

Introduction

Software Architecture

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Question

What is *Software Architecture*?

Software Architecture is design.

Design is not software architecture.

But...

Software Architecture is hard to define.

Let's hear from an expert



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DngAZyWMGR0>

Okay so...

Definition 1. Software Architecture

The important stuff; whatever that is.

Question

What do *you* want from this course?

Maybe...

Definition 2. Software Architecture: The Course

A set of tools, processes, and design patterns which enable me to deliver high quality software.

High Quality Software?¹

Functional Requirements – Functional features to be delivered.

Constraints – Real world constraints on development.

Principles – Ideas adopted to encourage design consistency.

Quality Attributes – Quality of service & cross-cutting concerns.

¹Yes, “high quality” is intentionally vague.

Functional Requirements

- Architecture must enable delivery of functionality.
- Support interaction model.
 - A mobile dating app may be difficult to deliver using *Pipe and Filter*.
- Don't over architect.
 - A mobile dating app doesn't need a six-layer *PCBMER* architecture.

Constraints

- Externally determined restrictions
- Time and budget
- Technology
 - Interoperability with existing systems
 - Deployment platform
 - Vendor relationships
- People
- Organisation
 - Strategic or tactical system?
 - Politics may limit choices

Principles

- Standards developers are expected to follow
 - Avoid unintentionally breaking the architecture
- e.g. Architectural structure
 - Layering strategy
 - Location of business logic
 - Stateless components

Question

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Answer

Non-functional requirements for the success of software.

Quality Attributes: Examples

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Extensibility Features or extensions can be *easily added* to the base software.

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- Scalability** The software can handle peaks of high demand by *taking advantage of available computing resources*.
- Extensibility** Features or extensions can be *easily added* to the base software.
- Testability** The software is designed so that *automated tests* can be easily deployed.

Problem

Software cannot meet all quality attributes.

“Solution”

Software architects prioritise the important attributes.

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Definition 3. The First Law of Software Architecture

[Richards and Ford, 2020]

Everything in software architecture is a trade-off.

Definition 4. Wicked Architecture [Galster and Angelov, 2016]

There are often *no clear problem descriptions*, *no clear solutions*, good or bad solutions, *no clear rules* when to “stop” architecting and mostly team rather than individual work.

Definition 5. Wicked Architecture [Galster and Angelov, 2016]

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Don't expect “clean” solutions.

Why now?

Architecture is more important today thanks to *expectations* and *infrastructure*.

Big design up front is dumb.

Doing no design up front is even dumber.

- *Dave Thomas*

References

[Galster and Angelov, 2016] Galster, M. and Angelov, S. (2016).

What makes teaching software architecture difficult?

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[Richards and Ford, 2020] Richards, M. and Ford, N. (2020).

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