

# Best of Breed

column2.com

Rolling Your Own Digital Automation Platform  
Using BPMS In A Microservice Architecture

# How did we get here?

column2.com

# The rise and fall of the monolith

- Monolithic mainframe applications
  - Custom-built internally
  - Highly customized COTS
- Hard to change
  - No single process owner
  - No development team with overall code view
  - Any upgrade requires large-scale redeployment

# “Fixing” the monolith with SOA

- Multi-tier with SOA
- Monolithic, highly-interdependent layers
- Wrappers on mainframe function points
- Larger potential for destabilization

# SOA is dead! Long live microservices

- Discrete self-contained business capability
- Independently developed and deployed
- Loosely coupled
- Swap out for new/better capability

# The emergence of the Franken-BPMS

- Race for the upper-right corner
- BPMS: the new monolith
  - Strong in original capabilities
  - Weaker in hastily-built or acquired capabilities
  - Inseparably coupled
- Filled a (then) gap in app dev

# Agility as a competitive differentiator

- Business agility requires technical agility
  - Changing front-end customer experiences
  - Changing back-end process automation
  - Introducing new capabilities
- Not so easy with a monolithic architecture

# Technology platforms for agile businesses

column2.com



# What's a Digital Automation Platform?

- A collection of microservices
  - Automation-related capabilities
  - Loosely coupled
  - Independently deployed and scaled
  - Swappable for best-of-breed adaptability
- API surface
- Optionally, low-code tooling

# What Does A DAP Look Like In Practice?

- Best of breed microservices from anywhere
- Tooling for creating new microservices
  - Process & decision management within services
- Integration with corporate identity mgmt.
- Support for orchestration and choreography
- Low-code app dev or configurable apps

# Why You May Not Want Your BPMS To Be Your DAP (or Your App Dev Platform)

- Proprietary low-code app dev environment
  - Great for citizen developers
  - Death by properties panel for technical developers
- May not be sufficient for core processes
- May not allow creation of microservices
- May lack software development tools

DAP is not one-size-fits-all

column2.com

# Marketplace Divisions

- **BPMS as a DAP**
  - Small to mid-sized companies
  - COTS system (e.g., ERP) managing core processes
- **Microservice DAP**
  - Large companies
  - Robust development teams
  - Custom core processes

# Lessons: Vendors

- Pendulum swinging from buy to build for large companies that require agility
- Separate components for consumption by other environments, and price accordingly
- Allow creation of microservices with your tools

# Lessons: Consumer organizations

- Happy with your monolithic core business system? Great!
- Need flexible, large scale core business processes? Think about microservice DAP

# Thanks!

column2.com

Sandy Kemsley  
sandy@kemsleydesign.com



Read my blog at [column2.com](http://column2.com)  
Find me on Twitter @skemsley