

## Guide to SOA Consulting and System Integration Service Providers

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Companies often enlist external help in their journey toward a service-oriented architecture (SOA). We provide a vendor market overview and representative samples of service providers within each category that offer SOA consulting and system integration (C&SI) services to assist clients in preparing their "long list" of potential providers for evaluation and further due diligence.

### Key Findings

- Buyer options for service providers of SOA projects are diverse; they include large global and regional providers; boutique, niche and local providers; offshore-headquartered providers; and professional services arms of software firms.
- The SOA C&SI service market remains fragmented among many providers from a variety of backgrounds; niche specialist providers contend with large firms that offer a broad range of SOA services.
- SOA is a relatively new but rapidly growing approach, and service providers' capabilities and experience are evolving quickly.

### Recommendations

- Use the lists of vendors in this research as a starting point for your initial market scan, and refer to "How to Evaluate External Service Providers for Service-Oriented Architecture Projects" to select the providers best-suited to your project.
- When looking for external help, decide on the category of service providers that most closely aligns to the criteria of your SOA project(s) — local or niche providers, regional or global service providers, or the professional services arm of software companies — ensuring that your current and likely future needs will be well-served by the core capabilities of those providers.
- Consider engaging global or regional service providers with end-to-end capabilities across different countries for an enterprisewide SOA initiative in multinational companies.
- Consider offshore-headquartered service providers for good value and SOA testing capability.
- Consider boutiques for their strong SOA expertise in upfront assessment, design and training.

- Consider the consulting/implementation arms of software firms for largely technical implementations of their own SOA products. Exercise caution in using them for the non-technology-specific-related SOA efforts, and use them only for technology-specific SOA efforts in which their offerings are tightly aligned.

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## ANALYSIS

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Companies continue to be attracted to a service-oriented approach to building software. The traditional way is not keeping up with the speed of the business, and companies are exploring and embracing SOA as a way of making IT more responsive and agile. However, moving toward an SOA environment is hard and the journey long. Many are turning to external service providers (ESPs) to help them adapt their software, people and processes to a service orientation.

Given the range and type of ESPs available, this document seeks to categorize them, recommends when best to consider each type, and gives a sample list of providers within each category.

### 1.0 Vendor Landscape

When looking for external help, the ESP with the best fit is the one that most closely aligns to the criteria of the project at hand. While service providers of all types may claim end-to-end capabilities in helping clients with their SOA journey, their geographic presence and core competencies often suggest their suitability in some types and scope of projects. As a starting point, the SOA project's current and future scopes, as well as the geographic requirements, are good indications of the most suitable type of external help. Yet, Gartner often sees a mix of consultants from vastly differing sizes and core competencies, together with software vendors on the same shortlist for a specific project.

SOA is a relatively new but rapidly growing approach, and service providers' capabilities and experience are evolving quickly. Service providers listed in this document are representative — not exhaustive — and are subject to regular updates. The names are a good start to an initial list of suitable providers. Companies are advised to obtain the latest proof of capabilities from the providers. They do not represent a vendor rating, evaluation, or any form of competitive comparison. (An SOA service MarketScope document that seeks to evaluate the service providers will be forthcoming.) Placement of vendors in the various categories reflects Gartner analysts' understanding of vendors' experience and expertise through vendor briefings or client and market interactions. Service providers listed are representative based on who Gartner analysts see in the market. Local IT services analysts contributed to the listings of firms in their regions.

#### 1.1 Global and Regional Service Providers

Providing end-to-end capabilities, often across several regions, large service providers can offer a one-stop shop for many SOA needs. They can help clients prepare and migrate their IT environment to SOA, as well as implement projects that solve business problems using an SOA approach. They are a good choice for companies that require help for the full complement of plan, design, implement and deployment of SOA solutions, and for an enterprisewide SOA initiative in multinational companies. Most of them have created methodologies, reference architectures and a prebuilt repository of services to accelerate implementation and reduce risks. To varying extents, they stress the key aspects of a successful SOA solution: business value, governance and change management. The better ones are able to provide reasonably consistent methodologies across countries where they operate, and thus help ensure standards and governance are adhered to. Be aware, though, that even the biggest global service providers have gaps in certain countries and fewer capabilities in others. Quality can vary tremendously from one country practice to another. Consistency in SOA capabilities across these larger firms is still evolving. In some countries, they partner with local service providers to fill their gaps. For more information on how to evaluate a service provider for SOA projects, see "How to Evaluate External Service Providers for Service-Oriented Architecture Projects."

Leading SOA service providers are leading consultants and system integrators, and they include:

- Accenture
- Atos Origin
- BearingPoint
- Capgemini
- CSC
- Deloitte
- EDS, an HP company
- Hitachi Consulting
- IBM
- Logica

## 1.2 Offshore-Headquartered Service Providers

The primary business focus of these providers is offshore services. Global delivery is a central value proposition in their go-to-market strategy and, thus, presents a different engagement model. At this time, all the offshore-headquartered service providers with strong SOA capabilities are based out of India.

Offshore-headquartered service providers offer good value, and many of them have a good track record and experience with large SOA projects. They are well-suited to more-sizable technical projects that can be carved out into well-contained and well-defined pieces for offshore development, especially SOA unit and compliance testing, which has been developed into a specialized capability in many of these offshore providers. Most of the offshore-headquartered service providers tend not to be influential in the business suite, so they may not be ideal for SOA projects, such as business case analysis and change management.

Currently, offshore-headquartered providers tend to be strong only in the U.S. and selected countries in Europe, although the biggest ones are expanding rapidly into fast-growing countries in Asia/Pacific.

The following shows a selection of offshore-headquartered service providers that offer SOA project services:

- Cognizant Technology Solutions
- HCL Technologies
- ITC Infotech
- Infosys Technologies
- MindTree
- Satyam Computer Services (see Note 1)
- Tata Consultancy Services

- Torry Harris Business Solutions
- Wipro Technologies

## 1.3 Local and Niche Providers

### 1.3.1 North America

In addition to large service providers, the lure of SOA as the next big thing in technology has attracted a number of small boutique consulting firms to focus on SOA as one of its offerings, and sometimes its only offering.

In North America, boutiques often have principals with very strong SOA expertise, and they often offer very good value. The level of experience and expertise vary markedly from project team to project team, even within the same company, so due diligence is paramount when hiring one of these boutiques. In addition, they are unable to take on large-scale initiatives or initiatives spanning many different locations. They also tend to concentrate their offerings on front-end assessment, strategy, solution design and architecture and training, and they usually have to partner for implementation. Many of them are a good choice if companies are looking into tapping subject matter experts or for coaching their internal teams through their SOA journey. As a Gartner client puts it, "They are good for teaching you how to fish rather than do the fishing for you."

A sample of these boutiques is as follows:

- AgilePath ([www.agile-path.com](http://www.agile-path.com)) — AgilePath is a management and technology consulting firm focused exclusively on SOA and Web services. Headquartered in Newburyport, Massachusetts, and with offices in Herndon, Virginia, AgilePath's solutions and services focus on the following competency areas: strategy and planning, funding, budgeting and acquisition, enterprise governance, enterprise architecture, enablement technology, modeling, and solution technical implementation. Clients include the U.S. Department of Defense, the U.S. Intelligence Community and civilian agencies, as well as Fortune 1000 commercial organizations.
- Anexinet ([www.anexinet.com/solutions/soa.asp](http://www.anexinet.com/solutions/soa.asp)) — Anexinet is a solution integrator, value-added reseller and certified education center that is headquartered in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. SOA offerings include readiness assessment, proof of concept and life cycle development. Clients include an international insurance company.
- Dante Consulting ([www.danteconsulting.com](http://www.danteconsulting.com)) — Dante Consulting is a technology C&SI firm that has delivered large-scale, mission-critical systems and turned around "at risk" projects for its clients. Clients include organizations in the government, financial services, professional services and telecommunications sectors. Dante Consulting provides the road map knowledge and the "know-how" to help an organization use an SOA to define the core services needed to handle its business objectives. Dante Consulting is a privately held firm headquartered in Arlington, Virginia.
- MW2 ([www.mw2consulting.com](http://www.mw2consulting.com)) — Headquartered in Sunnyvale, California, MW2 Consulting seeks to transform traditional system integration services to more-modern techniques and philosophies, such as business service management (BSM), SOA and business process monitoring. MW2 provides clients with SOA specialists, program management, methodologies and SOA accelerators to deliver SOA projects. SOA offerings include SOA Architectural and Process Alignment Assessment, SOA pilot, SOA road map, service delivery that leverages MW2's SOA blueprint for accelerating transformation, and SOA governance in partnership with HP. SOA clients include the

State Board of Administration (SBA, an agency of Florida's state government) and Adobe.

- MomentumSI ([www.momentumsoftware.com](http://www.momentumsoftware.com)) — One of the first companies to offer SOA consulting services, the Austin, Texas-based MomentumSI offers [SOA Strategy & Roadmap Development](#), [SOA Architecture & Infrastructure](#), [SOA Governance Program](#) and [Training and Workshops](#), as well as service-oriented business solutions. MomentumSI provides project-based SOA engagements, as well as SOA subject matter experts to help clients on their SOA initiatives. Clients include Global 2000 clients and small to midsize technology firms.
- Prolifics ([www.prolifics.com](http://www.prolifics.com)) — Based in New York, New York, Prolifics is the largest system integrator specializing in IBM technologies and is a Level 5 WebSphere Partner. It offers end-to-end SOA and portal solutions in all aspects of the full project life cycle, including software procurement, architectural advisement, design, development through deployment, administration and training. SOA clients include New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, Southside Electric Cooperative and Liberty Mutual.
- RCG Information Technology ([www.rcgit.com](http://www.rcgit.com)) — Edison, New Jersey-based RCG IT is an IT professional services firm providing IT strategy and design, application development, testing, integration and management. With more than 400 SOA trained professionals in the United States and Manila, Philippines, its SOA-related solution offerings include: Service Based Blueprinting, Service Oriented Architecture and Component & Application Development. Clients include Walgreens, Aetna, Ann Taylor and General Motors.
- SentientPoint ([www.sentientpoint.com/index.html](http://www.sentientpoint.com/index.html)) — Chicago, Illinois-based SentientPoint provides business process management and SOA training and consulting services to organizations with complex integration needs through skill development and collaborative teamwork. Services include the creation of process-centric business models, standards development, and the design of SOA environments. Typical training and consulting clients include ABN AMRO, TransUnion, GATX, Pfizer and Aramark. SentientPoint also conducts training at Northwestern University and the University of Chicago.
- The SOA Monitor ([www.thesoamonitor.com](http://www.thesoamonitor.com)) — The SOA Monitor is a niche consultancy company focused on helping customers with disciplined adoption of SOA and successful deployment of service-oriented solutions. Discrete service offerings pertain equally to customers seeking to establish a foundation for SOA and to those applying SOA to deliver flexible IT and business solutions. Clients include Motorola, QBE and Railinc.
- SOA Systems ([www.soasystems.com](http://www.soasystems.com)) — Based in Vancouver, British Columbia, SOA Systems provides vendor-neutral SOA training and certification ([www.soaschool.com](http://www.soaschool.com)) and vendor-neutral consulting. It has developed a comprehensive vendor-neutral SOA certification curriculum as part of the company's SOA Certified Professional Program ([www.soacp.com](http://www.soacp.com)). The courses in this program are used by schools and organizations around the world, and examination is available worldwide via Prometric ([www.prometric.com/soacp](http://www.prometric.com/soacp)). The development of the curriculum is overseen by the SOA Education Committee ([www.soacommitee.org](http://www.soacommitee.org)).
- Summa ([www.summa-tech.com](http://www.summa-tech.com)) — Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania-based Summa provides IT consulting services and customized software development for regional businesses

and Global 2000 firms. Summa is a provider of application modernization, SOA and business process management, and portal solutions.

- TasmanAve ([www.tasmanave.com](http://www.tasmanave.com)) — TasmanAve is a consulting and training firm focused on SOA solutions, and it is based in San Jose, California. Services include readiness assessment, business case analysis, architecting solutions, people and process change, as well as a set of SOA-based courses.
- XWebServices ([www.xwebservices.com](http://www.xwebservices.com)) — XWebServices is a boutique SOA consulting firm based in Los Angeles, California. Focusing primarily on financial services, insurance and healthcare, XwebServices' clients include Fortune 500 companies and small and midsize businesses. Additional SOA services provided by the company include SOA training, vendor-agnostic consulting, implementing and hosting of enterprise services bus (ESB), SOA governance and SOA testing solutions, and XML/SOAP/REST Web services-based composite application development and hosting.

### 1.3.2 Europe

Local providers have strong knowledge of local culture and business practices, and sometimes they are more competitively priced than other types of providers. There is no language or cultural barrier, and being locally based, travel expenses are none to minimal, thus saving time and cost. These providers may also have specific expertise in vertical segments (such as forestry in the Nordics), domains (such as business intelligence) or software platforms (such as Tibco), and this expertise may be particularly suited to a local firm's needs. On the flip side, these providers are unable to implement projects that span outside their limited localities. Many of them also have limited focus on certain technologies.

Local providers with SOA capabilities in specific European countries include:

- BusinessGlue ([www.businessglue.de](http://www.businessglue.de)) — BusinessGlue is a management and IT consulting firm, with headquarters in Berlin, Germany. BusinessGlue is focused on delivering operational excellence through IT optimization and improved IT-business alignment. Services include SOA, enterprise architecture and project portfolio management. Clients include Credit Suisse, Winterthur Insurance, Deutsche Post World Net and Halifax Bank of Scotland (HBOS).
- IBSolution ([www.ibsolution.de](http://www.ibsolution.de)) — The SAP consultancy firm and special expertise partner, IBSolution, specializes in the SAP NetWeaver technology platform. IBSolution is headquartered in Baden-Württemberg, Germany.
- itelligence ([www.itelligence.ag](http://www.itelligence.ag)) — Headquartered in Bielefeld, Germany, itelligence is one of the leading international full-service providers for solutions in the SAP environment and a SAP Global Services Partner, SAP Business Partner, SAP Hosting Partner and SAP Special Expertise Partner in all essential fields of technology and solutions, such as portals, CRM, supplier relationship management and SAP NetWeaver.
- Alphacourt ([www.alphacourt.com](http://www.alphacourt.com)) — Alphacourt is a specialist integration consultancy firm headquartered in Swindon, the United Kingdom, and it provides a range of services that improve business performance by simplifying system integration and optimizing business processes. SOA service offerings include assessments and health checks, strategies and road maps, optimization and improvement, training and education, mentoring and support, as well as delivery of IBM's WebSphere technical skills. Clients include Aviva Investors, Electrabel, Lloyds Pharmacy, Signet, HBOS, npower, electrocomponents and World Vision.

- Everware-CBDI ([www.everware-cbdi.com](http://www.everware-cbdi.com) and <http://cbdiforum.com>) — Everware-CBDI is the result of the merger of Everware (a U.S. firm specializing in enterprise architecture, SOA and legacy transformations to SOA) with CBDI Forum (a U.K. firm focused on accelerating the successful adoption of SOA best practices through independent best-practice research, consulting, education and a global knowledge base, under the label of CBDI Service Architecture & Engineering). SOA service offerings include consulting, education and certification in: service portfolio planning, SOA adoption road map planning, center of excellence setup, SOA governance, service provisioning, SOA infrastructure adoption, business modeling for SOA, and legacy modernization. Its intellectual property is offered under license or subscription.
- The Voyant Group ([thevoyantgroup.com](http://thevoyantgroup.com)) — The Voyant Group, based in the United Kingdom, provides consulting, mentoring and educational services that focus on the application of the Model-Driven Architecture for business and technology needs, which includes business process management and enterprise architecture. Voyant offers model-driven SOA to help organizations accelerate transition to this new environment.
- ipt ([www.ipt.ch](http://www.ipt.ch)) — ipt is a Swiss software engineering company with more than 50 IT consultants. Services cover the entire life cycle of software development, using leading-edge technologies and focusing on SOA in particular. Clients include Allianz, Basler, Swiss Re, Swisscom, Credit Suisse, Die Post, Skyguide, Helvetia, DHL, Visana, Winterthur, RUAG and Novartis.
- Indra ([www.indra.es](http://www.indra.es)) — Indra is one of the largest IT companies in Spain and is a leading IT multinational company in Europe and Latin America. Indra built the first SOA center in Spain after reaching an agreement with Oracle to strengthen the joint collaboration between the two companies worldwide and to share their SOA experiences. The center has 200 Indra technology consultants dedicated exclusively to customizing SOA for clients. The center provides services that range from the definition of strategies and analysis, to the selection of tools that best suit the individual needs of each client, in addition to developing prototypes based on different SOA solutions currently on the market and implementing applications based on the Indra i-Builder methodology.

### 1.3.3 Asia/Pacific

As in Europe, local Asia/Pacific providers have strong local knowledge, language, local business practices and cultural compatibility. However, because of the more immature status of SOA in most Asia/Pacific countries, local providers' experience with SOA is limited. The smaller local providers mostly partner with global vendors and assist them in the delivery of SOA projects.

There are several local providers in Asia/Pacific with proven SOA capabilities. The larger ones include:

- KAZ ([www.kaz-group.com](http://www.kaz-group.com)) — Owned by telecommunications company Telstra and based in Australia, KAZ has just committed itself to a new strategy in the IT services market as part of Telstra. One of its three newly defined focus areas by type of service is application development work using SOA. It has a heritage in this kind of work via a much-earlier local acquisition. One of its specialties is network optimization of applications. It also offers integration and risk services related to SOA.
- Oakton ([www.oakton.com.au](http://www.oakton.com.au)) — Oakton is one of Australia's leading technology and business consulting service companies. It offers IT strategy, solution design, custom development, packaged software implementation, information management and system

integration solutions. Its SOA Enablement offering pulls together architectural services for the design, development and deployment of the SOA platform.

- SMS Management & Technology ([www.smsmt.com](http://www.smsmt.com)) — SMS Management & Technology is Australia's largest management service company, and it offers consulting, technology and enterprise solutions that include SOA.
- UXC ([uxc.com.au](http://uxc.com.au)) — Growing aggressively by acquisition of smaller but established services brands, Australian-based UXC provides solutions and services to midsize and large organizations and governments across Australia and New Zealand, and it offers SOA-related consulting and development through the following two business units: Red Rock Consulting ([www.redrock.net.au](http://www.redrock.net.au); Oracle SOA capabilities) and Oxygen Business Solutions ([www.oxygenforbusiness.com](http://www.oxygenforbusiness.com); SAP SOA capabilities).
- Gen-i ([www.gen-i.co.nz](http://www.gen-i.co.nz)) — New Zealand-based Gen-i is the information and communication technology (ICT) services arm of Telecom New Zealand. It embeds SOA practices within its application development and integration offerings. Gen-i was a finalist in the IBM World Beacon Awards in 2006 (international) for SOA and a finalist in the IBM Business Partner Awards in 2006 (New Zealand) for SOA. It has about 100 SOA professionals, and clients include Aon Insurance and Vero Insurance.
- NCS ([www.ncs.com.sg](http://www.ncs.com.sg)) — NCS is a leading vendor-independent IT and communications engineering solution provider in Singapore, with some 4,000 staff in the Asia/Pacific and the Middle East regions. It offers SOA under its ICT Transformation services.

#### 1.4 Consulting and Implementation Arms of SOA Software Companies

The majority of software companies have a consulting and implementation arm, which not only provides a source of revenue but also allows the software firm to understand client implementation issues and enables the firm to enhance its client relationships. Clients, in turn, have asked software firms for help in implementation so as to increase their vendor's responsibility in making the software work as promised.

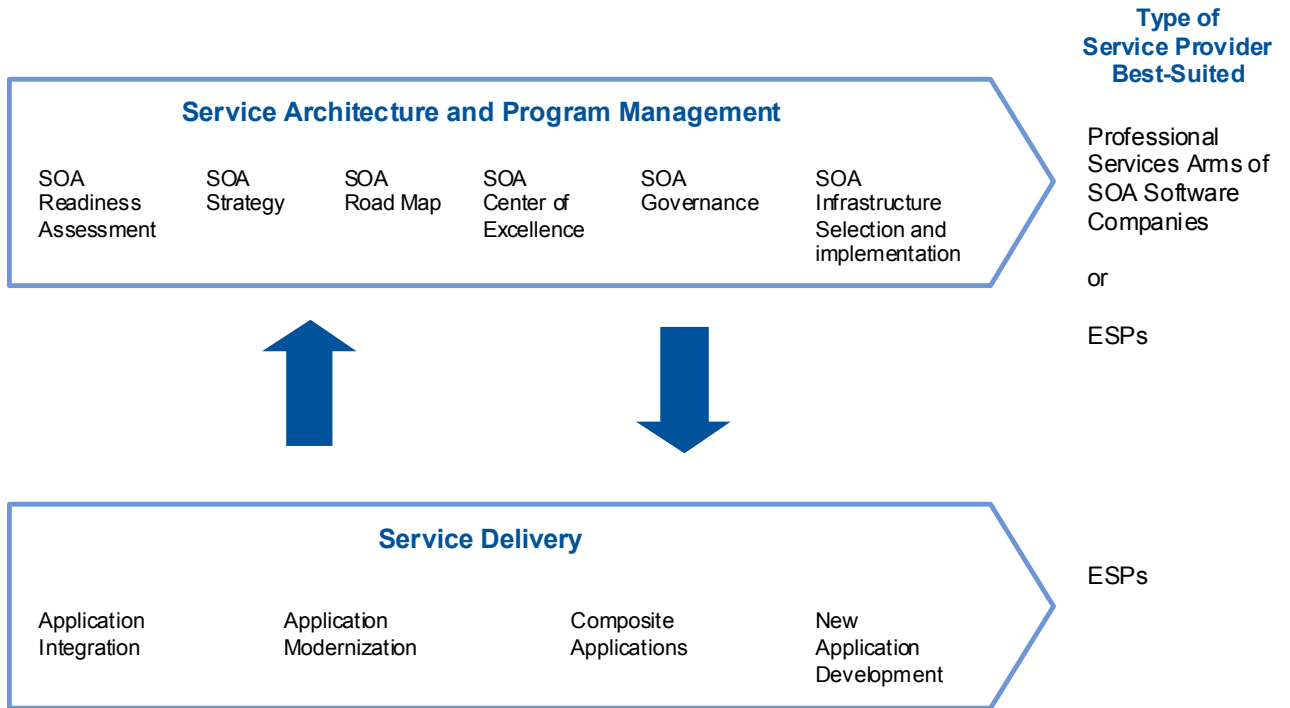
There are several advantages to having the consulting and implementation arms of software companies implement an SOA solution. The software firms know their software and have a vested interest in making it work. However, their capabilities are typically narrower than a service provider's capabilities. A software firm's expertise is usually confined to its own software, not necessarily the wide-ranging business problem that the SOA project is meant to solve. If the SOA project involves deep expertise in multiapplication, multivendor scenarios or deep business process knowledge and strong project management capability, a service provider may be a better fit. In today's market, it is fairly common to see software vendors and service providers working together to help a client achieve its implementation objectives, with the software company taking ownership of the technical implementation of its product and the service provider supplying the business process, project management, change management and auxiliary capabilities.

That said, many software companies are "beefing up" on their consulting and implementation capabilities surrounding SOA implementation. Because SOA is not a product but an alternative approach to software development, software firms are finding that they need to provide the requisite services around SOA assessment, SOA strategy, SOA vision and road map, SOA business case and training — services that support the needs of clients before they can purchase software to support their SOA journey.

Figure 1 shows the two tracks of SOA work commonly undertaken. In general, help for "Service Architecture and Program Management" can be found in any category of providers — both ESPs

and software firms (except the SOA software selection, which should come from an objective party). "Service Delivery," however, typically involves solving business problems. Here, service providers with deep understanding of business issues, as well as with the key technical, functional and industry knowledge relating to that project, are more appropriate sources of help.

**Figure 1. Two Tracks of SOA Work and Type of Service Provider**



Source: Gartner (January 2009)

Large software firms with SOA consulting and implementation capabilities include:

- IBM
- Oracle/BEA
- Progress Software
- SAP
- Software AG
- Tibco

## 2.0 Conclusions

Gartner recommends that enterprises use these lists as a starting point to scan the market choices and begin formulating their "long list" of potential providers for evaluation and further due diligence. The key evaluation criteria defined by the enterprise organization will be the determinants of how an enterprise can convert the long list to a more-manageable shortlist of providers for evaluation and potential issuance of an RFP that can respond to a buyer's needs,

scope and requirements. For more information on evaluating service providers for SOA projects, see "How to Evaluate External Service Providers for Service-Oriented Architecture Projects."

## **RECOMMENDED READING**

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"How to Evaluate External Service Providers for Service-Oriented Architecture Projects"

"User Survey Analysis: ESPs Must Help Build Business Cases and Transfer Knowledge to Win SOA Projects"

### **Note 1**

#### **Offshore-Headquartered Service Providers**

We have included Satyam because it has SOA capabilities, but due to its recent accounting fraud scandal, clients are advised to exercise extreme caution when considering Satyam.

## **REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS**

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### **Corporate Headquarters**

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