

# Software Architecture

Martin Kellogg

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A. Copenhagen

C. Pittsburgh

B. New York City

D. Tokyo

Q2: **TRUE** or **FALSE**: A weakness of architecture diagrams that the author of "How architecture diagrams enable better conversations" identified is that architecture diagrams are too hard to explain to new team members.

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# Software Architecture

Today's agenda:

- **Architecture vs Design**
- Architecture diagrams
- What makes an architecture good
- Architectural styles (with examples)

# Software Architecture: motivation

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- the other is to make it **so complicated** that there are **no obvious deficiencies.**”
  - Tony Hoare

# Software Architecture: motivation

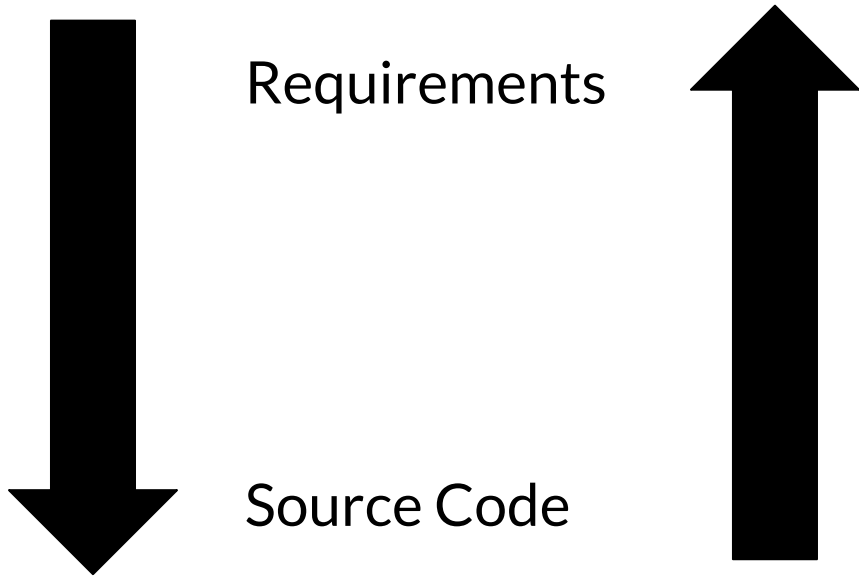
“There are two ways of constructing a software design:

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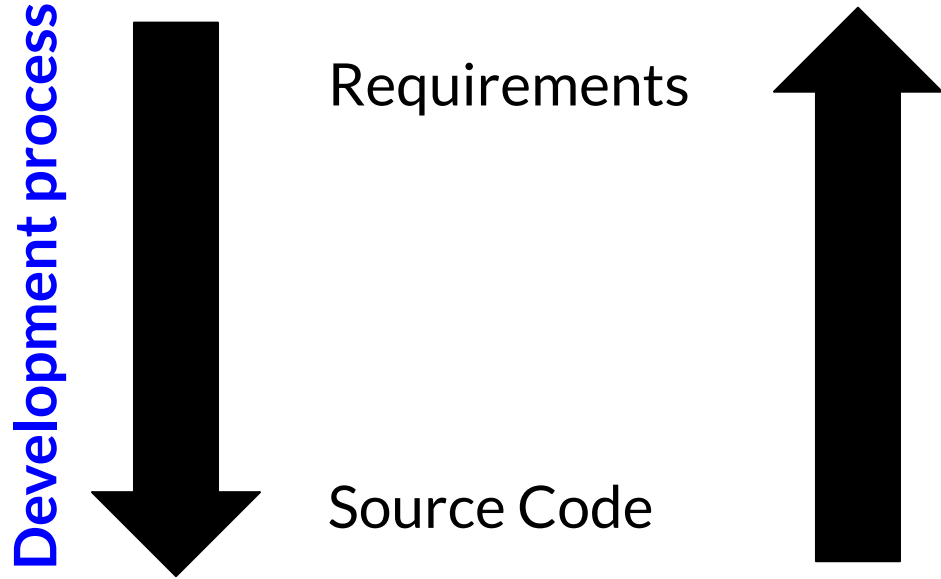
Our goals: **separation of concerns** and **modularity**

# “Architecture” vs “Design”

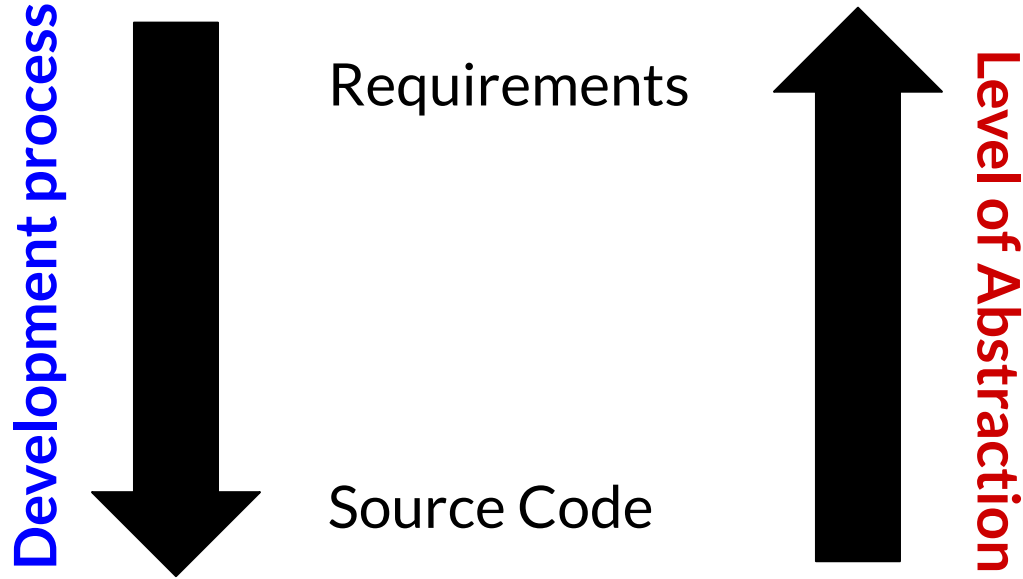
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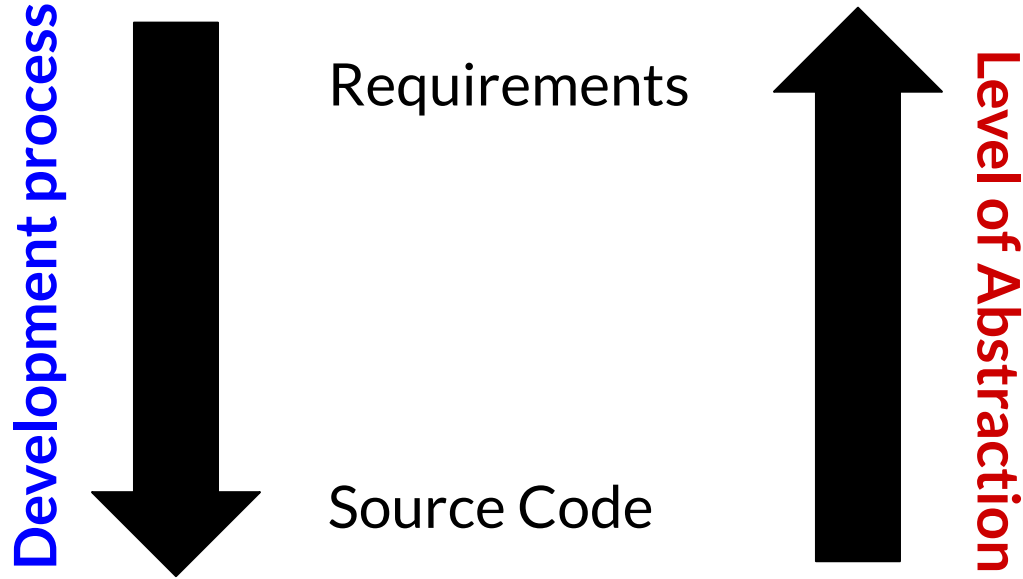
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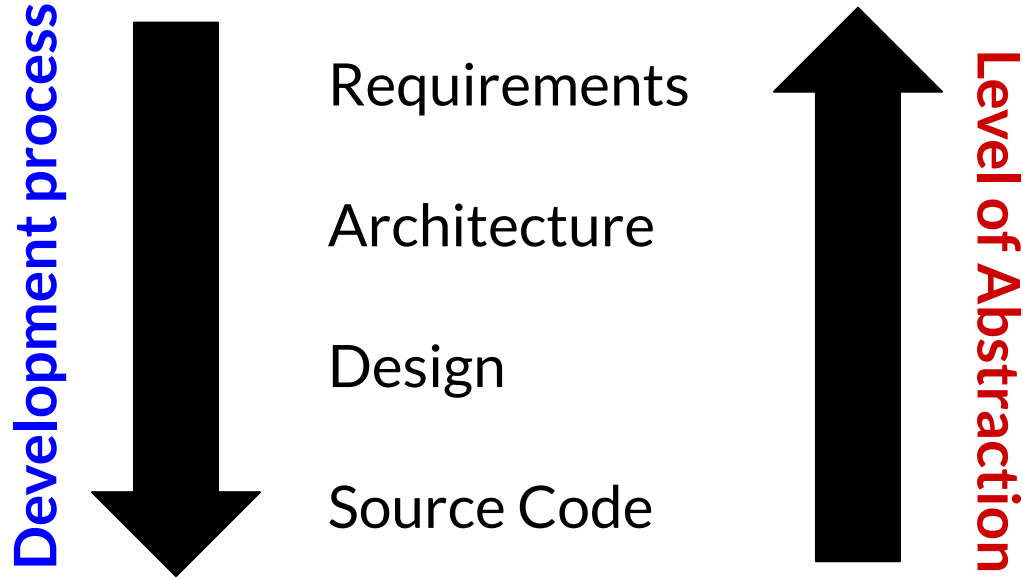
# Levels of abstraction

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  - more abstract = ignore more details
  - which details to ignore depends on your **purpose** (analogy: what abstract values to choose in dataflow analysis?)
- **Implication**: requirements have fewer details than code. Architecture and design are somewhere in the middle. But **where?**

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# “Architecture” vs “Design”



# “Architecture” vs “Design”

Development process



Requirements

Architecture

Design

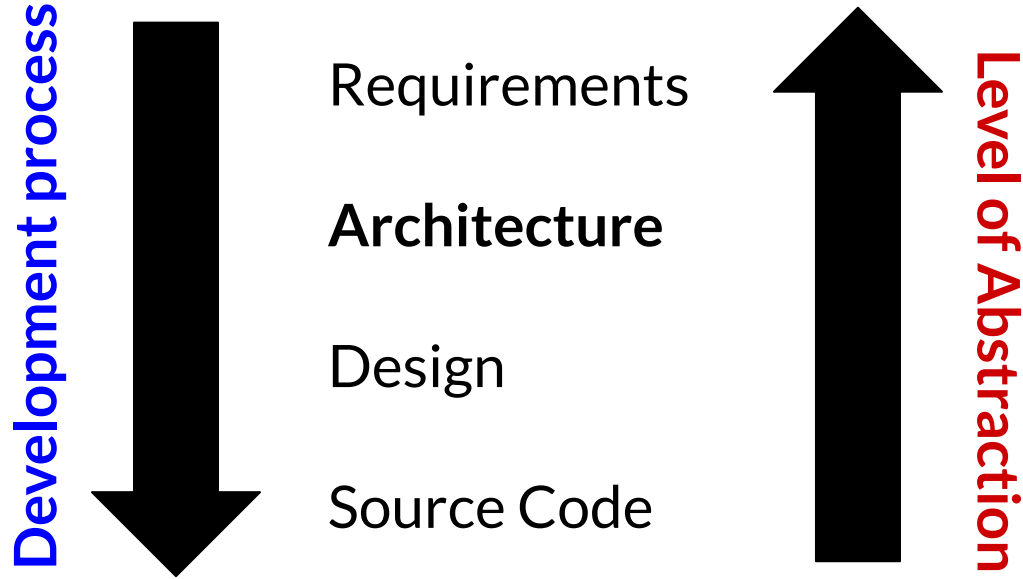
Source Code



Level of Abstraction

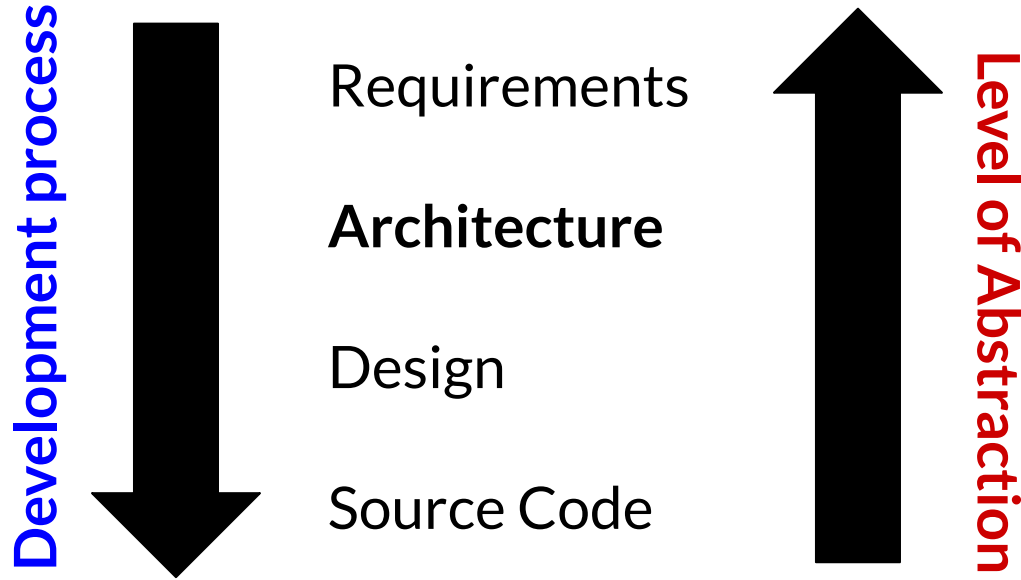
Architecture and design are the “glue” between the **code** you actually write and what your software is **supposed to do**

# “Architecture” vs “Design”





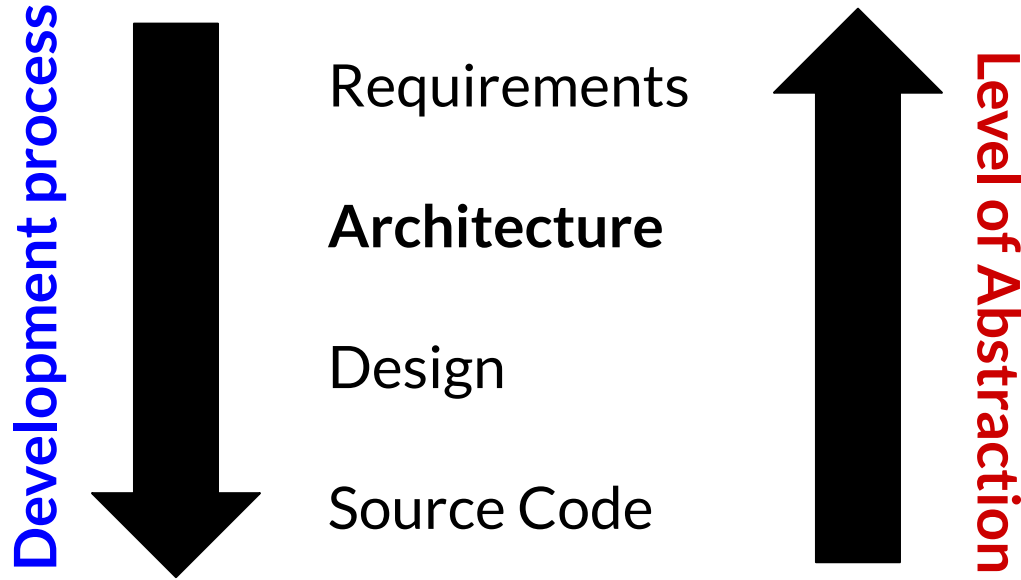
# “Architecture” vs “Design”



Definition: “the **software architecture** of a program or computing system is the structure or structures of the system, which comprise software components, the externally visible properties of those components, and the relationships among them”

[L. Bass, P. Clements and R. Kazman. Software Architecture in Practice. Addison Wesley, 1999, ISBN 0- 201-19930-0.]

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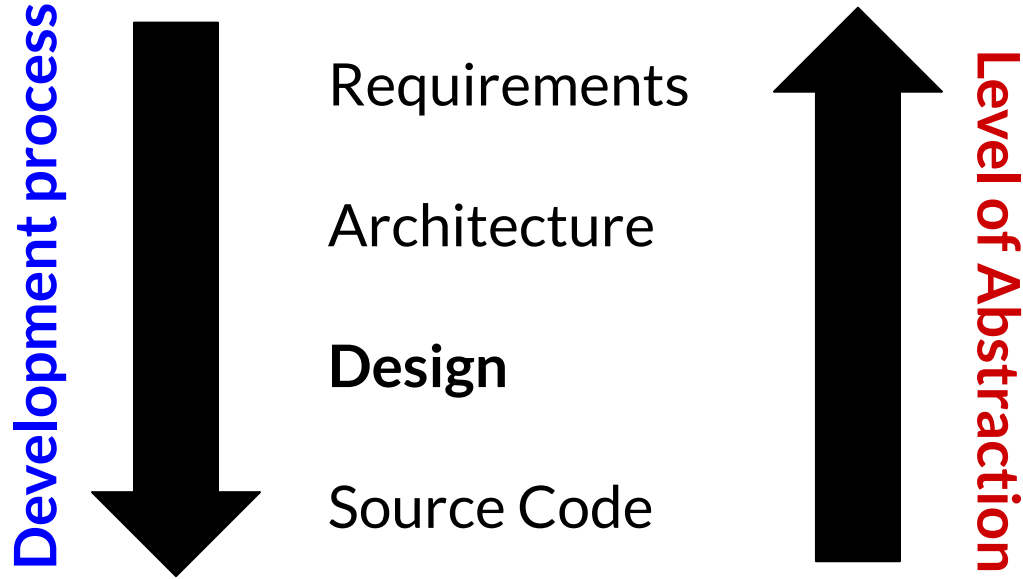


Architecture = **high-level view** of the system

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Level of Abstraction

**Definition:** *software design* is the structure or organization of a particular component of your system

- the phrase “software design” often refers to the **process** of producing a software design
- both “design” and “architecture” are **flexible** terms, used differently by different people

# “Architecture” vs “Design”: summary

- Architecture (what is developed?)
  - High-level view of the overall system:
    - What components do exist?
    - What are the protocols between components?
    - What type of storage etc.?
- Design (how are the components developed?)
  - Considers individual components:
    - Data representation
    - Interfaces, Class hierarchy
    - ...

# “Architecture” vs “Design”: analogy: offices

## “Architecture”



[ UW Gates Center, LMN ]

## “Design”



[ Office design, New York Times ]



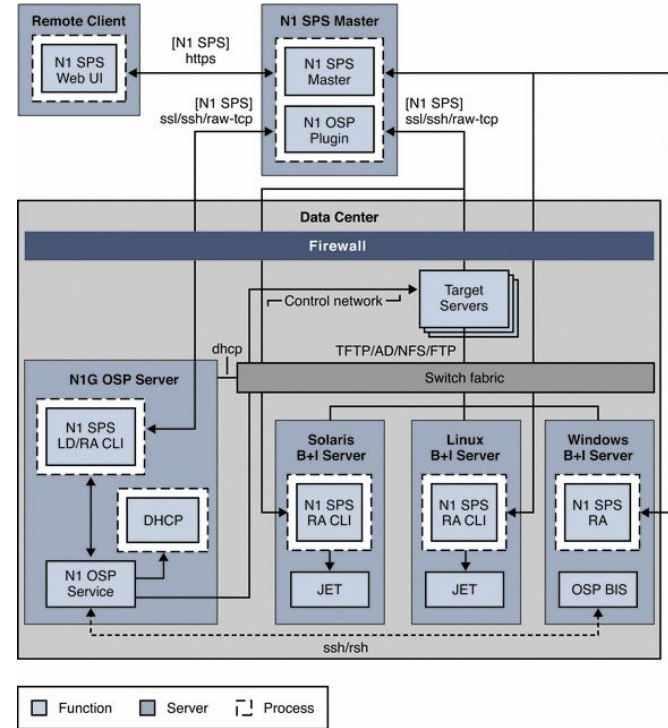
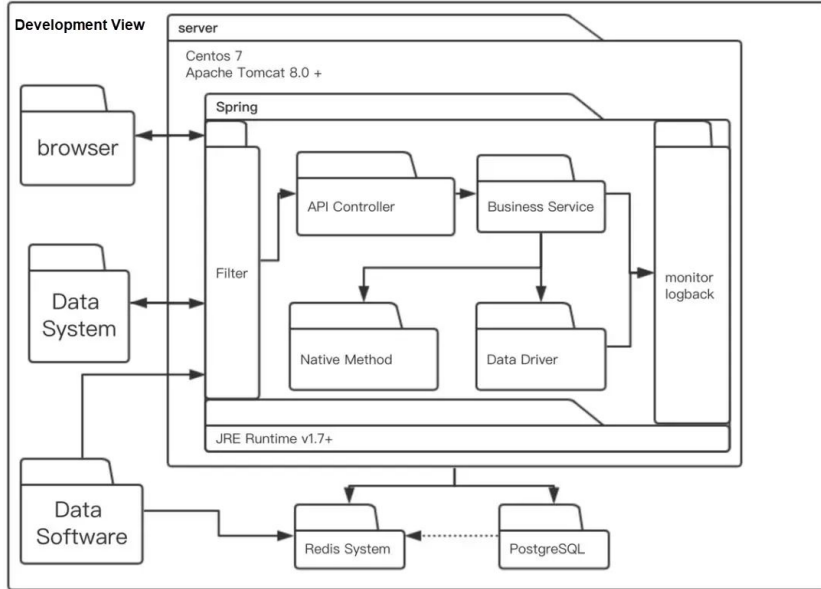
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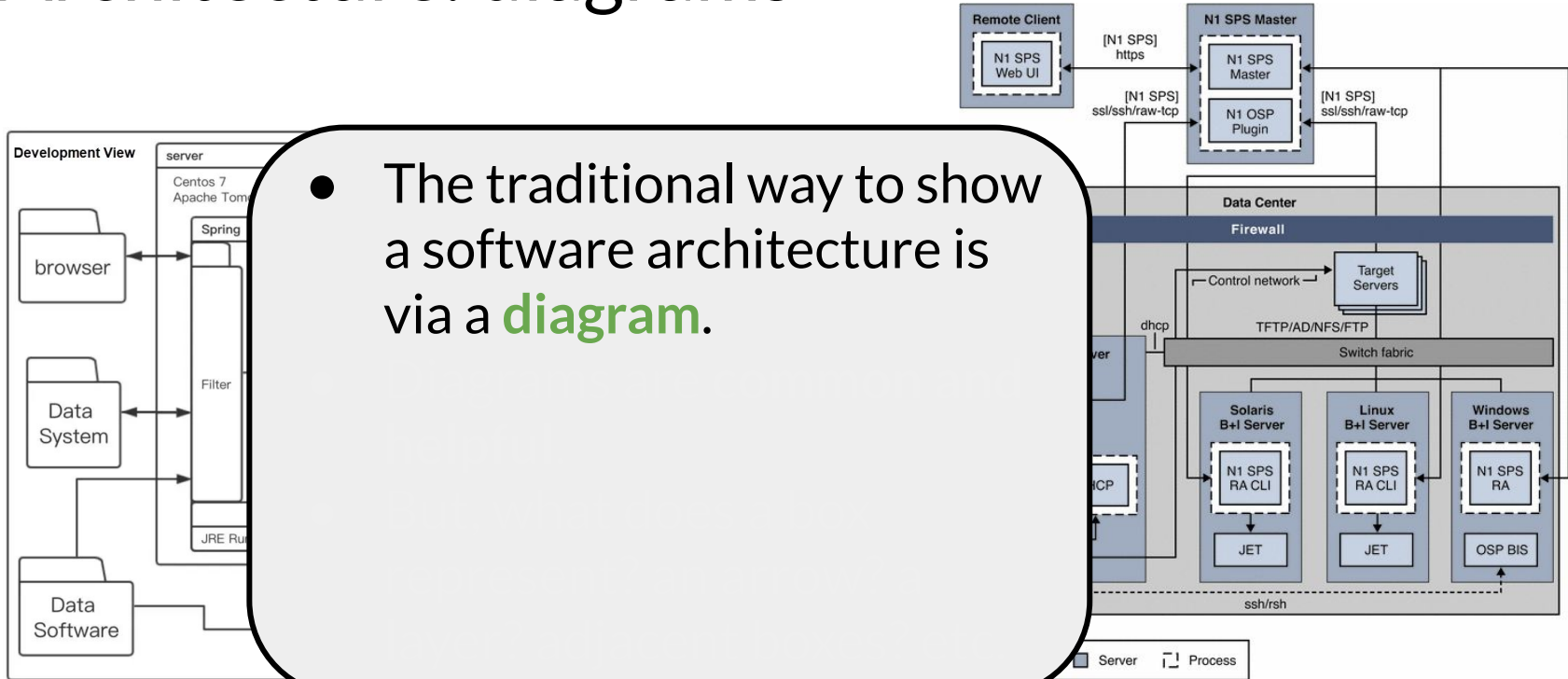
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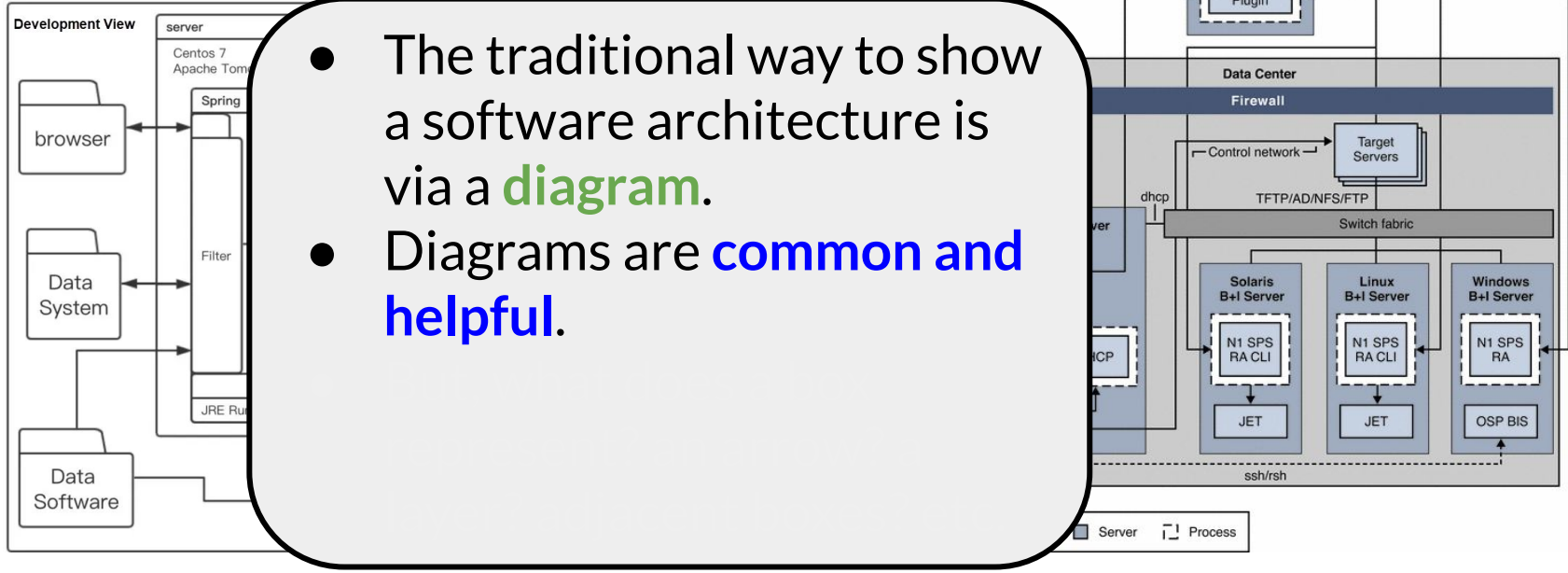


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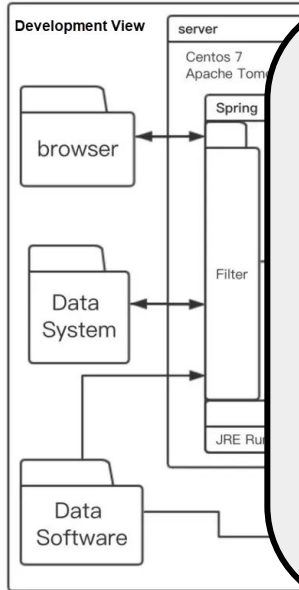
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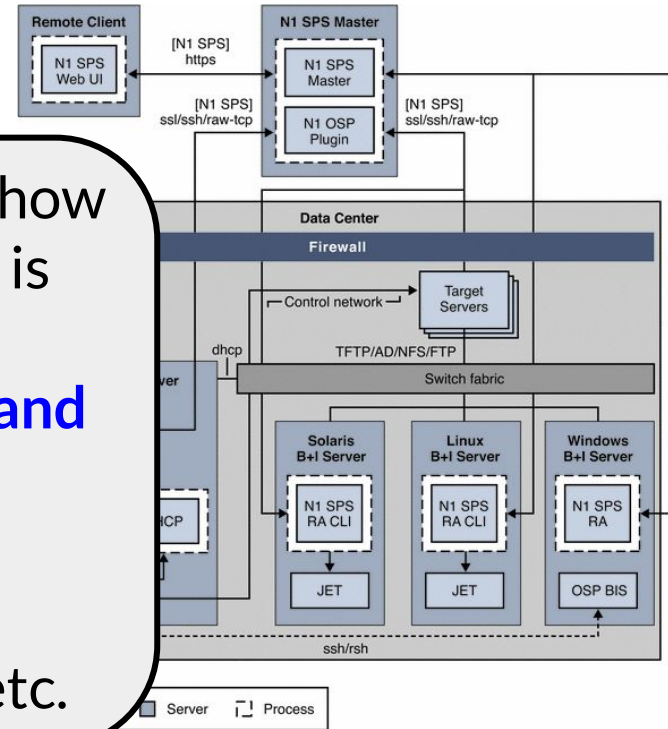
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- The traditional way to show a software architecture is via a **diagram**.
- Diagrams are **common and helpful**.
- But, what does a box represent? an arrow? a layer? adjacent boxes? etc.



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Note: the line between them may be **fuzzy**. For example, a connector might (de)serialize data, but can it perform other, richer computations?

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  - so, it’s not going to be the topic of this lecture
  - if and when you do encounter UML, look up the symbols and map them back to the **concepts** we’re discussing today

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# Properties of a good architecture

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- Satisfies functional and performance requirements
- Manages complexity
- Accommodates future change
- Is concerned with reliability, safety, understandability, compatibility, robustness, etc.
  - but, the emphasis on these may more larger or smaller depending on the domain

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- **Communication**: provides vocabulary; a picture says 1000 words

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Modularity also enables **decomposition**, which:

- decreases size of tasks
- supports independent testing and analysis
- enables separate work assignments
- eases understanding



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- Scale is usually “**strong**” vs “**weak**”
- Tight relationships **improve clarity and understanding**
- A class with good abstraction usually has strong internal cohesion
- **Avoid** classes that have multiple, independent jobs
  - and especially avoid “**god**” classes that control the entire application!
  - such classes almost always have weak cohesion

# Modularity: cohesion: strong or weak?

```
class Employee {  
    public:  
    ...  
    FullName GetName() const;  
    Address GetAddress() const;  
    PhoneNumber GetWorkPhone() const;  
    ...  
    bool IsJobClassificationValid(JobClassification jobClass);  
    bool IsZipCodeValid (Address address);  
    bool IsPhoneNumberValid (PhoneNumber phoneNumber);  
    ...  
    SqlQuery GetQueryToCreateNewEmployee() const;  
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    ...  
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    bool IsJobClassificationValid(JobClassification jobClass);  
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    ...  
    SqlQuery GetQueryToCreateNewEmployee() const;  
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No problem for  
cohesion here






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    bool IsJobClassificationValid(JobClassification jobClass);  
    bool IsZipCodeValid (Address address);  
    bool IsPhoneNumberValid (PhoneNumber phoneNumber);  
    ...  
    SqlQuery GetQueryToCreateNewEmployee() const;  
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```


Probably a cohesion problem here (what does “valid” mean? is it a property of being an Employee?)



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**Definitely a cohesion  
problem here!  
(SQL query  
generation != model  
of employee)**



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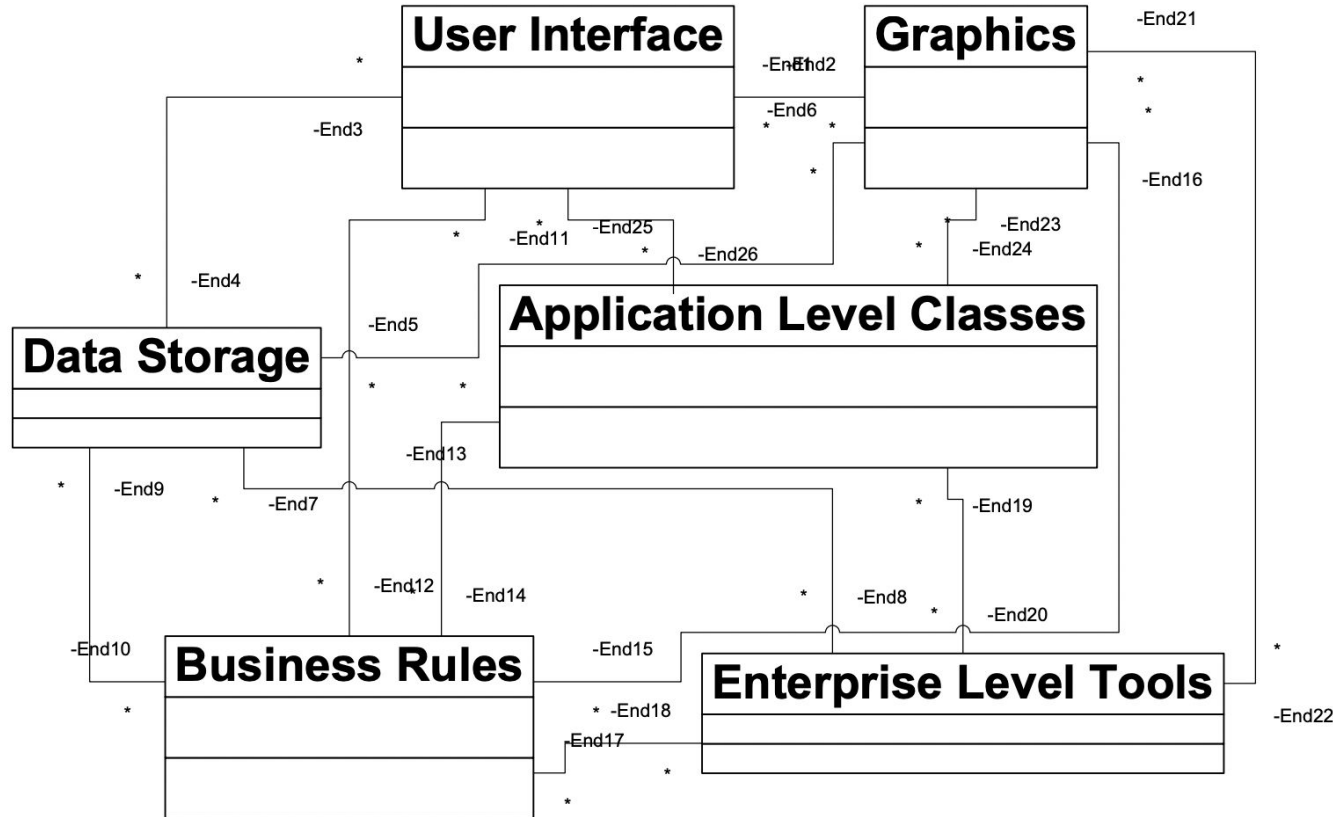
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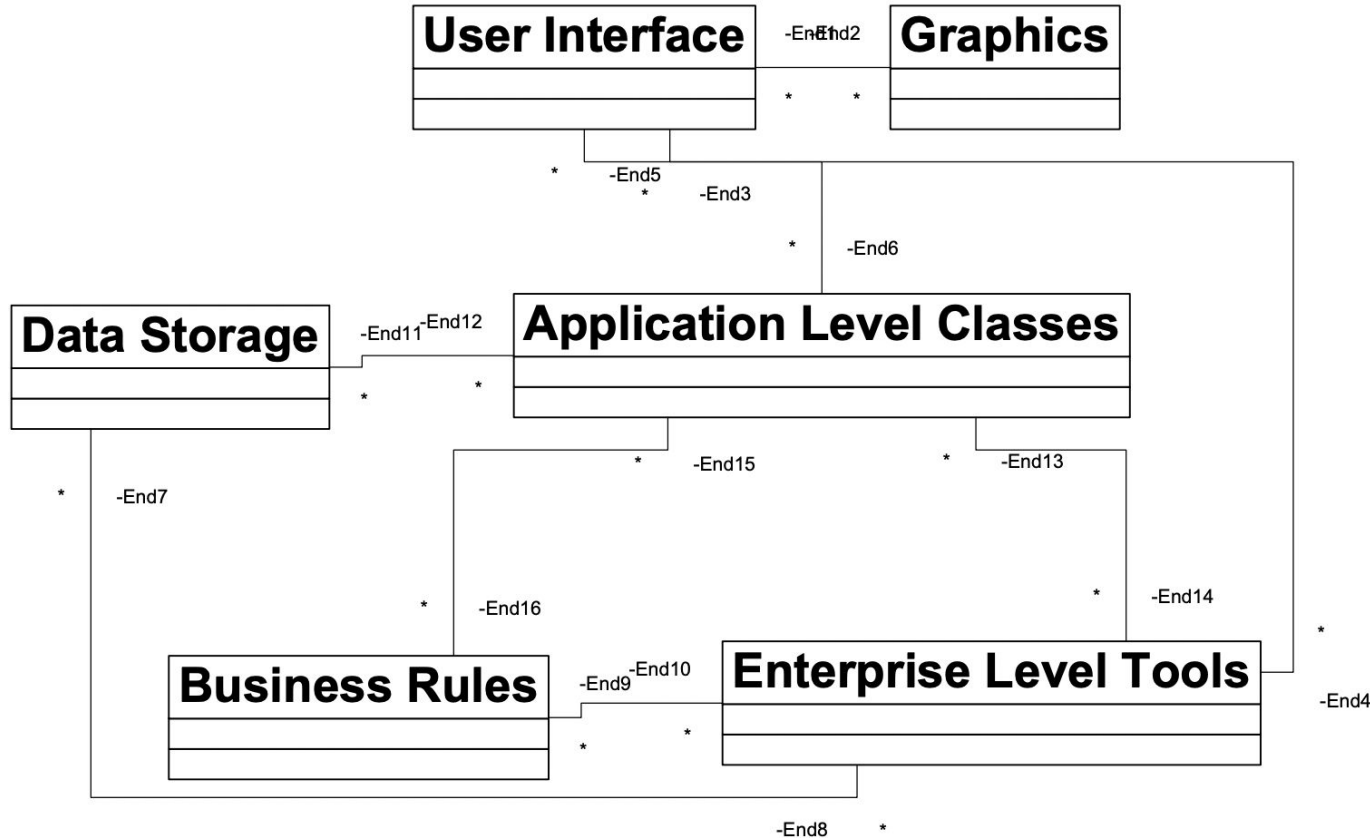
**Definition:** the **coupling** of a software project is the kind and quantity of interconnections among its modules

- scale: “loose” vs “tight”
- modules that are **loosely coupled** (or uncoupled) are **better** than those that are tightly coupled
  - the more tightly coupled two modules are, the harder it is to work with them separately

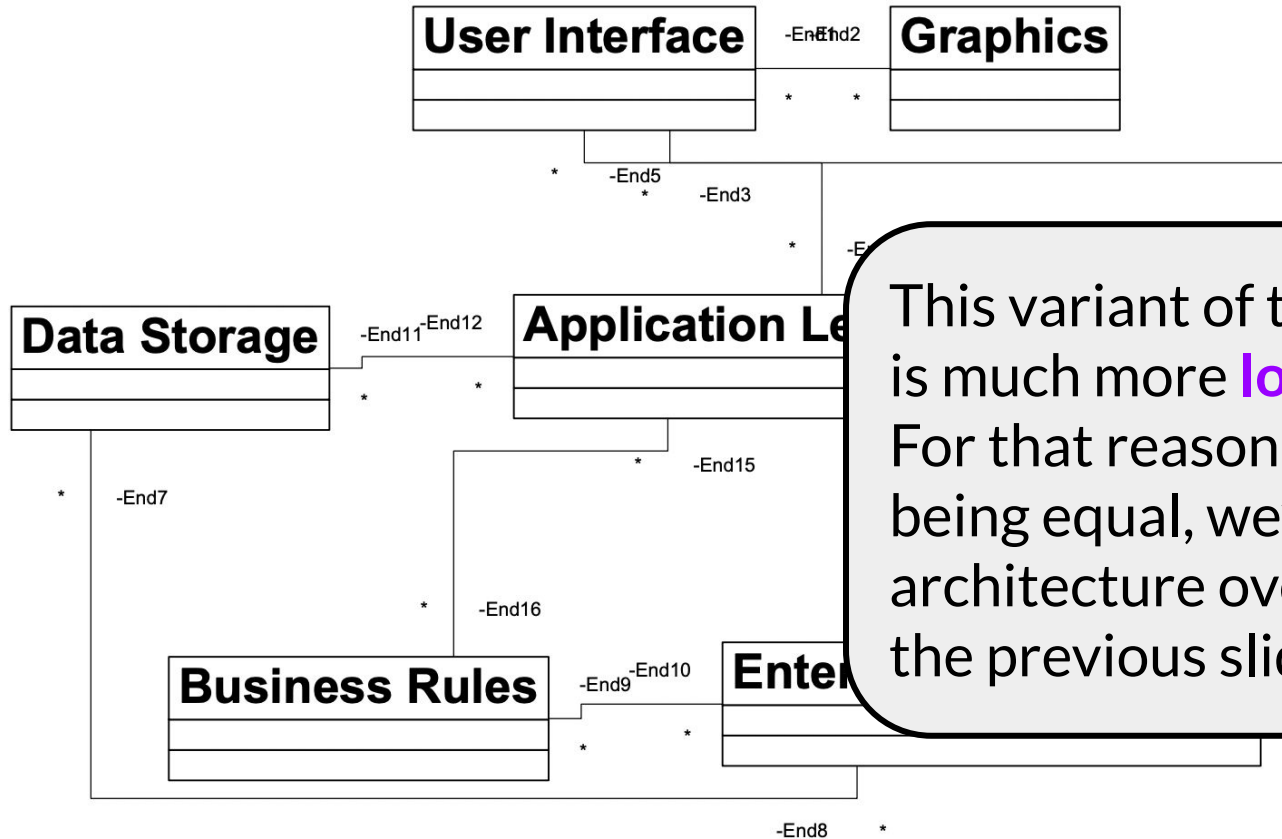
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This variant of the architecture is much more **loosely coupled**. For that reason, all other things being equal, we'd prefer this architecture over the one on the previous slide.



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# Modularity: implementation

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Example: a radio

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# Modularity: implementation

- How do you actually achieve modularity?

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**public interface:** data and behavior that is exposed and executed externally by "clients"

**private implementation:** internal details used to help implement the public interface, not directly accessed

**client:** code that uses your class/subsystem

Example: a radio

- public interface is the speaker, volume buttons, station dial
- private implementation is the guts of the radio: the transistors, capacitors, voltage readings, frequencies, etc. that a user should not see

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- Architecture diagrams
- What makes an architecture good
- **Architectural styles (with examples)**

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  - topological constraints (no cycles, etc.)
  - execution constraints (timing, etc.)



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An architectural style defines

- the **vocabulary** of components
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By choosing a style, one gets all the **known properties** of that style (for any architecture in that style)

- for example: performance, lack of deadlock, ease of making particular classes of changes, etc.

Architecture: styles: pipe and filter

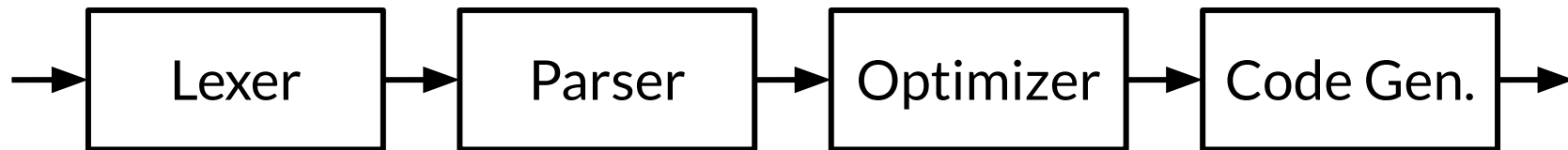
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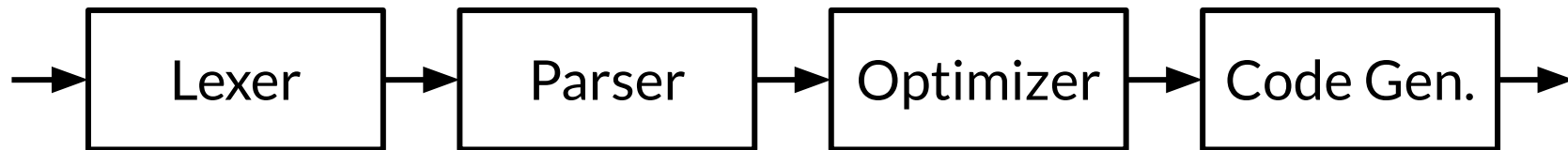
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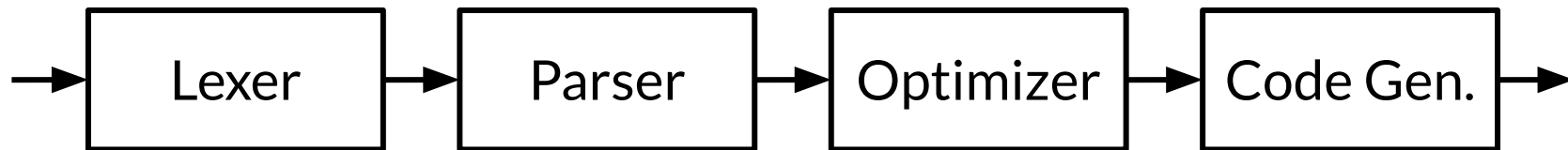


- Constraints:

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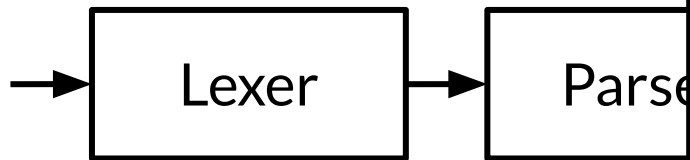


- Constraints:
  - pipes must compute local transformations
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# Architecture: styles: pipe and filter

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If these constraints are violated, it's not a pipe-and-filter architecture anymore!

- you can't necessarily tell this from a picture, either

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# Architecture vs. reality



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- Architecture should warn about **incompatibility between components**, which can be caused by (among other things):
  - mismatched interfaces
  - mismatched operating assumptions (e.g., one component assumes Windows, the other assumes Linux)



# Architecture: styles: other examples

Examples of architectural styles:

- pipe-and-filter
- client-server
- model-view-controller
- microservices

# Architecture: styles: other examples

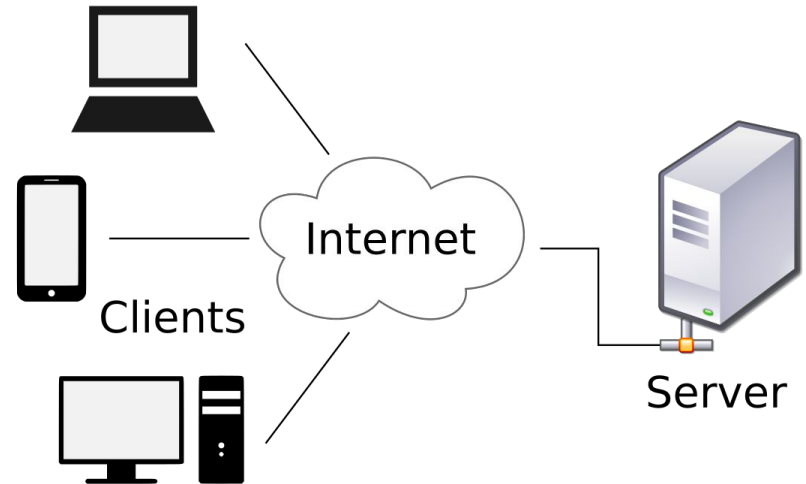
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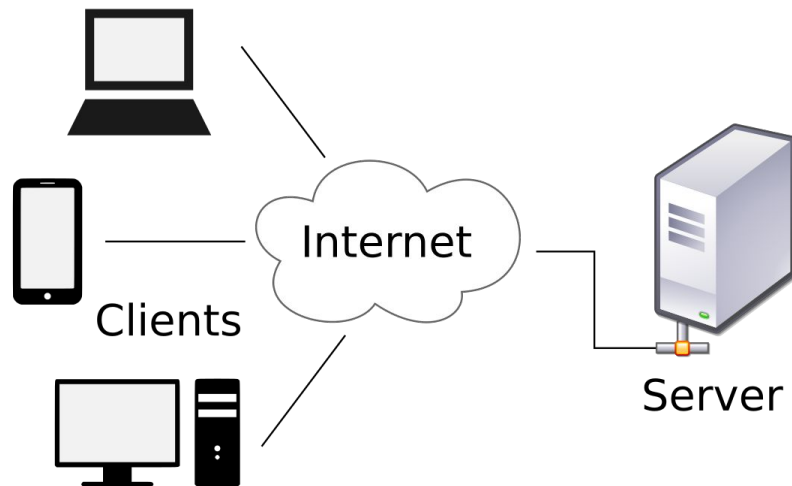
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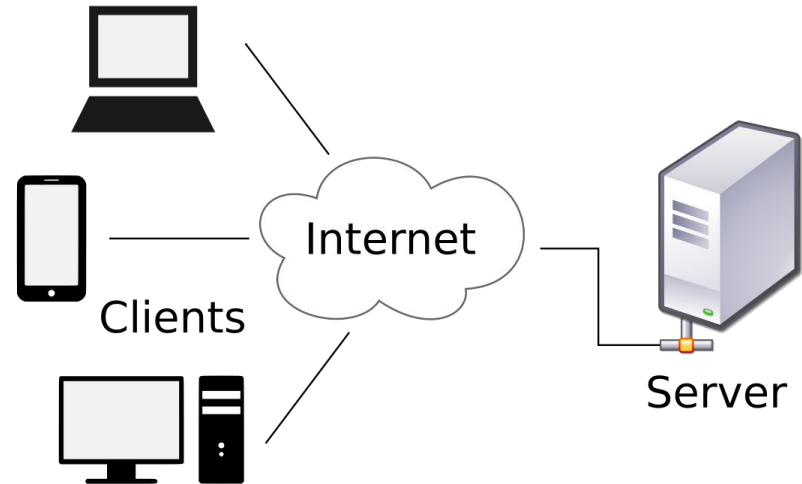
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- network doesn't have to be the internet (client and server can even be on the same machine!)
- example of decomposition: server has its *own architecture* internally, but we don't see it



Architecture: styles: model-view-controller

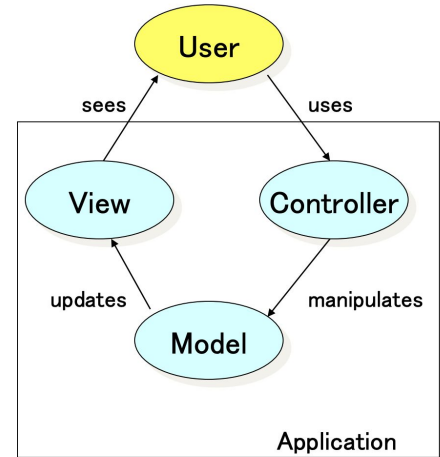
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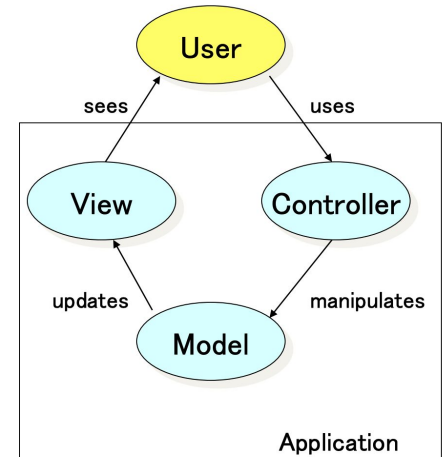
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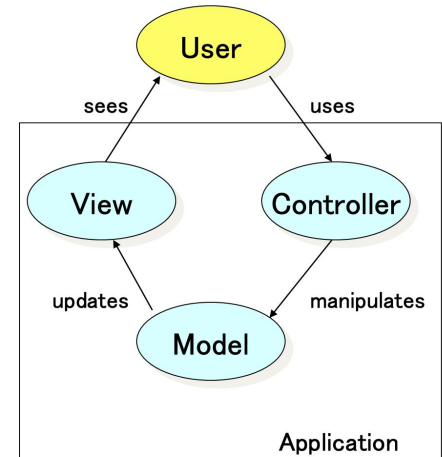
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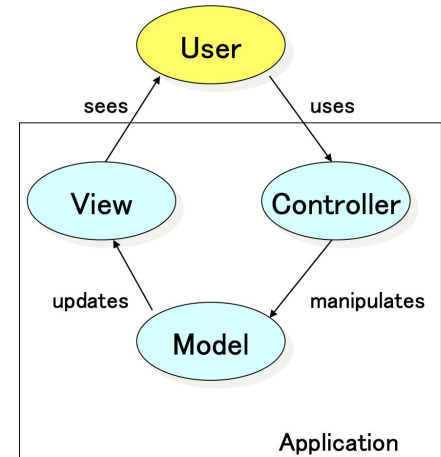
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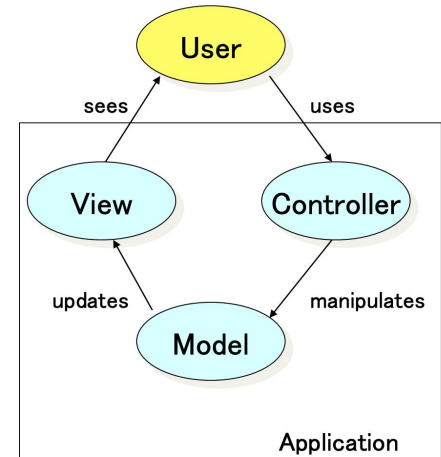


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**Key advantage** of MVC:



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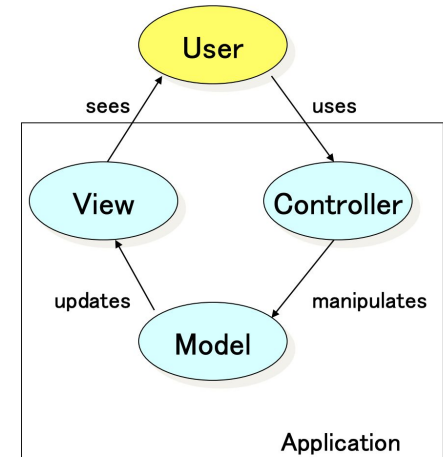
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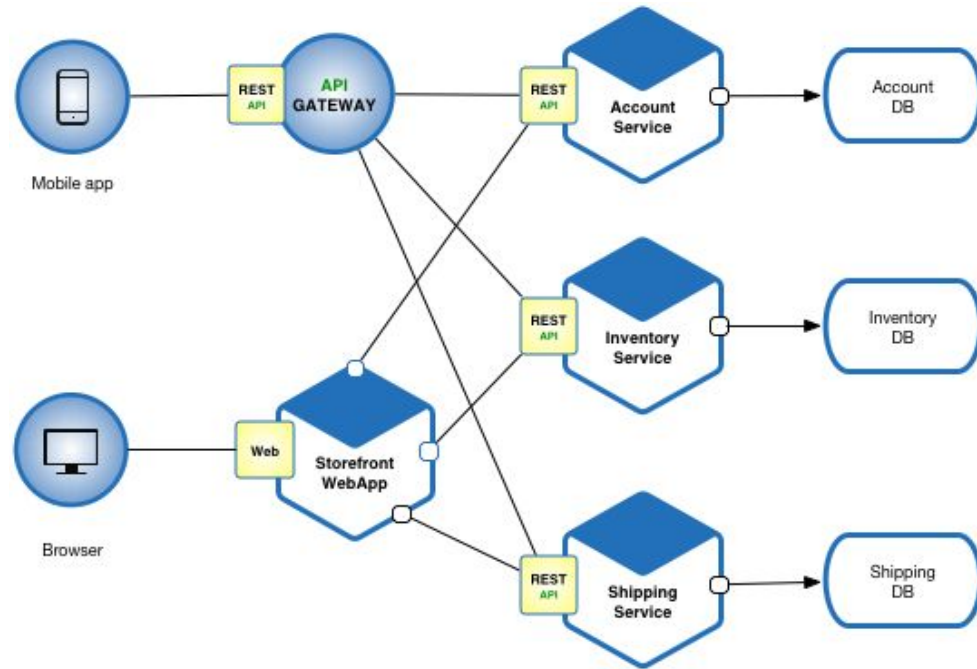
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**Key advantage** of MVC:  
*separates* data representation (Model), visualization/user interface (View), and client interaction (Controller)



Architecture: styles: microservices

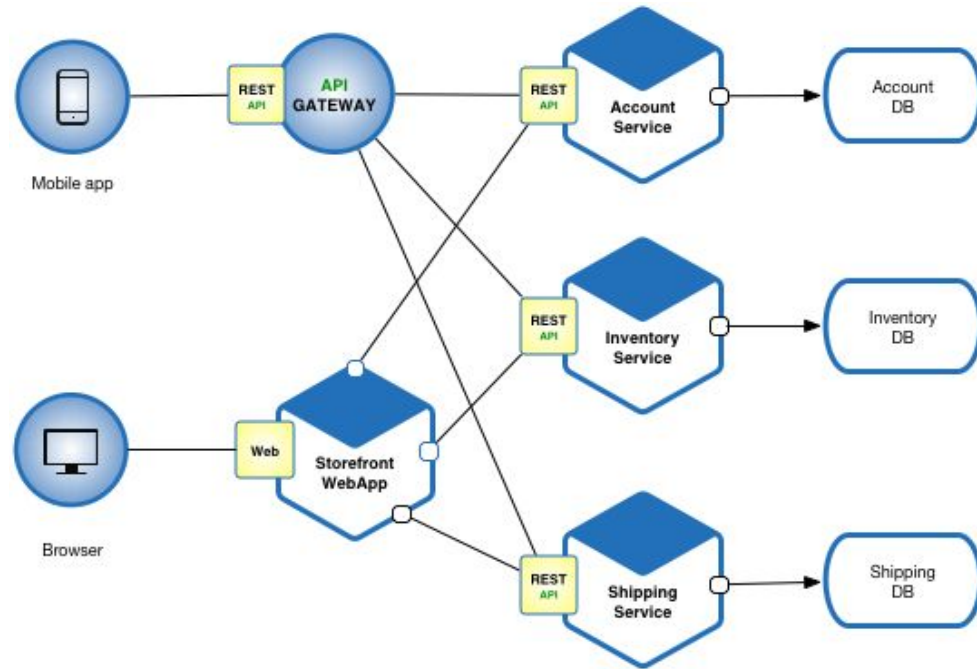
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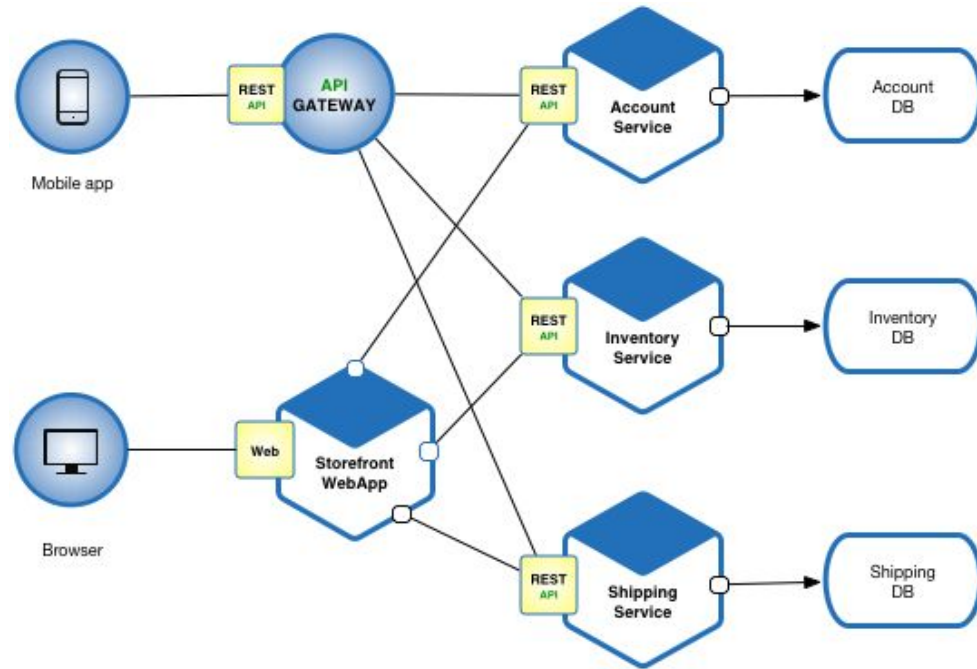
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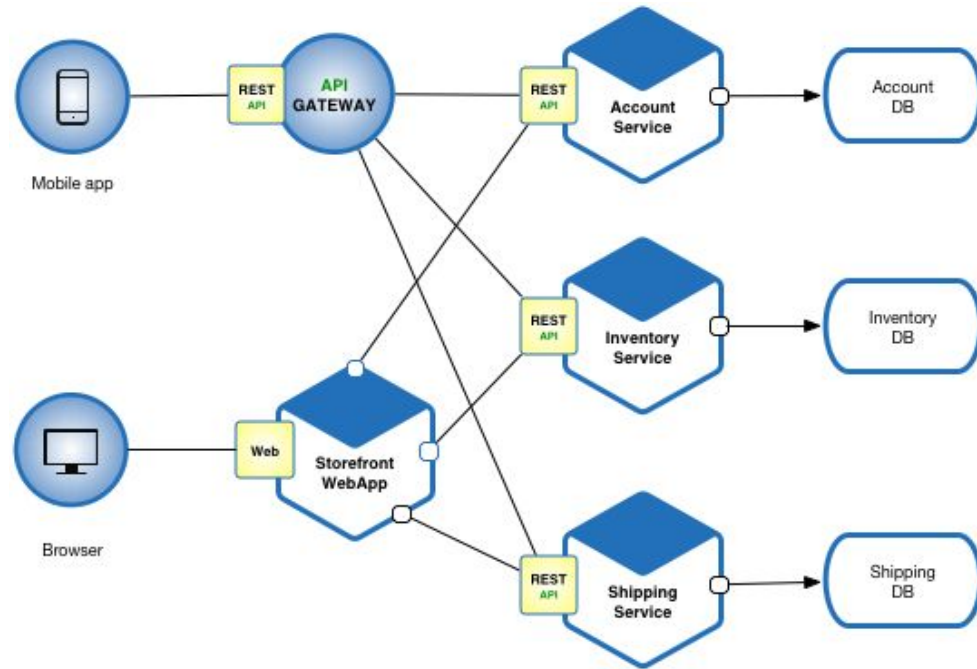
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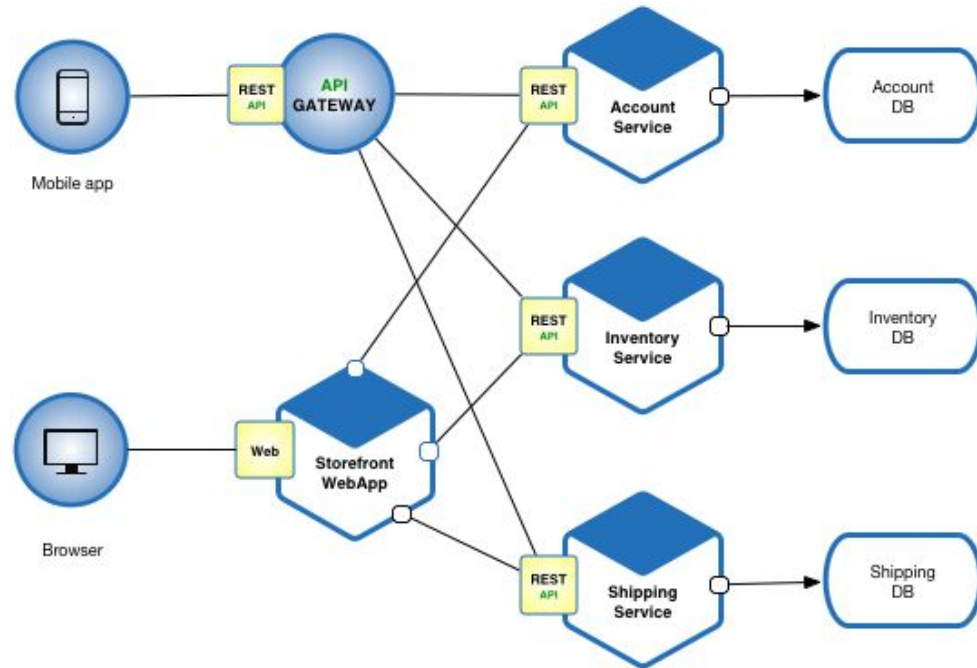
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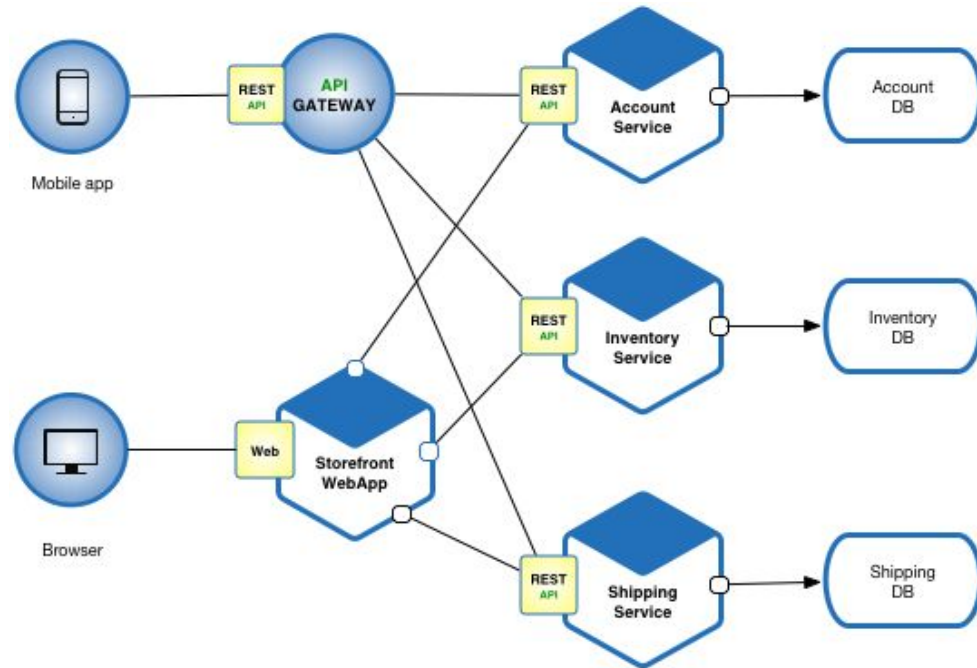
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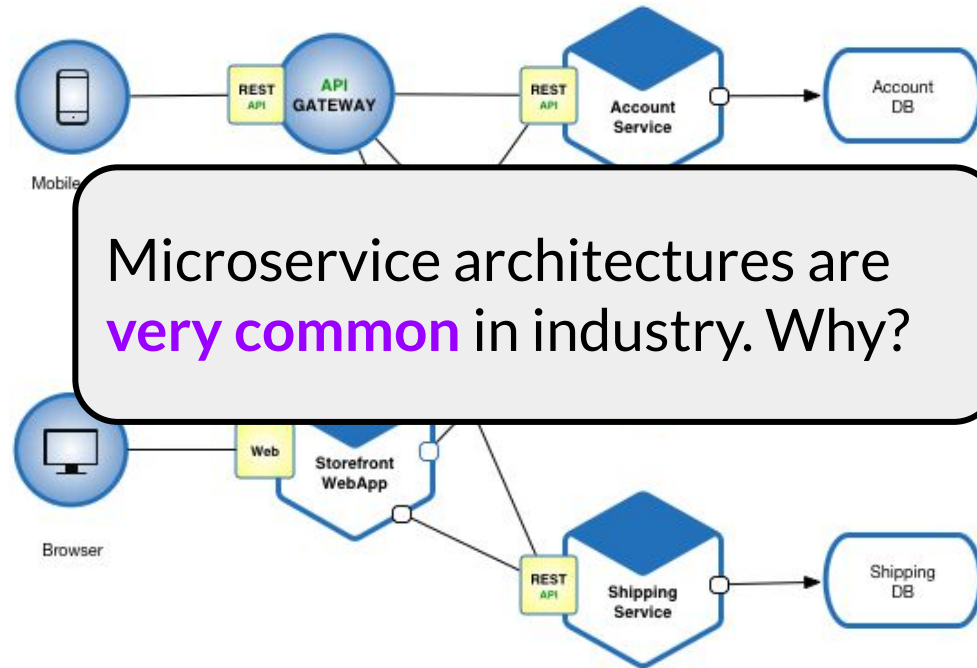
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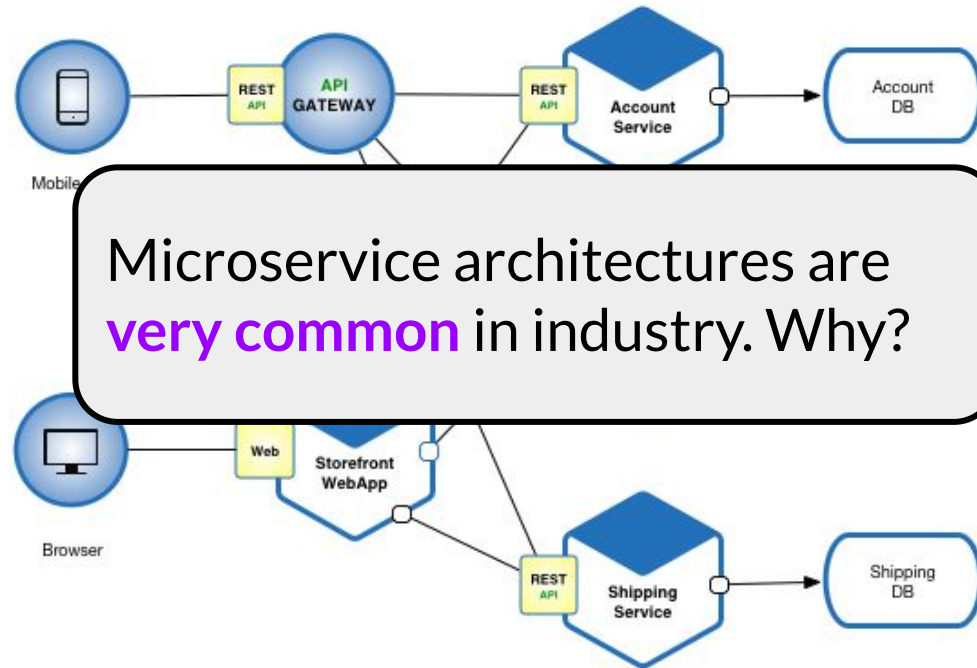
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- **Owned by a small team (makes management easy)**



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  - does communicate overall structure of the system
  - does communicate how components are related
  - does not communicate internal structure of components
    - definitely does not tell you how to implement them!

# Takeaways: architecture

- An architecture is a high-level view of a software system
- Good architectures communicate how the pieces of the system (the components) fit together
- Many architectural styles exist, and you should have a passing familiarity with several
  - common interview question: “on the whiteboard, design a [insert architectural style here] system to do X”
- Architectural styles are a guide, but are not prescriptive
  - real systems usually deviate from their “whiteboard architecture”, but deviations can be explained