

SKELETON FREE CLOSETS

DESIGNING INTERNAL APIS YOU CAN BE **PROUD** OF

API STRATEGY & PRACTICE: CHICAGO, 2014

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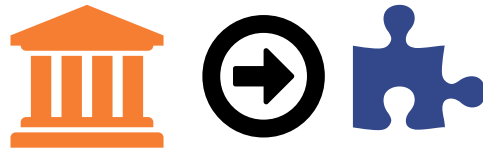
THE RISE OF THE INTERNAL API

THEN: THE MONOLITH

One application to rule them all.

NOW: MICROSERVICES

A suite of small services that communicate.



(Or at least somewhere in between)

WHICH IS COOL!

BUT...

THE TRUTH

MOST* INTERNAL APIS SUCK


*Based on a highly scientific sampling of my friends and colleagues

BUT WHY?



NOBODY  **THEM**

WHAT SEEMS TO HAPPEN

1. There are two services (or an application is broken up)
2. Need to glue these things together
3. Slap together an API interface
4. Functional? Done.
5. 

[ACTUAL] EXAMPLE INTERACTION

Me: *"Do you have any examples of a bad internal API?"*

Colleague: *"Well, the other day I saw..."*

Me: *"Perfect. Can you link me to the docs?"*

Colleague: **blank stare**

Colleague: **laughter**

SO HOW CAN WE DO BETTER?

DESIGN FIRST

Every. Single. Time.

BUT WHAT ABOUT...

NO.

TOO MANY FOR EXCUSES



apiary



api**blueprint**

RAML

...or any text editor of your choice.

GET COLLEAGUES INVOLVED

Show design drafts to people who will have to use it

IT TAKES AN ORGANIZATION

Get * management involved as well

KICK BAD HABITS

Your org is probably building bad internal APIs because it's a habit now.

KILL YOUR DARLINGS

It's good to have organization guidelines and all, but...

DON'T CLING FOR CONSISTENCY SAKE

If patterns / best practices / dev preferences change enough, change with them

AIM FOR IDIOMATIC

Internal APIs should feel "standard" within the broader context

DOCUMENT EVERYTHING

Even Especially if you're not proud of it.

OWN UP TO SHORTCOMINGS

Surprises are worse than idiosyncracies

KEEP IT UP TO DATE

This is harder than it seems. Admit it.

BE A GOOD CITIZEN

Update documentation when you notice problems.

TL;DR

INTERNAL != CUT CORNERS

THINK ABOUT **FUTURE** YOU

These APIs will potentially be a communication layer for years.

THANK YOU

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