

Architecture Overview





Module outline

▶ **Introduction and objectives**

What is an Architecture Overview?

Examples

Best practices

Anti-patterns

Summary and reference



At the end of this module, you should be able to:

- Explain an Architecture Overview
- Describe the uses of an Architecture Overview
- Explain how an Architecture Overview fits in with the Component and Operational Models
- Develop a simple Architecture Overview
- Identify potential issues when reviewing an Architecture Overview



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What is an Architecture Overview? (1 of 2)

From the Work Product Description:

Purpose:

- To communicate to the sponsor and external stakeholders a conceptual understanding of the intended IT system
- To provide a high-level shared vision of the architecture and scope of the proposed IT system for the development teams
- To explore and evaluate alternative architectural options
- To enable early recognition and validation of the implications of the architectural approach
- To facilitate effective communication between different communities of stakeholders and developers
- To facilitate orientation for new people who join the project

Main Description:

This artifact provides an overview of the ‘main conceptual elements and relationships’ of an architecture, which may include candidate subsystems, components, nodes, connections, data stores, users, and external systems. As such, it represents the governing ideas and ‘candidate building blocks’ of the architecture.



What is an Architecture Overview? (2 of 2)

From the Work Product Description:

Notation:

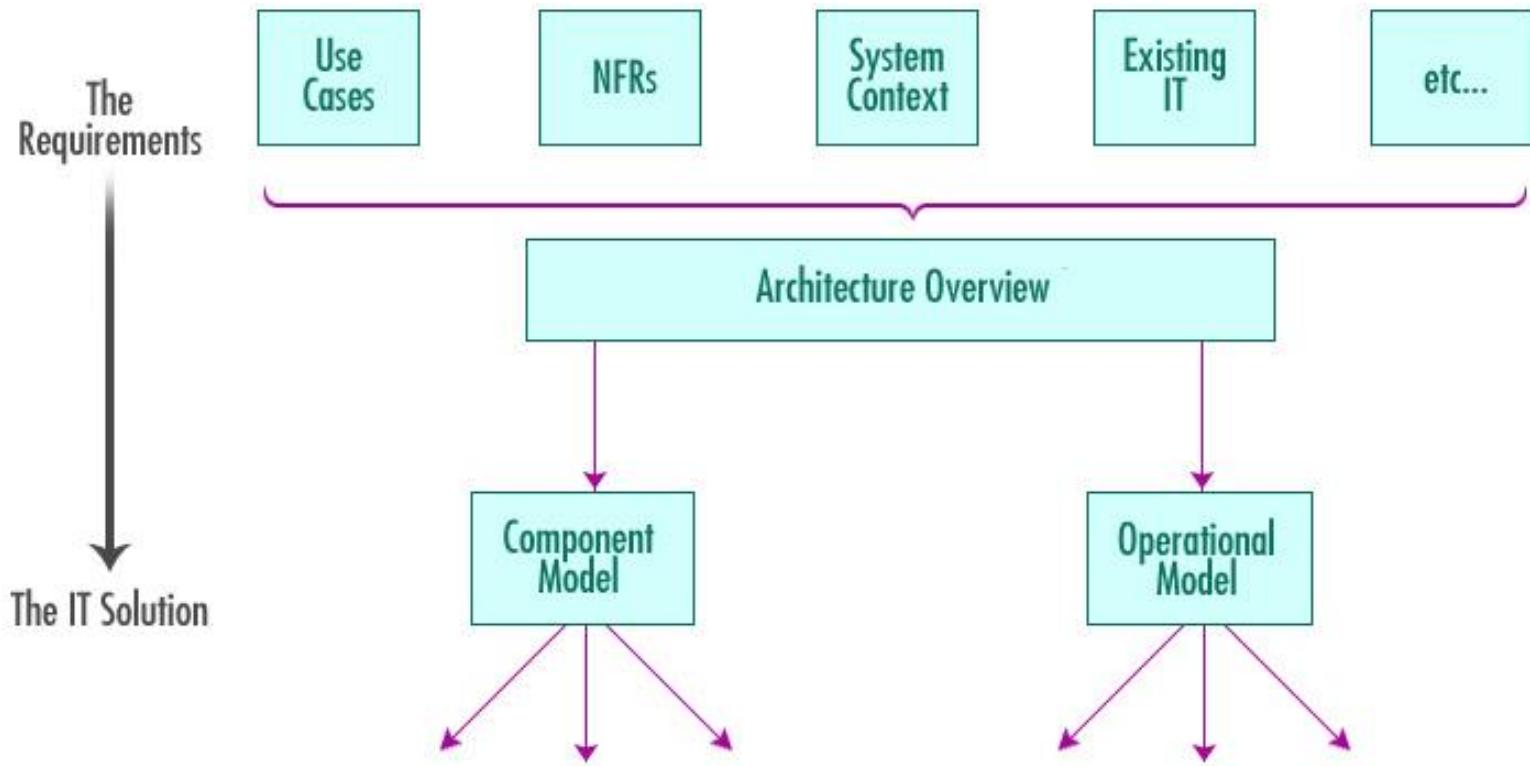
Consists of one or more ‘informal diagrams’ (in other words, not necessarily created using formal modeling tools or ‘notation’) together with supporting text describing the major architectural concepts of the architecture, such as:

- The range of different delivery mechanisms the architecture supports, such as home Internet terminals and kiosks
- The separation of functions
- The architecture model, such as a three-tier or four-tier model
- The use of hardware, such as distributed servers and workstations
- The access to legacy systems

Diagrams are usually static in nature, showing the relationships between components. However, where it makes sense to do so, dynamic views showing collaborations between the architectural components may also be included. The diagrams may show functional views, operational views, or a combination of the two.

Where alternative architectural solutions are being explored, diagrams may be produced for each option to enable various stakeholders to discuss the tradeoffs between the options

Where does the Architecture Overview fit?





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Example 1: Retail Industry – Customer Insights Architecture Overview



Business Roles



Line-of-Business Executive



Chief Marketing Officer



Chief Data Officer



Customer Officer



Agent

Pre-Integrated Capabilities



Deliver Insights

Insights via API

UI Design & Pre-Built Dashboards



Perform Analytics

Pre-Built Industry Analytic Models

Descriptive to Predictive to Cognitive



Prepare Data

Industry Data Models & Connectors

Internal & External Data

Relevant Data Sources



Internal Systems



3rd Party



Twitter



News



Upcoming Events



The Weather Channel

Example 2: DevOps on BlueMix Architecture Overview



DevOps Tooling



Client-Owned Hosted Apps / Services



Catalog of Services that Extend Apps' Functionality



Flexible Compute Options to Run Apps / Services



urban{code}



Platform Deployment Options that Meet Your Workload Requirements

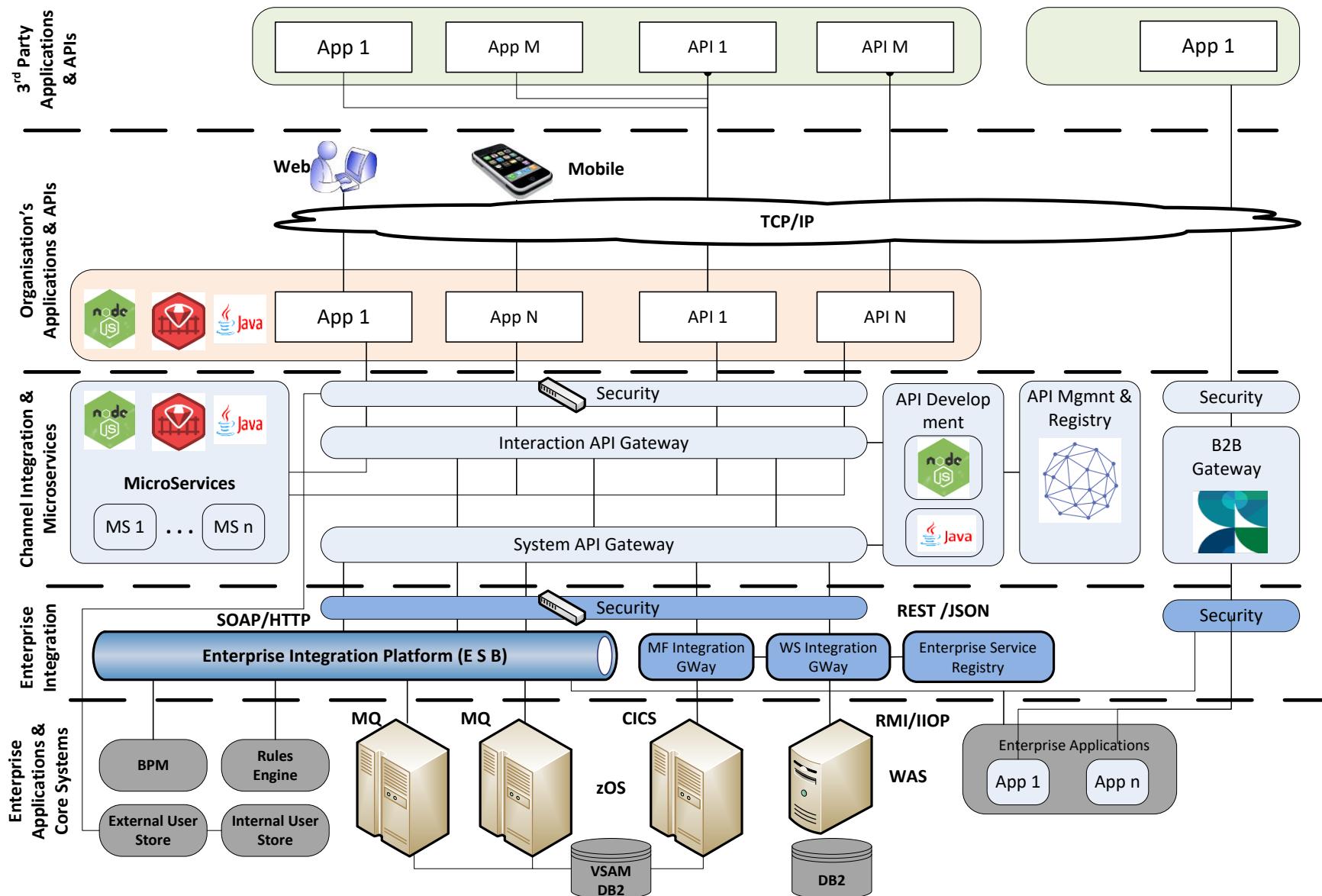


Integration & API Mgmt

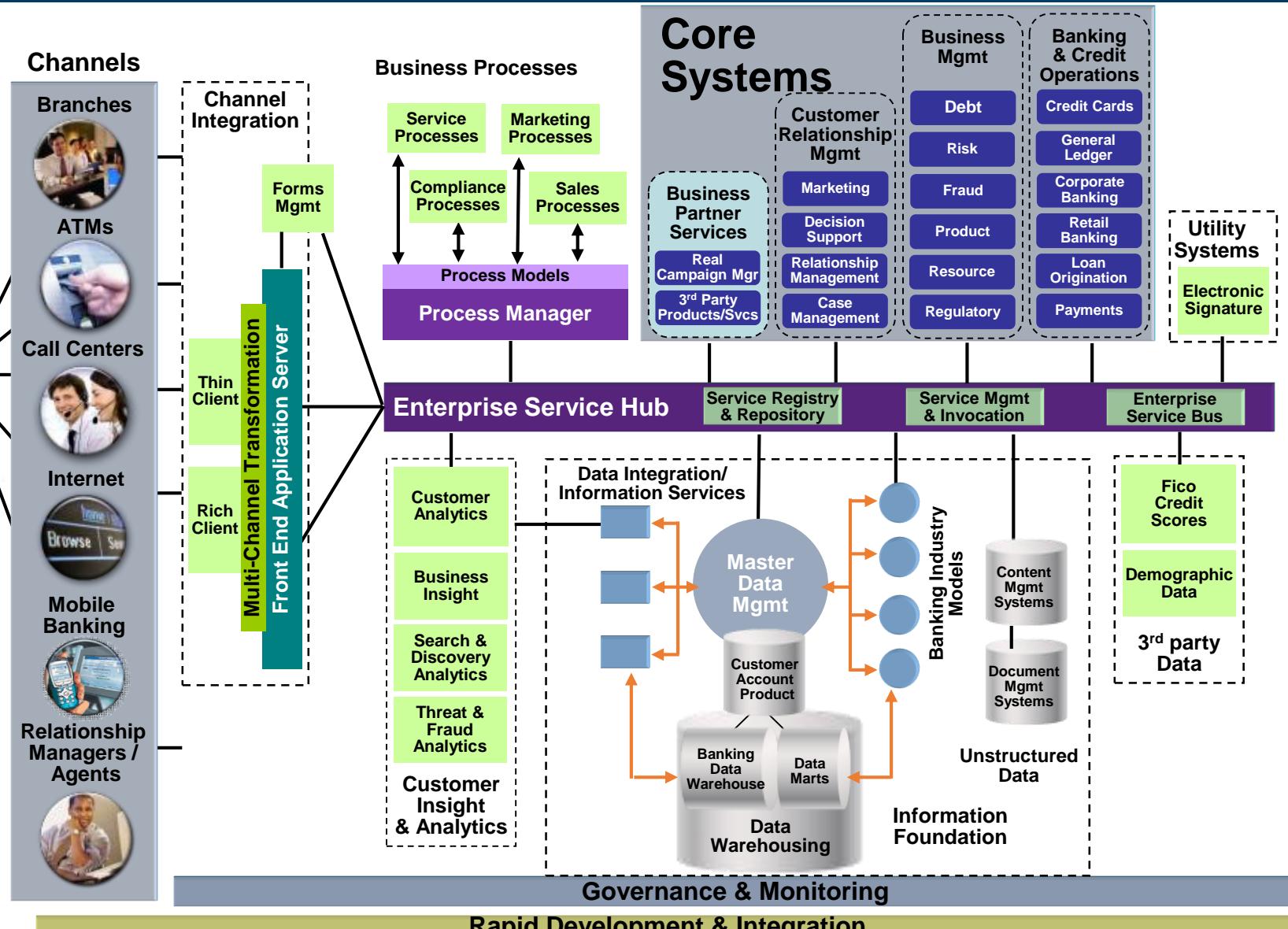




Example 3: Hybrid Integration Platform Architecture Overview



Example 4: Banking – Customer Care and Insights Architecture Overview





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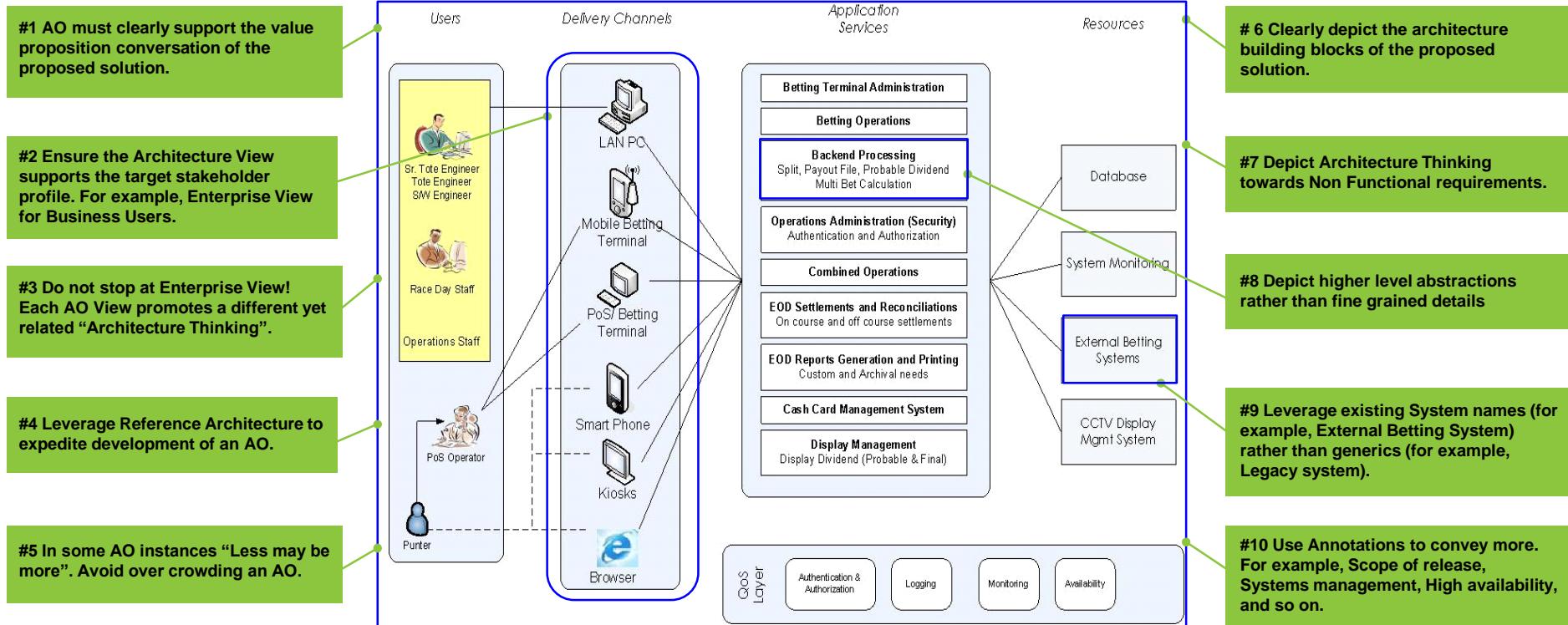
► **Best practices**

Anti-patterns

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Best practices





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Brainstorming:
what do you consider to be anti-patterns?



- Information overload: Putting too much information into one diagram
- Information underload: Putting too little information into the Architecture Overview
- Using too many acronyms that are not properly introduced
- Providing more technical details than required for a business audience



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Summary

- The main purpose of an Architecture Overview is communication.
- It is more important for the Architecture Overview to be simple, brief, clear, and understandable than comprehensive or accurate in all details.
- The Architecture Overview represents the governing ideas and candidate building blocks of an IT system or enterprise architecture.
- The Architecture Overview provides an overview of the main conceptual elements and relationships in an architecture.

References



Architecture Overview, Work Product ART 0512, on the [Method Website](#).

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