Component/Object to Relational Database Bridging: A Leader’s Guide to Bridging the Chasm Between Database and Software Engineers

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This tutorial will attempt to provide an understanding of the issues that separate object-oriented software and relational database technologies. It will also provide guidelines on how to develop a process and a team of system "generalists" (rather than die-hard object and/or database engineers) for producing well-designed and flexible software and database systems.

Object and component technologies are now considered mainstream in the development of software. Relational database systems are not just mainstream, but a technology that has been providing support and entrenching itself for over thirty years. Yet issues and problems of using these two technologies together continue to arise and interrupt (and sometimes halt) information system development.

While much has been proposed and provided on how to technically map between objects/components and database tables, the real gap lies far beyond these simple mapping techniques. The real chasm lies between the differences in fundamental processes, design views, communications, and foresightedness on the part of the participants involved in the development of systems.

This tutorial will review the perspectives of object and database engineers in software and database systems development. It will explore the nature of the "entricity" battles that often occur, and it will provide guidelines to those managing or working with these engineers on how to effectively negotiate this challenge to produce good software and information systems. Discussion will center on establishing common goals, developing object/relational communications, setting up an effective development process and dealing with inevitable misunderstandings and required compromises.

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