Knowing is Half the Battle

Lori MacVittie, 2010-22-02

There's a difference between automation and orchestration, and knowing which one you're really doing is half the battle in achieving a truly dynamic data center.

Randy Heffner on CIO.Com wrote an excellent article on SOA and its value, "SOA: Think Business Transformation, Not Code Reuse." The problem I had with the article was not in any way related to its advice, conclusions, or suggestions. The problem I had was that I kept thinking about how perfectly much of his article could be applied to data center orchestration, operational transformation, and automation. Simply replace "SOA" with "orchestration", "software reuse" with "automation", and "business" with "operational" and you've pretty much got what needs to be said. Here, I'll show you what I mean:

> The worst ~~CIO~~ CTO misunderstanding about ~~service-oriented architecture (SOA)~~ orchestration is thinking of it as only another technical initiative for automation ~~software reuse~~. Although ~~SOA's reuse~~ orchestration's automation potential is real and good, its ~~business~~ operational impact goes much further: In Forrester surveys, 38 percent of Global 2000 ~~SOA~~ orchestration users say they are using it for strategic ~~business~~ operational transformation. ~~SOA's~~ Orchestration's true source of power is in its ~~business~~ operational design models, not its technology — and this means that ~~SOA~~ orchestration provides a broad foundation for a much larger shift in ~~business~~ operational technology (BT) architecture that goes far beyond ~~SOA~~ orchestration itself. By correctly understanding orchestration ~~SOA~~, ~~CIOs~~ CTOs can lead their organizations on a solid and well-managed path toward a strategic technology future and greater business value.

This is true for SOA, and it's true for cloud computing, where it is the orchestration of the data center infrastructure that brings the value to the table through making more efficient the operational processes codified to automate and integrate systems.

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