

# Microkernel Architecture

CSSE6400

Richard Thomas

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So far...

**Simplicity** – Monolith, Pipeline

**Modularity** – Layered, Pipeline

### Definition 1. Extensibility

Features or extensions can be easily added to the software over its lifespan.

Question

How easy is it to extend *Monolith*, *Layered* or *Pipeline*?

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### Answer

**Monolith** – Everything in one container



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**Monolith** – Everything in one container



**Layered** – Typically all layers



**Pipeline** – Create a new filter



## Definition 2. Interoperability

Software can easily share information and exchange data with internal components and other systems.



Question

What about interoperability?

## Question

# What about interoperability?

## Answer

**Monolith** – Everything in one container

- Internal 🤖
- External 🤖

## Question

# What about interoperability?

## Answer

**Monolith** – Everything in one container

- Internal 🤗      External 🤔

**Layered** – Nearest Neighbour

- Internal 🤗      External 🤔

## Question

# What about interoperability?

## Answer

**Monolith** – Everything in one container

- Internal 🤗      External 🤔

**Layered** – Nearest Neighbour

- Internal 🤗      External 🤔

**Pipeline** – Standard Interface

- Internal 🤗      External 🤔

Question

What if I want simplicity, extensibility and interoperability?

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Answer

Consider *Microkernel Architecture*

### Definition 3. Microkernel Architecture

Core system providing interfaces that allow plug-ins to extend its functionality.



#### Definition 4. Registry

Tracks which plug-ins are available to the core system and how to access them.



## Loading Plug-ins

Static Loading when application starts

Dynamic Loading as needed at run-time

Registry designed for the selected strategy

Question

Can you think of a *microkernel architecture*?

Question

Can you think of a *microkernel architecture*?

Answer

Web Browser?

### Definition 5. Independent Plug-in Principle

Plug-ins should be independent, with no dependencies on other plug-ins. The only dependency on the core system is through the plug-in interface.

## Definition 6. Standard Interface Principle

There should be a single interface that defines how the core system uses plug-ins.

### Question

Does a plug-in architecture equate to a microkernel architecture?

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Does a plug-in architecture equate to a microkernel architecture?

### Answer

What about *IntelliJ*?

## Plug-ins with Separate Databases

- Plug-ins cannot access core system data
  - Core system may pass data to the plug-in
- Plug-ins may have their own persistent data





## Plug-ins as External Services

- Need communication protocol
- Registry records communication contract
  - e.g. URL of the REST endpoint & data passed to it



# Adapting Non-Conforming Interfaces



# Technical Partitioning



# Technical Partitioning



# Domain Partitioning



### Question

Is the microkernel architecture suited to *technical* or *domain* partitioning?

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Is the microkernel architecture suited to *technical* or *domain* partitioning?

### Answer

Core system can be partitioned either way.

# Domain Standard Interfaces



# Distributed Microkernel

- Partitions in the core system can be distributed
  - Technical or domain partitions
  - Plug-ins could also be distributed





## Pros & Cons

Simplicity Core system & Plug-in interface



Extensibility Plug-ins



Interoperability Plug-ins



Scalability



Reliability

