

## SOA Group Takes Step Toward Standardization

Massimo Pezzini, Yefim V. Natis, Kimihiko Iijima, Roy W. Schulte

Nine more software vendors have joined a group developing specifications for service-oriented architecture. Microsoft is notable by its absence. The community's new Web site will help the group to expand.

### Event

On 26 July 2006, a group of eight vendors selling service-oriented architecture (SOA) software revealed nine new partners, launched its Web site and laid out achievements in its drafting of specifications for two SOA technologies: Service Component Architecture (SCA) and Service Data Objects (SDO). The group introduced enhancements to a November 2005 draft, including support for more technologies and a new policy framework.

### Analysis

The informal alliance's initial members include BEA Systems, IBM, Oracle and SAP. We expect its new Web site, Open SOA ([www.osoa.org](http://www.osoa.org)), to serve as a foundation for expansion and more-formal processes.

The addition of nine vendors (most notably Sun Microsystems, Tibco Software, Progress Software and Software AG) means the group looks like the one that formed around Java 2 Platform, Enterprise Edition (J2EE) almost a decade ago and helped to propel it to industry prominence. As was the case then, Microsoft is staying away; it plans to release Windows Communication Foundation, its own model for SOA. But this new alliance differs from its predecessor in that it is not focused on a single language. By adding Sun, the group has solidified compatibility with products that use Java Business Integration. The move will also help attract vendors in the Java community and increase the specifications' standing.

SCA and SDO form a programming model for SOA in a format that is language-independent — Business Process Execution Language, C++, Java and PHP are now supported. The effort offers a programming model, but relies on standard communication protocols (initially Web services, Java Messaging Service and J2EE Connector Architecture).

The biggest gap in the specifications — lack of interoperation with Microsoft's .NET — has not yet been addressed, although many vendors plan to support Microsoft technology. Addressing .NET is vital to the effort's success, as almost all organizations will have to integrate .NET applications in their SOA.

Despite recent progress, the specifications are not finished. Gartner doesn't expect them to be completed until the end of 2006. The group intends to hand the specifications to an existing standards body to aid certification. No products claim to be fully compliant yet, though a few have preliminary implementations.

### Recommendations

- Watch this group of vendors, because it is likely to generate specifications that will help companies deploy consistent and successful SOA projects, especially those involving many technologies and suppliers.
- Remember that production-ready versions of SCA and SDO probably won't appear before late 2007 and that Microsoft is likely to remain outside the initiative.

**Analytical Sources:** Yefim Natis, Massimo Pezzini, Roy Schulte and Kimihiko Iijima, Gartner

## RECOMMENDED READING

---

- "Service Component Architecture Is a Winner in the Quest to Establish a Common Notation for SOA" — SCA has the potential to significantly aid mainstream organizations in the development, deployment and management of services using an SOA. **By Jess Thompson**
- "Advanced SOA for Advanced Enterprise Projects" — The good news about the software patterns of advanced SOA (aka "SOA 2.0") is that it is a natural step forward from the conventional SOA: nothing to replace or repair. **By Yefim Natis and Roy Schulte**

(You may need to sign in or be a Gartner client to access the documents referenced in this First Take.)

## REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS

---

### Corporate Headquarters

56 Top Gallant Road  
Stamford, CT 06902-7700  
U.S.A.  
+1 203 964 0096

### European Headquarters

Tamesis  
The Glanty  
Egham  
Surrey, TW20 9AW  
UNITED KINGDOM  
+44 1784 431611

### Asia/Pacific Headquarters

Gartner Australasia Pty. Ltd.  
Level 9, 141 Walker Street  
North Sydney  
New South Wales 2060  
AUSTRALIA  
+61 2 9459 4600

### Japan Headquarters

Gartner Japan Ltd.  
Aobadai Hills, 6F  
7-7, Aobadai, 4-chome  
Meguro-ku, Tokyo 153-0042  
JAPAN  
+81 3 3481 3670

### Latin America Headquarters

Gartner do Brazil  
Av. das Nações Unidas, 12551  
9º andar—World Trade Center  
04578-903—São Paulo SP  
BRAZIL  
+55 11 3443 1509