System Design

Acknowledge: Atlee and Pfleeger (Software Engineering: Theory and Practice)

• Goals:
  – Satisfy the requirements
  – Satisfy the customer
  – Reduce development costs
  – Provide reliability
  – Support maintainability
  – Plan for future modifications

Design: HOW to implement a system
Design Issues

- Architecture
- User Interface
- Data Types
- Operations
- Data Representations
- Algorithms

System Design

- Choose high-level strategy for solving problem and building solution
- Decide how to organize the system into subsystems
- Identify concurrency / tasks
- Allocate subsystems to HW and SW components
Strategic vs. Local Design Decisions

• **Defn**: A high-level or *strategic* design decision is one that influences the form of (a large part) of the final code
• Strategic decisions have the most impact on the final system
• So they should be made carefully
• **Question**: Can you think of an example of a strategic decision?

System Design

• **Defn**: The high-level strategy for solving an [information flow] problem and building a solution
  – Includes decisions about organization of functionality.
  – Allocation of functions to hardware, software and people.
  – Other major conceptual or policy decisions that are made prior to technical design.

• Assumes and builds upon thorough requirements and analysis.
Taxonomy of System-Design Decisions

- Devise a system architecture
- Choose a data management approach
- Choose an implementation of external control

System Architecture

- A collection of **subsystems** and interactions among subsystems.
- Should comprise a small number (<20) of subsystems
- A subsystem is a package of classes, associations, operations, events and constraints that are interrelated and that have a reasonably well-defined interface with other subsystems,
- Example subsystems:
  - Database management systems (RDBMS)
  - Interface (GUI) package
• Describe information flow
  – Can use DFD to model flow
• Some common topologies
  – Pipes-and-Filter
  – Star topology
  – Client-Server
  – Peer-to-Peer
  – Publish-Subscribe
  – Repositories
  – Layering

**System Topology**
(also known as SW Architecture)

**Data Flow Diagram**

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Terminology

**Idioms:**
- paradigm/language-specific programming techniques.

**Design Patterns:**
- reusable (problem, design strategy) pair with context for application, consequences for use.

**Architectural Patterns:**
- High-level strategies for system design
- Involves large-scale components and their relationships

Architectural Styles
Architectural Styles and Strategies

- Pipes-and-Filter
- Client-Server
- Peer-to-Peer
- Publish-Subscribe
- Repositories
- Layering

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Architectural Styles and Strategies

Pipes-and-Filter

- The system has
  - Streams of data (pipe) for input and output
  - Transformation of the data (filter)

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Several important properties

- The designer can understand the entire system's effect on input and output as the composition of the filters
- The filters can be reused easily on other systems
- System evolution is simple
- Allow concurrent execution of filters

Drawbacks

- Encourages batch processing
- Not good for handling interactive application
- Duplication in filters functions
Monitoring system:

- Sensors
  - sensor status
- SafeHome software
  - commands, data
  - display information
- Control panel
- Alarm
  - On/Off signals, alarm type
- Telephone line
  - number tones

**Architectural Styles and Strategies**

**Client-Server**

- Two types of components:
  - Server components offer services
  - Clients access them using a request/reply protocol
- Client may send the server an executable function, called a callback
  - The server subsequently calls under specific circumstances
Architectural Styles and Strategies
Peer-to-Peer (P2P)

- Each component acts as its own process and acts as both a client and a server to other peer components.
- Any component can initiate a request to any other peer component.
- Characteristics
  - Scale up well
  - Increased system capabilities
  - Highly tolerant of failures
- Examples: Napster and Freenet

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Sidebar: Napster’s P2P Architecture

- Peers are typically users’ desktop computer systems running general-purpose computing applications (email, word processors, Web browsers, etc.)
  - Many user systems do not have stable Internet protocol (IP) addresses
  - Not always available to the rest of the network
  - Most users are not sophisticated; they are more interested in content than in the network’s configuration and protocols
  - Great variation in methods for accessing the network, from slow dial-up lines to fast broadband connections
- Napster’s sophistication comes from its servers, which organize requests and manage content, with actual content provided by users, shared from peer to peer, and the sharing goes to other (anonymous) users, not to a centralized file server
- If the file content changes frequently, sharing speed is key, file quality is critical, or one peer needs to be able to trust another, a centralized server architecture may be more appropriate

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More recent P2P: BitTorrent

- Protocol for (large) file sharing among a group of peers.
- Seed: client that has full file
- Tracker: server that manages/helps to assemble pieces
- Swarm: group of users contribute to distributing the file pieces
- .torrent: pointer file that directs you to where the file you want is located.
- Leecher: one who is downloading the file

Architectural Styles and Strategies

Publish-Subscribe

- Components interact by broadcasting and reacting to events
  - Component expresses interest in an event by subscribing to it
  - When another component announces (publishes) that event has taken place, subscribing components are notified
  - Implicit invocation is a common form of publish-subscribe architecture
    - Registering: subscribing component associates one of its procedures with each event of interest (called the procedure)

- Characteristics
  - Strong support for evolution and customization
  - Easy to reuse components in other event-driven systems
  - Need shared repository for components to share persistent data
  - Difficult to test
Architectural Design Principles for Layered Systems

- Decompose into subsystems *layers* and *partitions*.
- Separate application logic from user interface.
- Simplify the interfaces through which parts of the system will connect to other systems.
- In systems that use large databases:
  - Distinguish between *operational* (transactional) and *inquiry* systems.
  - Exploit features of DBMS.

Architectural Styles and Strategies

Layering

- Layers are hierarchical
  - Each layer provides service to the one outside it and acts as a client to the layer inside it.
  - Layer bridging: allowing a layer to access the services of layers below its lower neighbor.
- The design includes protocols
  - Explain how each pair of layers will interact.
- Advantages
  - High levels of abstraction.
  - Relatively easy to add and modify a layer.
- Disadvantages
  - Not always easy to structure system layers.
  - System performance may suffer from the extra coordination among layers.
Layered Subsystems

- Set of “virtual” worlds
- Each layer is defined in terms of the layer(s) below it
  - Knowledge is one-way: Layer knows about layer(s) below it
- Objects within layer can be independent
- Lower layer (server) supplies services for objects (clients) in upper layer(s)

Example: Layered architecture

- Interactive Graphics Application
  - Windows Operations
  - Screen Operations
  - Pixel Operations
  - Device I/O Operations
**Closed Architectures**

- Each layer is built only in terms of the immediate lower layer
- Reduces dependencies between layers
- Facilitates change

**Open Architectures**

- Layer can use any lower layer
- Reduces the need to redefine operations at each level
- More efficient/compact code
- System is less robust/harder to change
Properties of Layered Architectures

- **Top and bottom layers specified by the problem statement**
  - Top layer is the desired system
  - Bottom layer is defined by available resources (e.g. HW, OS, libraries)

- **Easier to port to other HW/SW platforms**

Partitioned Architectures

- Divide system into weakly-coupled subsystems
- Each provides specific services
- Vertical decomposition of problem
Ex: Partitioned Architecture

Operating System

- File System
- Process Control
- Virtual Memory Management
- Device Control

Typical Application Architecture

- Application package
  - User dialogue control
  - Window graphics
  - Screen graphics
  - Pixel graphics
  - Operating system
  - Computer hardware
  - Simulation package

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• Actual software architectures rarely based on purely one style
• Architectural styles can be combined in several ways
  – Use different styles at different layers (e.g., overall client-server architecture with server component decomposed into layers)
  – Use mixture of styles to model different components or types of interaction (e.g., client components interact with one another using publish-subscribe communications)
• If architecture is expressed as collection of models, documentation must be created to show relation between models
Taxonomy of System-Design Decisions

- Devise a system architecture
- **Choose a data management approach**
- Choose an implementation of external control

Choosing a Data Management Approach

- Databases:
  - Advantages:
    - Efficient management
    - multi-user support.
    - Roll-back support
  - Disadvantages:
    - Performance overhead
    - Awkward (or more complex) programming interface
    - Hard to fix corruption
Choosing a Data Management Approach (continued)

- “Flat” files
  - Advantages:
    - Easy and efficient to construct and use
    - More readily repairable
  - Disadvantages:
    - No rollback
    - No direct complex structure support
    - Complex structure requires a grammar for file format

Flat File Storage and Retrieval

- Useful to define two components (or classes)
  - Reader reads file and instantiates internal object structure
  - Writer traverses internal data structure and writes out presentation
- Both can (should) use formal grammar
  - Tools support: Yacc, Lex.
Taxonomy of System-Design Decisions

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- **Choose an implementation of external control**

Implementation of External Control

*Four general styles for implementing software control*

- **Procedure-driven:**
  - Control = location in the source code.
  - Requests block until request returns

- **Event-Driven: Control resides in dispatcher**
  - Uses callback functions registered for events
  - Dispatcher services events by invoking callbacks
Implementation of External Control

• Concurrent
  – Control resides in multiple, concurrent objects
  – Objects communicate by passing messages
    • across busses, networks, or memory.

• Transactional
  – Control resides in servers and saved state
  – Many server-side E-systems are like this

Sample Concurrent System

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MVC (Model/View/Controller)

Separates data model, data view, and behavior into separate components.

Model (data) - changes events

Controller (interface for data changes)

Representation (view) - consumer observable

Dispatcher Model (event driven)

Events

Get event, call a procedure

Process event type 1

Process event type 2

Process event type N

Window manager & Notifier

Application code

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Event-driven architecture in UI toolkits

Window manager

User-interface component

Application code

Get events and dispatch

Events

Widget1 (e.g. Button)

Button Listener

Widget2 (e.g. TextBox)

Text Listener

Widget3 (e.g. Dialog)

Listener

Typical Dispatcher Code

while (!quit) {
    WaitEvent(timeout, id);
    switch (id) {
        case ID1: Procedure1(); break;
        case ID2: Procedure2(); break;
        ....
    }
}

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Transaction Model

Mimics event-driven

- Server
- State manager
- Object A
- Object B
- Object C

System/network
Application/initial
Application/Classes
Restore state
Dispatch based on previous state

General Design Concerns

- Modularity
- Abstraction
- Cohesion
- Coupling
- Information Hiding
- Abstract Data Types
- Identifying Concurrency
- Global Resources
- Boundary Conditions
- Tradeoffs
Modularity

- Organize modules according to resources/objects/data types
- Provide cleanly defined interfaces
  - operations, methods, procedures, ...
- Hide implementation details
- Simplify program understanding
- Simplify program maintenance

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Abstraction

- Control abstraction
  - structured control statements
  - exception handling
  - concurrency constructs
- Procedural abstraction
  - procedures and functions
- Data abstraction
  - user defined types

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### Abstraction (cont.)

- Abstract data types
  - encapsulation of data

- Abstract objects
  - subtyping
  - generalization/inheritance

### Cohesion

- Contents of a module should be *cohesive*
  - Somehow related

- Improves maintainability
  - Easier to understand
  - Reduces complexity of design
  - Supports reuse
### (Weak) Types of cohesiveness

- **Coincidentally cohesive**
  - contiguous lines of code not exceeding a maximum size
- **Logically cohesive**
  - all output routines
- **Temporally cohesive**
  - all initialization routines

### (Better) Types of cohesiveness

- **Procedurally cohesive**
  - routines called in sequence
- **Communicationally cohesive**
  - work on same chunk of data
- **Functionally cohesive**
  - work on same data abstraction at a consistent level of abstraction
Example: Poor Cohesion

package Output is
    procedure DisplayDice(. . .);
    procedure DisplayBoard(. . .);

Example: Good Cohesion

package Dice is
    procedure Display (. . .);
    procedure Roll(. . .);
Coupling

- Connections between modules
- Bad coupling
  - Global variables
  - Flag parameters
  - Direct manipulation of data structures by multiple classes

Coupling (cont.)

- Good coupling
  - Procedure calls
  - Short argument lists
  - Objects as parameters

- Good coupling improves maintainability
  - Easier to localize errors, modify implementations of an objects, ...
Information Hiding

• Hide decisions likely to change
  – Data representations, algorithmic details, system dependencies

• Black box
  – Input is known
  – Output is predictable
  – Mechanism is unknown

• Improves maintainability
Abstract data types

- Modules (Classes, packages)
  - Encapsulate data structures and their operations
  - Good cohesion
    - implement a single abstraction
  - Good coupling
    - pass abstract objects as parameters
  - Black boxes
    - hide data representations and algorithms

Identifying Concurrency

- Inherent concurrency
  - May involve synchronization
  - Multiple objects receive events at the same time without interacting
  - Example:
    - User may issue commands through control panel at the same time that the sensor is sending status information to the SafeHome system
Determining Concurrent Tasks

- **Thread of control**
  - Path through state diagram with only one active object at any time

- Threads of control are implemented as *tasks*
  - Interdependent objects
  - Examine state diagram to identify objects that can be implemented in a task

Global Resources

- Identify global resources and determine access patterns
- Examples
  - physical units (processors, tape drives)
  - available space (disk, screen, buttons)
  - logical names (object IDs, filenames)
  - access to shared data (database, file)
Boundary Conditions

- Initialization
  - Constants, parameters, global variables, tasks, guardians, class hierarchy
- Termination
  - Release external resources, notify other tasks
- Failure
  - Clean up and log failure info

Identify Trade-off Priorities

- Establish priorities for choosing between incompatible goals
- Implement minimal functionality initially and embellish as appropriate
- Isolate decision points for later evaluation
- Trade efficiency for simplicity, reliability, . . .