**Case Study: Strangler Pattern at Blackboard Learn (2011)**

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Blackboard Inc. is considered one of the pioneers of providing education technologies. The development team packaged software, installed, and ran locally with a legacy J2EE codebase from 1997. The remainder of the Pearl code was running in the codebase. Lead times and complexity increased in 2010, making code more susceptible to errors. This decreased customer satisfaction. The number of code commits decreased while the lines of code got longer. Ashman, in 2012, decided to launch a reform using the Strangler Fig Pattern. This was done using building blocks so developers can work in separate code workspaces, decoupled from a monolithic codebase. This helped decrease the monolithic code line amounts. Mistakes were now localized, and coding was safer in these separate building blocks. This also increased autonomy, productivity, code reviews, quality, and freedom.

The Strangler Pattern at Blackboard Learn (2011) led to many lessons learned. When developing code, understanding that elements can phase out is essential. These elements should slowly be replaced to avoid code complications, slower processing times, and customer dissatisfaction. Breaking it into smaller, more isolated work stations is the best practice when dealing with any system, especially a larger one. It allows developers more freedom to code, is more resilient to coding errors, helps contain mistakes, and improves productivity and performance.

**Reference**

Kim, G., Humble, J., Debois, P., Willis, J., & Forsgren, N. (2021). *The DevOps Handbook, Second Edition*. IT Revolution. (Original work published 2025)