

Dynamics-NAV Web Services Overview

'Technical Preview Session'

Introductions

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- Introduction
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- Dynamics-NAV 2009 !

What are WebServices?

- ❑ Web services are **application components**
- ❑ Web services communicate using **open protocols**
- ❑ Web services are **self-contained** and **self-describing**
- ❑ Web services can be **discovered** using **UDDI**
- ❑ Web services can be **used** by other **applications**
- ❑ **XML** is the basis for Web services

How Does it Work?

- The basic Web services platform is **XML + HTTP**.
- The **HTTP** protocol is the most used Internet protocol.
- **XML** provides a language which can be used between different platforms and programming languages and still express complex messages and functions.
- Web services platform elements
 - **SOAP** (Simple Object Access Protocol)
 - **UDDI** (Universal Description, Discovery and Integration)
 - **WSDL** (Web Services Description Language)

Why Webservices ?

- A few years ago Web services were **not fast** enough to be interesting.
 - Thanks to the major IT development the last few years, most people and companies have **broadband** connection and use the web **more and more**.
- **Interoperability** has highest priority.
 - When all major platforms could access the Web using Web browsers, different platforms could **interact**.
 - For these platforms to work together, **Web applications** were developed.
 - Web applications are **simple** applications run on the web.
 - These are built around the **Web browser** standards and can mostly be used by any browser on any platform.

Why Webservices ?

- **Web services** take Web applications to the **next level**.
 - Using Web services your application can **publish** its function(s) or message(s) to the **rest** of the **world**.
 - Web services uses **XML** to code and decode your **data** and **SOAP** to **transport** it using open protocols.
 - With Web services your accounting departments Win X servers billing system can connect with your IT suppliers Y server.

Purpose of WebServices ?

- Web services have **two** types of **uses**.
- **Reusable** application **components**
 - There are things different applications need very often. So why make these over and over again?
 - Web services can offer **application components** like currency conversion, weather reports or even language translation as **services**.
 - Ideally, there will only be **one type** of each application component, and **anyone can use it** in their application.
- **Connect** existing **software**
 - Web services help solve the **interoperability** problem by giving different applications a way to **link** their data.
 - Using Web services you can **exchange data** between different **applications** and different **platforms**.

WebService Technology ?

- Web Services have **three** basic platform **elements**.
- These are called **SOAP**, **WSDL** and **UDDI**.

What is SOAP?

- The basic Web services platform is **XML** plus **HTTP**.
 - SOAP stands for **S**imple **O**bject **A**ccess **P**rotocol
 - SOAP is a **communication** protocol
 - SOAP is for communication between **applications**
 - SOAP is a **format** for sending messages
 - SOAP is designed to **communicate** via Internet
 - SOAP is **platform independent**
 - SOAP is **language independent**
 - SOAP is based on **XML**
 - SOAP is **simple** and **extensible**
 - SOAP allows you to get around **firewalls**
 - SOAP will be developed as a **W3C standard**

What is WSDL?

- WSDL is an XML-based language for **describing** Web services and how to **access** them.
 - WSDL stands for **Web Services Description Language**
 - WSDL is written in **XML**
 - WSDL is an XML **document**
 - WSDL is used to **describe** Web services
 - WSDL is also used to **locate** Web services
 - WSDL is not yet a W3C standard

What is UDDI?

- UDDI is a **directory service** where businesses can **register** and **search** for Web services.
 - UDDI stands for **U**niversal **D**escription, **D**iscovery and **I**ntegration
 - UDDI is a **directory** for storing **information** about web services
 - UDDI is a **directory** of web service **interfaces** described by WSDL
 - UDDI communicates via **SOAP**
 - UDDI is **built into** the Microsoft **.NET** platform

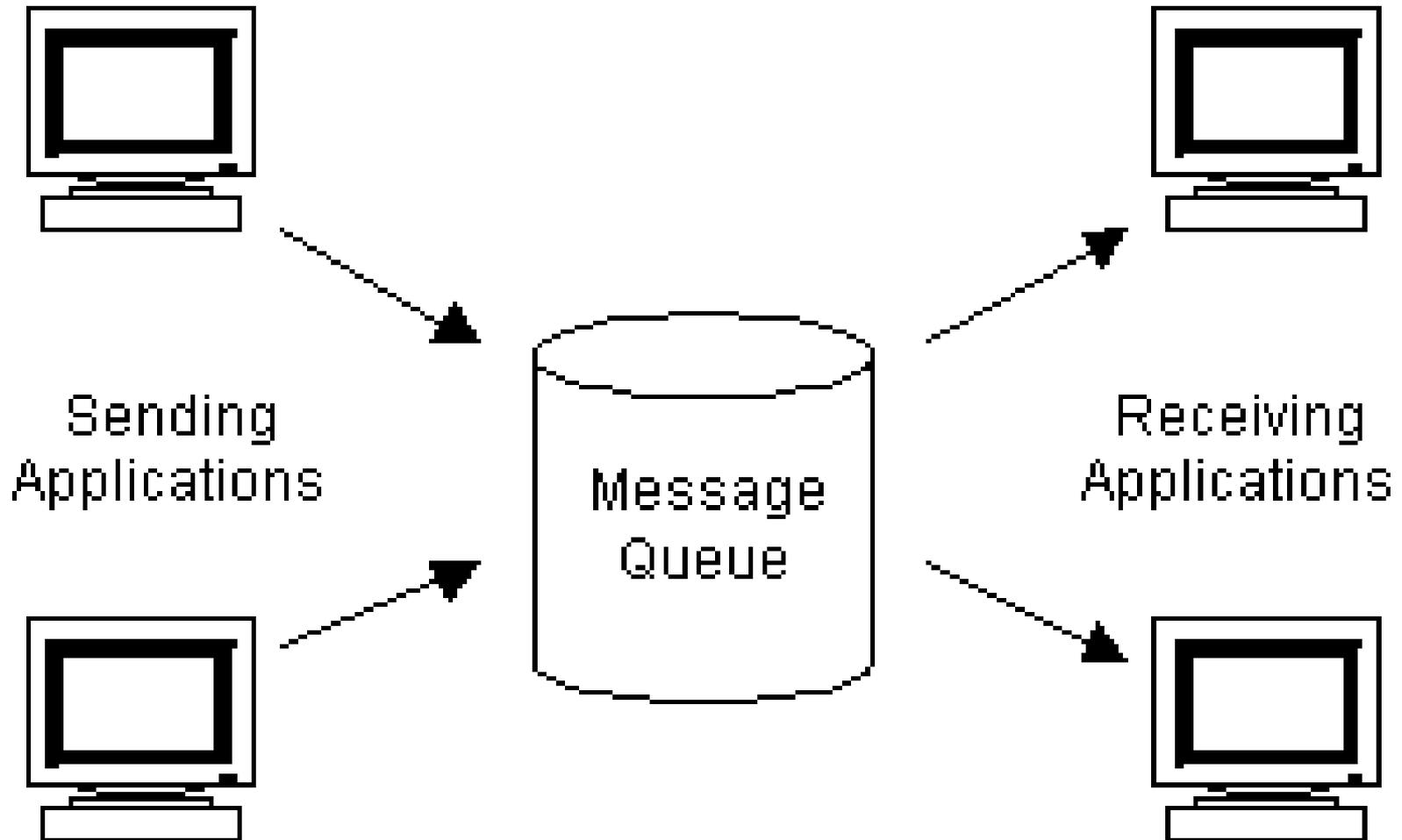
- Dynamics-NAV Install DVD:
 - NAV50BE\Nas\Common\Dynamics
NAV**Communication Component**
- This documentation describes a **set of components** that allow applications to **communicate** easily, both synchronously and asynchronously, with each other.
- You can **extend** this system to fit your own particular needs.
- The components consist of:
 - the Navision Named Pipe Bus Adapter.
 - the Navision **MS-Message Queue Bus Adapter**.
 - the Navision Socket Bus Adapter.
 - the Navision Communication Component version 2.0.

Navision MS-Message Queue Bus Adapter

- ❑ Provides flexible, heavyweight synchronous / asynchronous **communication** between two systems.
- ❑ Supports disconnected communication and prioritized messages.
- ❑ The **bus adapter** supports 'all' versions of the **Microsoft Message Queue Server (MSMQ)**.

Definition of Message Queuing (MSMQ)

- Microsoft provides the following definition of Message Queuing:
- **"Message Queuing (MSMQ) technology enables applications running at different times to communicate across heterogeneous networks and systems that may be temporarily off-line".**
- Applications **send** messages to **queues** and **read** messages from **queues**.
- The following **illustration** shows how a queue can hold the messages used by both sending and receiving applications.



Sending a Document Code Example

- In this simple example, we use a **codeunit** to **initialize** the Navision Communication Component, **establish contact** to the Navision MS-Message Queue Bus Adapter and **send** a document.
- This example does not include **error handling**.
- For the purpose of this example, we have defined the following **variables**:

Variable Name	Data Type	Subtype
MQBus	Automation	'Navision MS-Message Queue Bus Adapter'.MSMQBusAdapter
CC2	Automation	'Navision Communication Component version 2'.CommunicationComponent
OutMsg	Automation	'Navision Communication Component version 2'.OutMessage
OutS	OutStream	

Sending a Document Code Example

```
OnRun()  
CREATE(CC2);  
CREATE(MQBus);  
CC2.AddBusAdapter(MQBus,1);  
MQBus.OpenWriteQueue('MyMessageQueueServer\XML-  
requests',0,0);  
MQBus.SenderAuthenticationLevel:= 2;  
OutMsg := CC2.CreateoutMessage('Message  
queue://MyMessageQueueServer\XML-requests');  
OutS := OutMsg.GetStream();  
OutS.WRITE('Hello world!');  
OutMsg.Send(0);
```

Receiving a Document Code Example

- In this example, we use a **single instance** codeunit to **initialize** the Navision Communication Component, establish **contact** to a Navision MS-Message Queue Bus Adapter, **open** the bus adapter's **receive queue** and, finally, **read** the **message** that is received.
- For the purpose of this example, we have defined the following variables:

Variable Name	Data Type	Subtype	Length
MQBus	Automation	'Navision MS-Message Queue Bus Adapter'.MSMQBusAdapter	
CC2	Automation	'Navision Communication Component version 2'.CommunicationComponent	
InMsg	Automation	'Navision Communication Component version 2'.InMessage	
InS	InStream		
Txt	Text		100

Receiving a Document Code Example

```
OnRun()  
CREATE(MQBus);  
CREATE(CC2);  
CC2.AddBusAdapter(MQBus,1);  
MQBus.OpenReceiveQueue('MyMessageQueueServer\comcom2_queue',0,0);  
CC2::MessageReceived(VAR InMessage : Automation)  
InMsg := InMessage;  
InS := InMsg.GetStream();  
InS.READ(Txt);  
MESSAGE(Txt);  
InMsg.CommitMessage();
```

IMSMQBusAdapter Interface

Method Name

[OpenWriteQueue](#)

[GetWriteIMSMQQueue](#)

[OpenReceiveQueue](#)

[GetReceiveIMSMQQueue](#)

[CreateQueue](#)

[OpenReplyQueue](#)

Property Name

[SenderCertificate](#)

[AdministrationQueue](#)

[SenderAuthenticationLevel](#)

[ReceiverAuthenticationLevel](#)

[WriteTimeout](#)

[ReceiveTimeout](#)

[RemoveWhenCommit](#)

Description

Opens a queue for sending messages.

Returns the MSMQQueue object that is used to write to allow direct manipulation.

Opens a queue for receiving messages.

Returns the MSMQQueue object that is used to receive to allow direct manipulation.

Produces a queue that can send and receive messages.

Opens a queue to receive reply messages (when you use SendWaitForReply).

Description

Provides an array of bytes that represent the security certificate.

Provides the name of the AdministrationQueue in case this can be created or used.

Provides an authentication level that is passed to each message, which is sent through this bus adapter.

Requests an authentication level for each incoming message.

Provides a maximum time in seconds for an application to read the messages sent by this bus adapter.

[In, Out] Provides a maximum time in milliseconds for the bus adapter to receive a message.

[In, Out] Sets the bus adapter to either remove or not to remove the message from the Journal Queue when an InMessage is committed.

Building a Dynamics-NAV Webservice

- Now, it is time to engineer on this and use this simple mechanism to **wrap our ERP system into a web service** which **exposes Dynamics-NAV business layer** to 3rd party applications.
- If you understand the communication model and if you have been developing your own web services for a while, it should be **quite easy** how to add a web service layer around Dynamics-NAV.
- Our main concern is on **how** to take each **method's arguments** and **repack** them in a way that they are **understood** when the request is forwarded to **Dynamics-NAV**.

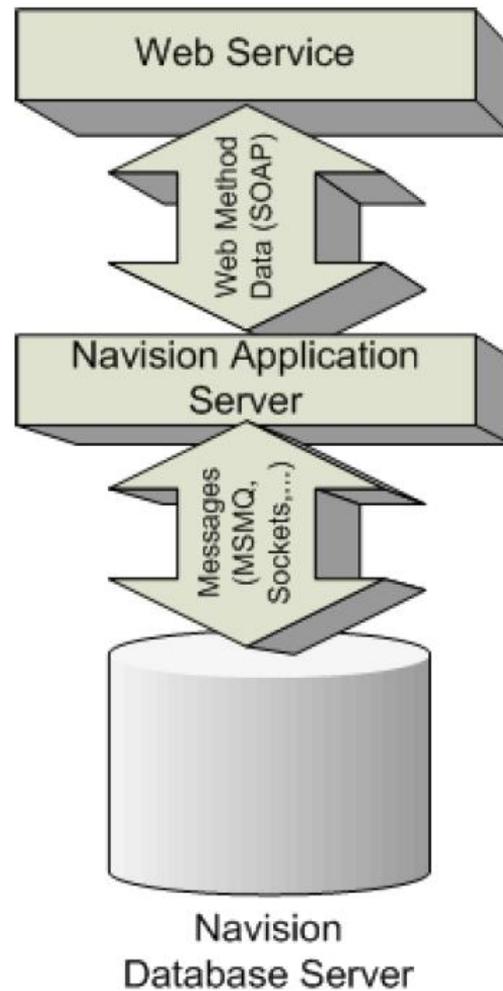
The scenario & architecture

- ❑ Suppose you are developing a **warehouse management tool** which the warehouse employees will be able to access from their handheld devices or from any web browser.
- ❑ When designing such application, you clearly see a very tight **interaction** between your application and Dynamics-NAV, which centralizes the customer's warehouse items and surrounding information.
- ❑ By providing such **connection** between both systems, you can be sure your application will always use the **latest information** as it enters **your ERP system**.

The scenario & architecture

- However, when using a system like Dynamics-NAV, such connection means using Navision **Application Server**, a **communication subsystem** such as named pipes, sockets or **message queuing** and a **protocol** both systems must be aware of for communication purposes.
- From the developer's point of view, it would be a much easier task if all of the requirements above are "**hidden**" behind some sort of an **Application Programming Interface (API)**.

Proposed layered architecture



The scenario & architecture

- We will start by **choosing** the set of Dynamics-NAV **functions** we would like to **expose** and then discuss **how** they **map** onto the architecture.
- At least **two** functions must be exposed, one that allows for data **reading** and another one which performs data **writing**.
 - **GetItem** (Item no.) which returns an item instance
 - **InsertItem** (Item no., Description, ...) which inserts a new item based on a set of field values
- Each of these functions/procedures will have a **counterpart** both within **Dynamics-NAV** Database Server and at the highest level, being exposed as **Web Methods**.

The scenario & architecture

- When requesting an **item** find, the Web Method will get the **argument** (the item number) and will **forward** a message to Dynamics-NAV.
- Dynamics-NAV will then **read** the message and **route** it to the appropriate handler within its **business layer**.
- The **response**, if available, is **sent** back as a message and the **Web Method** must be able to **transform** it according to the external representation.
 - Although they might look similar, the data format used by Dynamics-NAV and externally are completely independent of each other.
 - Their design may be similar and that will ease the translation process, but there is no formal reason for doing so.

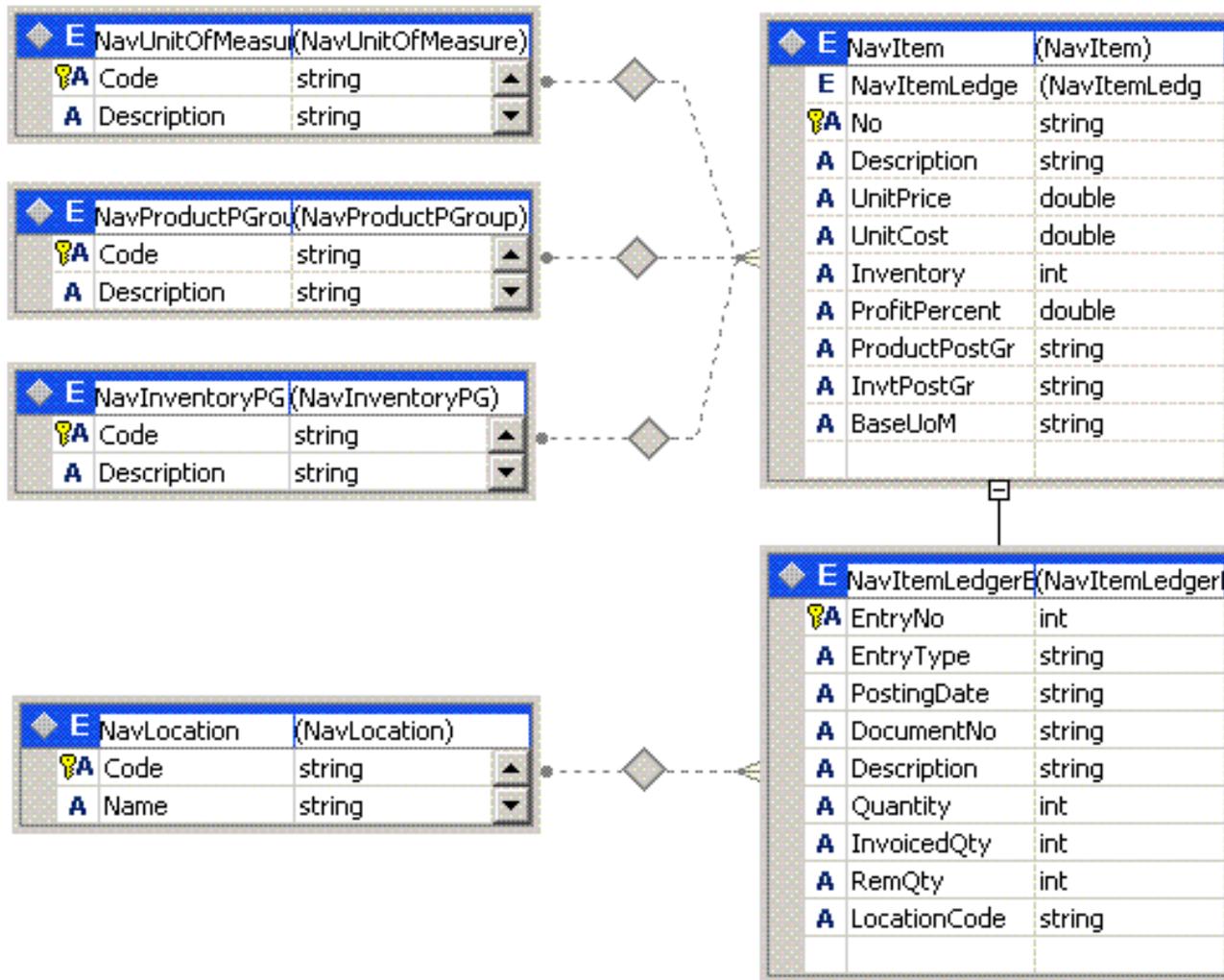
From the web service down to the business layer

- When a **Web Method** is **called**, along with it goes a set of **arguments**.
- All of this information must **reach** the **business layer** which will then **respond** accordingly.
- For this purpose, instead of using a complex XML structure, we have chosen to **pack both the method name and the arguments into a string**, pretty much as if it were a local call:
 - `<Method Call> ::= <Method Name> (<Argument>*)`
- All that Dynamics-NAV has to do is **parsing** that string, retrieving both the method **name** and the **arguments**.
- Later you will see how this parsing may be performed.

From Navision back up to the web service

- After the business layer has processed the request, it has to **bubble** the data back up to the calling **Web Method**, which will then **return** it.
- Now we must rely upon a somewhat **complex structure** which may **hold** all the bubbling **data**.
- We have decided to include some **complementary data** along with our inventory items:
 - general product and inventory posting groups, locations and units of measure.

The schema both layers must respect.



The schema both layers must respect.

- ❑ For now, let us just assume that our core entity is the item.
- ❑ An **item** is identified by its **number** and it contains zero or more item **ledger** entries.
- ❑ Also, 3 of the item's properties are validated against 3 tables: its **base unit of measure** and its **product** and **inventory posting groups**.
- ❑ Finally, each ledger entry has a **location** code which is validated against the location collection.
- ❑ This schema maps onto the Dynamics-NAV **object model**.
- ❑ (a very small subset of the object model).

Setting up the environment

- ❑ Ensure your Dynamics-NAV database is being served by either a Navision **Database Server** or a Microsoft **SQL Server**;
- ❑ Configure a Navision **Application Server**, making sure it points to a specific **start-up parameter** value and a specific **company** within a specific database located on a specific server.
- ❑ Create **two message queues** which will be used to support the bidirectional communication.
- ❑ Add a new **codeunit** which will **receive** the messages, **parse** the requests and **respond** to them (marked as **single instance**).
- ❑ Edit trigger **NasHandler** () on Codeunit 1, adding a new case option for the Parameter.

NASHandler trigger

- In our development environment, we have used a **WEBSERVICE** start-up parameter value and we have created a new codeunit named Web Service Handler.
- We have added the following code to the NasHandler trigger in codeunit 1:

```
IF CGNASStartedinLoop = FALSE THEN  
CASE Parameter OF  
'WEBSERVICE':  
    WSHandler.RUN;  
'MAILLOG':  
    CODEUNIT.RUN(CODEUNIT::"E-Mail Dispatcher");  
ELSE  
    ...
```

- Additionally, we have Microsoft Visual Studio .NET and all its requirements for the development of ASP.NET web services.

- Check out the Web Services Developer Center
 - <http://msdn.microsoft.com/webservices>

The first Web Method: GetItem

- In order to present the first Web Method, we will split the whole process in 4 parts:
 - Packing the **method** name and its single **argument**, the item number and sending the string to Dynamics-NAV.
 - Having Dynamics-NAV **receiving** the string, **unpacking** it and **redirecting** to the appropriate code which will serve the request.
 - **Serving** the request, which means **finding** the **item** whose number is the one received as argument, packing the data into an **XML document** conformant to the schema and **sending** it **back**.
 - **Receiving** the **response**, **validating** it against the schema, building the **dataset** and **returning** it to the caller system.

Packing and sending the request to Navision

- Once the Web Service has been created, we need to bring in the two **message queues** we created for this project.
- By naming them **mqFromNavision** and **mqToNavision** it should be easier to understand when to use each.
- Now we are ready to create the first **web method**, as follows:

```
[Web Method]
```

```
public NavDS GetItem(string No)
```

```
{
```

```
    string request = "GetItem(" + No + ")";
```

```
    mqToNavision.Send (request, "Navision MSMQ-BA");
```

```
    ...
```

Having Navision parsing and redirecting the request accordingly

- By adding a **handler codeunit**, Dynamics-NAV is prepared to receive the request.
- However, we still need to add a **procedure** which will **parse** the request, **retrieving** both the **method name** and the **argument** collection.
- Let us assume our codeunit has two global variables:
 - **Request—Text** (50)
 - **Parameters—Text** (50) with the Dimensions property set to a number that may hold the largest amount of arguments (200 is much more than enough)
 - This procedure starts by retrieving the method name from the string cutting it by the open parenthesis.
 - Then, it loops through the comma-separated argument collection and builds the Parameters array with those values.

Having Navision parsing and redirecting the request accordingly

```
ParseRequest(string : Text[250])
```

```
Request := COPYSTR (string, 1, STRPOS (string, '(') - 1);
```

```
auxstring := COPYSTR (string, STRPOS (string, '(') + 1, STRLEN  
                    (string) - STRPOS (string, '(') - 1);
```

```
argpos := 1;
```

```
commapos := STRPOS (auxstring, ',');
```

```
WHILE (commapos <> 0) DO
```

```
BEGIN
```

```
    Parameters[argpos] := COPYSTR (auxstring, 1, commapos - 1);
```

```
    auxstring := COPYSTR (auxstring, STRPOS (auxstring, ',') + 1);
```

```
    argpos := argpos + 1;
```

```
    commapos := STRPOS (auxstring, ',');
```

```
END;
```

```
Parameters[argpos] := auxstring;
```

```
ParCount := argpos;
```

Having Navision parsing and redirecting the request accordingly

- Now that we have a **request parser**, we are able to fill the code of the message received trigger like this:

```
CC2::MessageReceived(VAR InMessage : Automation ""'.IDISPATCH")
// load the message into an XML document and find the string node
InMsg := InMessage;
InS := InMsg.GetStream();
XMLDom.load (InS);
XMLNode := XMLDom.selectSingleNode ('string');
// parse the request and according to the Request variable, redirect to
// the appropriate function
ParseRequest (XMLNode.text);
CASE Request OF
'GetItem':
    BizLayer.GetItem (Parameters[1], XMLDom);
ELSE
END;
```

Serving the request and responding

- In the message received trigger, we **redirect** the request to the **GetItem procedure** on a **new codeunit** which represents the **business layer** entry point.
- In order to respond to the web service methods, we have chosen to create this **codeunit** which will hold the Dynamics-NAV **counterpart** for each method.

Auxiliary procedures that help us building the XML.

```
AddElement(VAR XMLNode : Automation "Microsoft XML, v3.0'.DOMDocument"; NodeName : Text[250]; VAR CreatedXMLNode : Automation "Microsoft XML, v3.0'.IXMLDOMNode")
NewChildNode := XMLNode.ownerDocument.createElement('element', NodeName, "");
XMLNode.appendChild(NewChildNode);
CreatedXMLNode := NewChildNode;
```

```
AddAttribute(VAR XMLNode : Automation "Microsoft XML, v3.0'.IXMLDOMNode"; Name : Text[260]; NodeValue : Text[260])
IF NodeValue <> " THEN BEGIN
    XMLNewAttributeNode :=
    XMLNode.ownerDocument.createAttribute(Name);
    XMLNewAttributeNode.nodeValue := NodeValue;
    XMLNode.attributes.setNamedItem(XMLNewAttributeNode);
END;
```

Navision counterpart for GetItem

- Now, getting back to the Dynamics-NAV counterpart for the **GetItem** specific situation, this could be the code to add:

- → See Demo. (GetItem)

Navision counterpart for GetItem

- By passing a reference to **XMLDom**, when this procedure ends, that variable will hold a populated **dataset** with all the locations, all the product and inventory posting groups, all the units of measure, items and their item ledger entries.
- We have decided to include all of the locations, product groups and units of measure as they represent a small amount of data and will not overburden our dataset instances.

message received trigger

- Now that the **second argument** of the function has been filled with an **XML document** representing the **dataset** we would like to return, we have to **complete** the **message** received trigger by adding the **code** which will **instantiate** a message that will be **sent** up to the **web service**:
- → See Demo (CC2::MessageReceived)

Receiving and validating the response and returning the dataset.

- The request has been **sent** to Dynamics-NAV, Dynamics-NAV **understood** it, **handled** it, **responded** to it and now a **dataset** is on a **queue** waiting to be **received**, **validated** and then **returned** to the web method caller.
- Let us add the **code** that will do exactly what is missing in this scenario: (see demo)

```
[Web Method]
public NavDS GetItem(string No)
{
    string request = "GetItem(" + No + ")";
    mqToNavision.Send (request, "Navision MSMQ-BA");
    mqFromNavision.Formatter = new
    System.Messaging.XmlMessageFormatter (new Type[] {typeof (NavDS)});
    System.Messaging.Message msg =
    mqFromNavision.Receive (new System.TimeSpan (0,0,0,30));
    NavDS nds = new NavDS ();
    nds.ReadXml (msg.BodyStream, System.Data.XmlReadMode.Auto);
    return nds;
}
```

NavDS ?

- ❑ What is this **NavDS** we are seeing in the code?
- ❑ We are creating an object of this type and using its **ReadXML** () method to read the contents of the message.
- ❑ Well, it is a **dataset** whose schema has already been depicted in figure 2 above.
- ❑ Here goes its formal XML representation:
- ❑ → see NavDS.ds

The Webservice in Action

- DemoTime !

After-thoughts and conclusions

- As you could see, the **magic** of communication has already been presented.
- This demo allows you - as a software architect and/or developer – to conceal the specifics of such communication, thus providing those responsible for the upper layers of your applications with a simple interface with the ERP system.

- **Kind of environments** in which this solution may participate:
- A **complex** system **composed** of **multiple applications** aimed at distinct goals, in which there is a **central entity** responsible for the overall **synchronization**.
 - This entity would probably need to be able to recurrently **read data from** the **ERP** system and to **post changed** or **new** data onto it as well.
 - By being able to call a set of **web methods**, this task would be much **easier** than otherwise having to go all the way to and from Navision;

- A **business-specific** application whose processes merely **intersect** the scope of **Navision**, specially in its later stages when dealing with the company resources, such as customers, general ledger accounts or warehouse picks.
 - When developing these connections, having a Web Service which takes care of these details seems a good resource;
- An **internal web portal** for warehouse employees in which they can check the inventory and perform item adjustments, for instance.
- ...

What's Next?

- Now You Know Web Services, What's Next?
- The next step is to learn about WSDL and SOAP.
- **WSDL**
 - WSDL is an XML-based language for **describing** Web services and how to **access** them.
 - WSDL describes a web service, along with the message format and protocol details for the web service.
- **SOAP**
 - SOAP is a simple XML-based protocol that allows applications to **exchange** information over HTTP.
 - Or more simply: SOAP is a protocol for **accessing** a web service.

- How will Webservices work in the next Dynamics-NAV version ?
- → Demo Kurt Juvijns.

Resources available

- www.msdn.microsoft.com/webservices
- DevGuide.chm (NAS)
- Microsoft .Net Framework SDK QuickStart Tutorials (<http://samples.gotdotnet.com/quickstart/>)
- Talking with Navision: Accessing Navision Business Layer through a Web Service (<http://msdn2.microsoft.com/en-us/library/ms952079.aspx>)
- Talking with Navision: Say Hello to Navision and Expect Navision to Be Polite (Talking with Navision: Say Hello to Navision and Expect Navision to Be Polite)
- Exposing .NET Components to Navision ([http://msdn2.microsoft.com/en-us/library/aa973247\(printer\).aspx?topic=306132](http://msdn2.microsoft.com/en-us/library/aa973247(printer).aspx?topic=306132))
- www.plataan.be → Training & Blog

The End...

- Thank you for attendance and participation.



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