

Letters from the Trenches

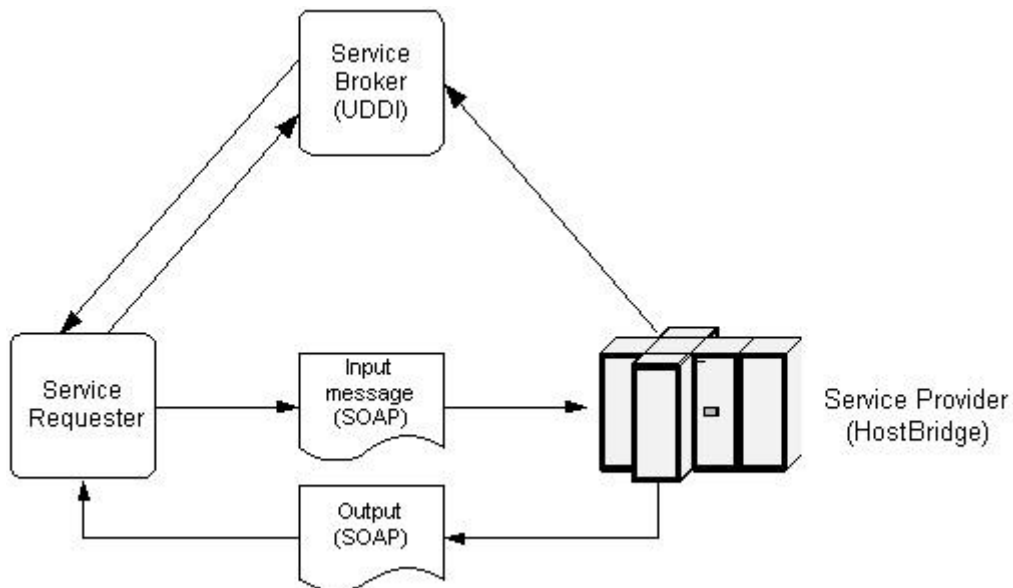


Web Services and CICS

From the HostBridge Archive

Web services are platform-independent interfaces that allow communication with other applications using standards-based Internet technologies, such as HTTP and XML. They provide an opportunity for organizations to reduce the costs and complexities of application integration inside the firewall and open up new possibilities for legacy applications to participate in eBusiness.

The problem with traditional integration is the proliferation of point-to-point data conversions that must change as new applications are integrated or data formats change. The problem gets worse when you add business partners into the integration mix. Web services reduce the costs and complexities of performing data conversions internally and externally between partners. By using standards-based technologies and widely available skill sets, web services allow companies to develop flexible integration solutions that can change as needed.



The diagram above shows three web services: a Provider (HostBridge) that provides the web service, a Requester that uses a web service, and a Broker that finds Providers for Requesters. The following steps are required to find and use a web service. (Subsequent requests do not require steps 1-3.)

1. Upload a WSDL specification to publish the HostBridge web service with a Broker.
2. The Requester queries the Broker for a web service by name or category.
3. The Broker selects a Provider and returns the Provider information to the Requester.
4. The Requester uses the information from the Broker to format and send a SOAP message to the HostBridge.
5. HostBridge returns a SOAP document to the Requester with the CICS data enclosed.

HostBridge is the perfect companion to enable CICS applications as web services. By supporting SOAP, XML, and HTTP, HostBridge makes it possible for applications to transparently invoke CICS transactions within a web services architecture and receive the resulting data as well-formed XML documents. For organizations that want to retain the value of their CICS applications, HostBridge and web services offer an ideal solution.

See our web site for more information on HostBridge and more information on ROI. Or, call us at 1-866-XML-CICS (965-2427).

Tech Notes

This section answers common technical questions.

Q. Can I use HostBridge with CA's Xpeditor?

A. Yes. However, there is a conflict between older versions of Xpeditor (pre v7.4) and programs compiled using the SAS/C compiler. To circumvent this problem, four control statements need to be specified to Xpeditor. These statements instruct Xpeditor to ignore HostBridge and the SAS/C support modules. Contact HostBridge technical support for instructions.

Q. Does HostBridge support the PAGE and ACCUM parameters used by BMS applications?

A. Yes, the latest version of HostBridge supports PAGE and ACCUM in conjunction with an IBM-developed CICS usermod.