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## Weak governance haunts SOAs

SPECIAL FEATURE by David Longworth

**P**RACTICAL experience of service-oriented design and development is driving one critical requirement to the top of the agenda: the need for strong governance over developers.

Development organizations have found they must evolve new compliance and incentive systems to ensure their SOAs are built on stable foundations. Without governance, unfettered ad-hoc development of services threatens to undermine the promised benefits of SOA, such as improved productivity through service reuse and better alignment with the business. Instead, SOA initiatives may lead organizations in a backwards direction, pouring development dollars into a black hole.

Motti Vaknin, founder and CEO of WebLayers, a Cambridge, MA-based vendor of SOA governance tools, gives the example of one telecoms company where the vendor was invited to audit the planning and execution of a B2B integration strategy. "What we found over there was the gap between top management [intentions] and the

deployment in the field was so great that it caused the company to lose millions of dollars through late delivery and development that was outside the stated requirements."

In addition, when the company needed to modify those developments, it couldn't because implementation had not been carried out as the overall architecture required it should be – resulting in, for example, missing documentation or non-standard design.

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**There's little use in having an enterprise strategy unless developers adhere to the policies and practices it sets out**

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This isn't a one-off example. A similar story would probably emerge at any Fortune 500 company or government agency today, if they took the time to investigate. Most don't – and so only become aware of the problem when they embark upon some overarching integration project or similar enterprise initiative.

**>> continues on page 10**

**“It's going to be critical to have end-to-end support for governance. Customers can't go to one company to provide all the runtime pieces [in an SOA]”**

— David Butler, Systinet, *page 3*

**“A lot of the SOA projects we see are SOAP operas around a database”**

— Mike Abbott, Composite Software, *page 8*

**“There will be organizations who say they are building SOA and end up with spaghetti code”**

— Brent Carlson, LogicLibrary, *page 10*