Introduction to software architecture

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The content of these slides is extracted from the following references:

1 Motivations and objectives

1. Motivations and objectives
1.1 On a technical perspective
1.2 On a business perspective
1.3 Software architecture and Middleware
1.4 Architectural patterns Vs. Design patterns

2. Software architecture and Views

3. Attribute-Driven Design (ADD)
1.1 On a technical perspective

- Software architecture is about **preliminary design**
  - Each stakeholder (customer, user, project manager, coder, tester, and so on) is concerned with different characteristics of the system

- Software architecture is about **design at large**
  - Provides a language in which different concerns can be expressed, negotiated, and resolved at a level that is manageable (by one person) for large, complex systems

- The early design decisions carry enormous weight with respect to the system’s remaining development, its deployment, and its maintenance life

- It is the earliest point at which these design decisions can be scrutinized
1.2 On a business perspective

- A documented architecture enhances communication among stakeholders.
- An architecture channels the creativity of developers, reducing design and system complexity.
- Architecture-based development focuses on finding a stable design and a stable (predictable) development plan.

Documentation of the architecture: See [ISO/IEC/IEEE, 2011]
1.3 Software architecture and Middleware

- Middleware is
  - *Middleware is software glue*
  - *Middleware is computer software that connects software components or applications. It is used most often to support complex, distributed applications.*
  - *Middleware is any software that allows other software to interact*

- In short, in the “Component-and-connector” view of a software architecture, middleware is about the “connector” part
  - Design patterns exist for the design of the connectors
    - Home work: Study the slides
      - “Introduction to design patterns for middleware”

- Middleware and architectural patterns are strongly related
  - See M. Richards, “Software Architecture Patterns”
1.4 Architectural patterns Vs. Design patterns

Architectural pattern

- Coarse
- System

Design pattern

- Detail
- Local
2 Software architecture and Views

1. Motivations and objectives

2. Software architecture and Views
   2.1 Definition of “Software architecture”
   2.2 Other architectures: System and Enterprise
   2.3 Views of a software architecture

3. Attribute-Driven Design (ADD)
2.1 Definition of “Software architecture”

- “The software architecture of a system is the set of structures needed to reason about the system, which comprise software elements, relations among them, and properties of both” [Bass et al., 2012]

- Software architecture = an abstraction —i.e. omits certain information
  - Elements interact with each other by means of interfaces that partition details into public and private parts
  - Architecture focuses on the public side of this division

- Desirable properties of software architectures:
  - Can be constructed, evaluated, and documented
  - Answer to requirements to satisfy stakeholders
  - Have a repertoire of patterns and description languages (ADL)
2.1.1 Examples of sets of software structures

- **Module decomposition structures** = Implementation units
  - What is the primary *functional responsibility*, e.g. assigned to each element?
  - What other elements is an element allowed to use?
  - What other software does it actually use and depend on?

- **Component-and-connector structures** = runtime entities, e.g.
  - What are the *major runtime elements* and how do they interact?
  - What are the *major shared data stores*?
  - Which parts of the system are *replicated*? Can run in parallel?
  - Can the system's structure change as it executes and, if so, how?

- **Allocation structures** = *mapping* from software structures to organizational, developmental, installation, and execution environments, e.g.
  - What processor does each software element *execute on*?
  - What is the assignment of each software element to *development teams*?
2.2 Other architectures: System and Enterprise

- **System architecture**
  - Is concerned with a total system, including hardware, software, and humans
  - In this presentation, we limit ourselves to software architecture of software-intensive systems: e.g. we do not target hardware-software co-design of for instance embedded systems

- **Enterprise architecture**
  - Software is only one concern of enterprise architecture
  - Other common concerns addressed by enterprise architecture are how the software is used by humans to perform business processes, and how it is organised into subunits that aligned with the organization’s core goals and strategic direction

- Each type of architecture has its own specialized vocabulary and techniques
2.3 Views of a software architecture

- Each of the software structures provides a different perspective
  - E.g. module decomposition, component-and-connector, allocation
- Although they give different system perspectives, they are not independent
  - Elements of one structure will be related to elements of other structures
  - We need to reason about the relations
- A view is a representation of a set of elements and relations among them
  - Not all system elements, but those of a particular type
- Documenting an architecture is a matter of documenting the relevant views and then adding documentation that applies to more than one view
2.3.1 Example of Client–Server with two views
3 Attribute-Driven Design (ADD)

1. Motivations and objectives

2. Software architecture and Views

3. Attribute-Driven Design (ADD)
   3.1 Quality attribute requirements
   3.2 Tactics
   3.3 Architectural Pattern
   3.4 Tactics versus Architectural Patterns
   3.5 ADD Methodology
3.1 Quality attribute requirements

3.1.1 Definition of “Quality attribute”
3.1.2 ISO/IEC 25010 product quality standard
3.1.3 Modeling quality attribute requirements
3.1.1 Definition of “Quality attribute”

- “A quality attribute is a measurable or testable property of a system that is used to indicate how well the system satisfies the needs of its stakeholders” [Bass et al., 2012]

- Quality is related to the functions as perceived by the user or customer

- Quality is about the extra-functional characteristics: modifiability, usability, testability, scalability, availability, security, etc.

- Quality attributes (when architecting) ≠ Constraints (taken before)
3.1.2 ISO/IEC 25010 product quality standard I

System Software Product Quality

- Functional suitability
  - Functional completeness
  - Functional correctness
  - Functional appropriateness
- Performance efficiency
- Compatibility
- Usability
  - Appropriateness recognizability
  - Learnability
- Reliability
  - Maturity
  - Availability
  - Fault tolerance
  - Recoverability
- Security
  - Confidentiality
  - Integrity
  - Nonrepudiation
  - Analyzability
- Maintainability
  - Modularity
  - Reusability
  - Installability
- Portability
  - Adaptability
  - Installability
  - Replaceability
- Accessibility
3.1.2 ISO/IEC 25010 product quality standard II

- **Functional suitability**: The degree to which a product or system provides functions that meet stated and implied needs when used under specified conditions.
- **Performance efficiency**: Performance relative to the amount of resources used under stated conditions.
- **Compatibility**: The degree to which a product, system, or component can exchange information with other products, systems, or components, and/or perform its required functions, while sharing the same hardware or software environment.
- **Usability**: The degree to which a product or system can be used by users to achieve goals with effectiveness, efficiency, and satisfaction in a context of use.
- **Reliability**: The degree to which a system, product, or component performs specified functions under specified conditions for a specified period of time.
- **Security**: The degree to which a product or system protects information and data so that persons or other products or systems have the degree of data access appropriate to their types and levels of authorization.
- **Maintainability**: The degree of effectiveness and efficiency with which a product or system can be modified by the intended maintainers.
- **Portability**: The degree of effectiveness and efficiency with which a system, product, or component can be transferred from one hardware, software, or other operational or usage environment to another.
### 3.1.3 Modeling quality attribute requirements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>who or what</th>
<th>A tourist</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stimulus</td>
<td>does something</td>
<td>...broadcasts a location message to the members of their group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environment</td>
<td>under certain conditions</td>
<td>...during normal operations, with at most $3000 \times 10$ tourists that are broadcasting at most one message per second,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artifact</td>
<td>to the system or part of it</td>
<td>...to the group communication system,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Response</td>
<td>the system reacts with these actions</td>
<td>The group communication system notifies (sends notifications to) all the members of the group of the tourist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resp. measure</td>
<td>which can be measured by these metrics</td>
<td>...within a maximum of 1 second after having received the broadcast message from the tourist,</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.1.3 Modeling quality attribute requirements II

What to specify in stimulus-oriented requirements modelling

1. **Source of stimulus**: This is some entity (a human, a computer system, or any other actuator) that generated the stimulus

2. **Stimulus**: The stimulus is a condition that requires a response when it arrives at a system

3. **Environment**: The stimulus occurs under certain conditions (environment state). The system may be in an overload condition or in normal operation, or some other relevant state.

4. **Artifact**: Some artifact is stimulated. This may be a collection of systems, the whole system, or some piece or pieces of it

5. **Response**: The response is the activity undertaken by the system as the result of the arrival of the stimulus

6. **Response measure**: When the response occurs, it should be measurable in some fashion so that the requirement can be tested

See Slide 1 of the appendix for illustrative scenarios
3.2 Tactics

3.2.1 Definition of “Tactic”
3.2.2 Working on “Tactic”
3.2.1 Definition of “Tactic”

- The quality attribute requirements specify the responses of the system that realize the goals of the business.
- When architecting, techniques to achieve quality attributes are called architectural tactics.
- “A tactic is a design decision that influences the achievement of a quality attribute response” [Bass et al., 2012]

The focus of a tactic is on a single quality attribute response:
- Within a tactic, there is no consideration of tradeoffs.
  - In this respect, tactics differ from architectural patterns, where tradeoffs are built into the pattern (See slide 26).
3.2.2 Working on “Tactic” I

- We propose to work on tactics by studying chapters of Bass, Clements, and Kazman’s book [Bass et al., 2012]
  - Availability
  - Security
  - Interoperability
  - Modifiability
  - Scalability
  - Performance

- The instructions and explanations for working on tactics for the micro-project are in Section “Extrafunctional requirements”
3.2.2 Working on “Tactic” II

- Example of a set of tactics: Modifiability

- See also Slide 9 of the appendix
3.3 Architectural Pattern

- Architectural pattern = composition of architectural elements
  - is a bundle of design decisions that is found repeatedly in practice
  - has known properties that permit reuse
  - describes a class of architectures

- Examples: layered pattern, shared-data or repository pattern, client-server pattern, multi-tier pattern, distributed event-based pattern

- Pattern cataloguers strive to understand how the characteristics lead to different behaviors and different responses to environmental conditions
  - There will never be a complete list of patterns
    - Patterns spontaneously emerge in reaction to environmental conditions
    - As long as those conditions change, new patterns will emerge
3.4 Tactics versus Architectural Patterns

- Architectural patterns typically consist of a bundle of design decisions/tactics
  - They are often difficult to apply as is. Architects need to modify/adapt them.

- By understanding the role of tactics, an architect can more easily assess the options for augmenting an existing pattern to achieve a quality attribute goal.

- If no pattern exists to realize the architect’s design goal, tactics allow the architect to construct a design fragment from “first principles”
3.5 ADD Methodology

ASR = Architecture Significant Requirement: e.g. a quality attribute
Element = the whole system, a subsystem, or a component

Step 1: Choose an element of the system to design
Step 2: Identify the ASRs for this element
Step 3: Generate a design solution for the chosen element
Step 4: Verify & refine requirements and prepare next iteration

Element is mostly a functional “component”
Design solution introduces “connectors” — i.e. middleware
3.5 ADD Methodology II

Instantiate patterns and tactics = Use the functional requirements to help instantiate the roles of the patterns and tactics
Responsabilities = Functionalities
*Software Architecture in Practice, 3rd Edition.*
Addison-Wesley.

*Documenting Software Architecture: Views and Beyond, 2nd Edition.*
Addison-Wesley.

*Evaluating Software Architectures: Methods and Case Studies.*
Addison-Wesley.

Information technology — Software product evaluation — Quality characteristics and guidelines for their use.

Systems and software engineering — Architecture description.

*Software Architecture Patterns: Understanding Common Architecture Patterns and When to Use Them.* O’Reilly.
A. Examples of illustrative scenarios of quality attribute requirements

- In [Bass et al., 2012], they are modelled in graphics.
A. Examples of illustrative scenarios of quality attribute requirements II

- Availability

![Diagram showing stimulus, artifact, environment, and response related to availability in software architecture.](image-url)
A. Examples of illustrative scenarios of quality attribute requirements

- Interoperability
A. Examples of illustrative scenarios of quality attribute requirements IV

- Modifiability

![Diagram showing a process with labels: Source: Developer, Stimulus: Wishes to Change the UI, Artifact: Code, Environment: Design Time, Response: Change Made and Unit Tested, Response Measure: In Three Hours.]
A. Examples of illustrative scenarios of quality attribute requirements

- Performance

A. Examples of illustrative scenarios of quality attribute requirements VI

- Security
A. Examples of illustrative scenarios of quality attribute requirements VII

- Testability

![Diagram showing the process of testability with steps: Source: Unit Tester, Stimulus: Code Unit Completed, Artifact: Code Unit, Environment: Development, Response: Results Captured, Response Measure: 85% Path Coverage in Three Hours.]
A. Examples of illustrative scenarios of quality attribute requirements VIII

- Usability

Diagram:
- Source: User
- Stimulus: Downloads a New Application
- Artifact: System
- Environment: Runtime
- Response: User Uses Application Productively
- Response Measure: Within Two Minutes of Experimentation
B. Example of decisions for some tactics

- In [Bass et al., 2012], sets of decisions are graphically displayed. The slides of this section contain some of these graphics.

- Interoperability tactics
B. Example of decisions for some tactics II

- Performance tactics

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Event Arrives

- Control Resource Demand
  - Manage Sampling Rate
  - Limit Event Response
  - Prioritize Events
  - Reduce Overhead
  - Bound Execution Times
  - Increase Resource Efficiency

- Manage Resources
  - Increase Resources
  - Introduce Concurrency
  - Maintain Multiple Copies of Computations
  - Maintain Multiple Copies of Data
  - Bound Queue Sizes
  - Schedule Resources

Response Generated within Time Constraints
```
B. Example of decisions for some tactics III

- Modifiability tactics
B. Example of decisions for some tactics IV

- Security tactics

![Diagram of security tactics]
B. Example of decisions for some tactics

- Availability tactics
C. Example of a catalog of questions

- We can view an architecture as the result of applying a collection of design decisions.
- Slides of this section propose some initial categories of decisions.
  - During the design of your solution, use these slides as a reminder.
- These design decisions are fine-grained; this is why there are inserted in the appendix.
C. Example of a catalog of questions II

- Allocation of responsibilities
  - Identifying the important responsibilities, including basic system functions, architectural infrastructure, and satisfaction of quality attributes
  - Determining how these responsibilities are allocated to non-runtime and runtime elements (namely, modules, components, and connectors)
C. Example of a catalog of questions III

- Coordination model
  - Identifying the elements of the system that must coordinate, or are prohibited from coordinating
  - Determining the properties of the coordination, such as timeliness, currency, completeness, correctness, and consistency
  - Choosing the communication mechanisms (between systems, between our system and external entities, between elements of our system)
    - Stateful versus stateless
    - Synchronous versus asynchronous
    - Guaranteed versus nonguaranteed delivery
    - Performance-related properties such as throughput and latency
C. Example of a catalog of questions IV

- Data model
  - Choosing the major data abstractions, their operations, and their properties
    - How the data items are created, initialized, accessed, persisted, manipulated, translated, and destroyed
  - Compiling metadata needed for consistent interpretation of the data
  - Organizing the data
    - In a relational database, a collection of objects, or both
      - If both, then the mapping between the two different locations of the data must be determined
C. Example of a catalog of questions V

- Management of resources
  - Identifying the resources that must be managed and determining the limits for each
  - Determining which system element(s) manage each resource
  - Determining how resources are shared and the arbitration strategies employed when there is contention
  - Determining the impact of saturation on different resources
C. Example of a catalog of questions VI

- Mapping among architectural elements
  - The mapping of modules and runtime elements to each other
    - The runtime elements that are created from each module
    - The modules that contain the code for each runtime element
  - The assignment of runtime elements to processors
  - The assignment of items in the data model to data stores
  - The mapping of modules and runtime elements to units of delivery
C. Example of a catalog of questions VII

- Binding time decisions

  - Binding time decision establishes the scope, the point in the life cycle, and the mechanism for achieving the variation

    - For allocation of responsibilities, you can have build-time selection of modules via a parameterized makefile

    - For choice of coordination model, you can design runtime negotiation of protocols

    - For resource management, you can design a system to accept new peripheral devices plugged in at runtime, after which the system recognizes them and downloads and installs the right drivers automatically

    - For choice of technology, you can build an app store for a smartphone that automatically downloads the version of the app appropriate for the phone of the customer buying the app.
C. Example of a catalog of questions VIII

■ Choice of technology

- Deciding which technologies are available to realize the decisions made in the other categories
- Determining whether the available tools to support this technology choice (IDEs, simulators, testing tools, etc.) are adequate for development
- Determining the extent of internal familiarity as well as the degree of external support available for the technology (such as courses, tutorials, examples, and availability of experts) and deciding whether this is adequate
- Determining the side effects of choosing a technology, such as a required coordination model or constrained resource management opportunities
- Determining whether a new technology is compatible with the existing technology stack
  - Can the new technology run on top of or alongside the existing technology stack?
  - Can it communicate with the existing technology stack?
  - Can the new technology be monitored and managed?