

CONTEXT MAPPER: DSL AND TOOLS FOR DOMAIN- DRIVEN SERVICE DESIGN – BOUNDED CONTEXT MODELING AND MICROSERVICE DECOMPOSITION

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Service-oriented architectures and microservices have gained much attention in recent years; many companies adopt them in order to increase agility, maintainability and scalability of their systems. Decomposing an application into multiple independently deployable, appropriately sized services is challenging. With strategic patterns such as Bounded Context and Context Map, Domain-Driven Design (DDD) can support software architects and domain experts during service decomposition. However, existing architecture description languages, methods and tools do not support strategic DDD sufficiently. As a consequence, different interpretations and opinions regarding pattern applicability can be observed, and it is not always clear how the patterns can be combined. Context modeling is an ad-hoc, error-prone activity.

In this talk we present [Context Mapper](#), an open source project providing a Domain-Specific Language (DSL) for DDD. Aiming for a clear and concise interpretation of the patterns and their combinations, we distilled a meta-model of the DDD patterns from community input. The DSL provides a light syntax to express the patterns and model DDD context maps. An Eclipse editor supports syntax highlighting, code completion, and model validation. Other tools allow designers to refactor and continuously evolve the models and generate lower-level artifacts such as service contracts. DSL and supporting tools promote iterative, incremental modeling and agile practices.

Session Outline

■ Presentation Part 1 (20 mins)

- Motivation
- Brief introduction to Microservice Architectures (MSA)
- Domain-Driven Design (DDD) and service decomposition
- Context Mapper overview

■ Context Mapper Demo (20 mins)

■ Presentation Part 2 (20 mins)

- Architectural refactoring
- Next steps in the BizDevOps tool & practice chain:
 - Microservice Domain-Specific Language (MDSL)
 - Microservice API Patterns (MAP)

■ Q&A (15 mins)

- *Input and feedback appreciated – this is ongoing research!*

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■ **Context Mapper Demo (20 mins)**

■ **Presentation Part 2 (20 mins)**

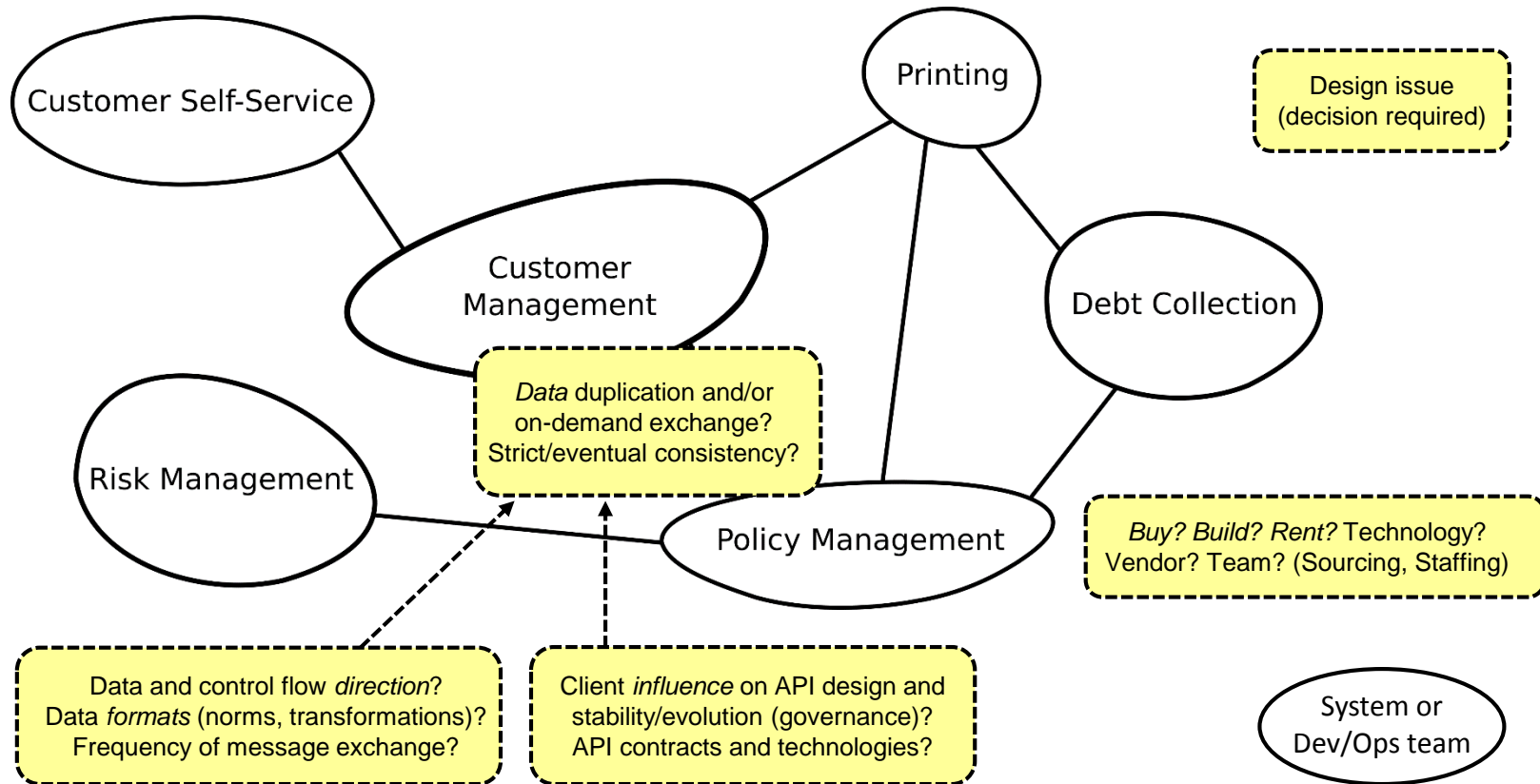
- Architectural refactoring
- Next steps in the BizDevOps tool & practice chain:
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■ **Q&A (15 mins)**

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Motivating Example: “Fictitious” Insurance Application Landscape

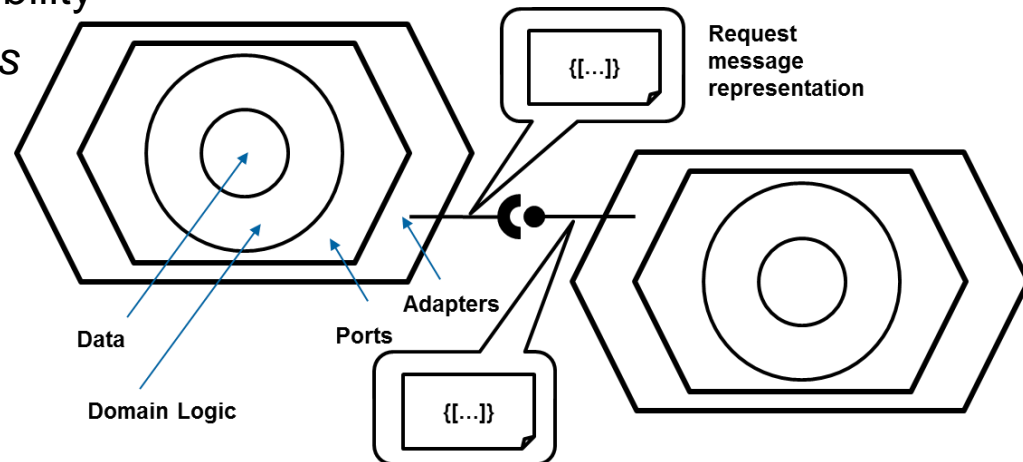
- Many design issues, typically recurring
 - per system/team, per relationship, per interface



A Consolidated Definition of Microservices

- **Microservices architectures evolved from previous incarnations of Service-Oriented Architectures (SOAs) to promote agility and elasticity**

- *Independently deployable, scalable and changeable services, each having a single responsibility*
- Modeling *business capabilities*



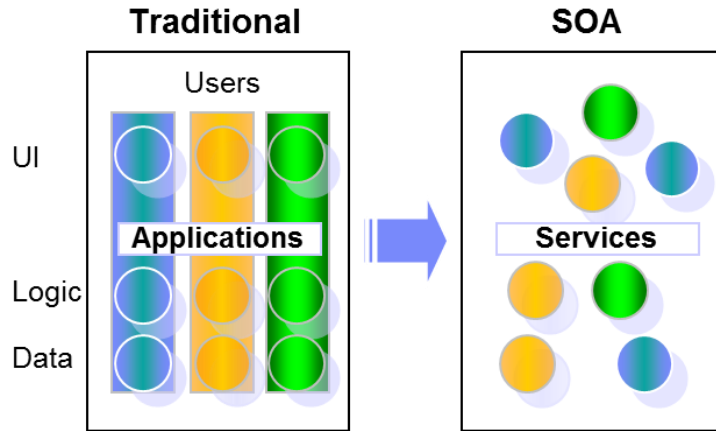
Detailed analysis: Zimmermann, O., [Microservices Tenets: Agile Approach to Service Development and Deployment](#), Springer Journal of Computer Science Research and Development (2017)

- Often deployed in *lightweight containers*
- Encapsulating their *own state*, and communicating via *message-based remote APIs* (HTTP, queueing), **IDEALLY** in a loosely coupled fashion
- Facilitating *polyglot programming and persistence*
- Leveraging DevOps practices including decentralized *continuous delivery* and *end-to-end monitoring* (for business agility and domain observability)

Open Problem: Service Decomposition

On the Criteria To Be Used in Decomposing Systems into Modules

D.L. Parnas
Carnegie-Mellon University



How Do Committees Invent?

Melvin E. Conway

Copyright 1968, F. D. Thompson Publications, Inc.
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Datamation magazine,
where it appeared April, 1968.



Research and Development Questions

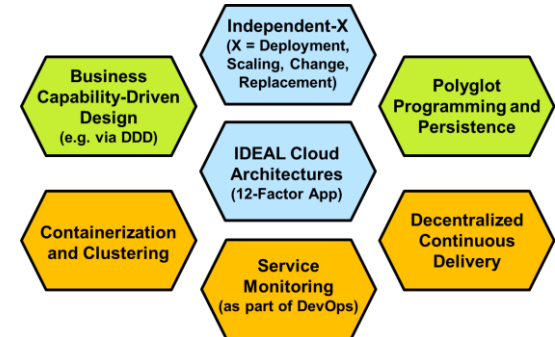
How can systems be decomposed and cut into services (forward engineering)?
How do the applied criteria and heuristics differ
from software engineering and software architecture “classics”
such as *separation of concerns* and *single responsibility principle*?



Which methods and practices do you use? Are they effective and efficient?

Decomposition Heuristics that do not suffice

- Two-pizza rule (team size)
- Lines of code (in service implementation)
- Size of service implementation in IDE editor



- Simple if-then-else rules of thumb
 - E.g. “If your application needs coarse-grained services, implement a SOA; if you require fine ones, go the microservices way” (I did not make this up!)
- Non-technical traits, including “products not projects”

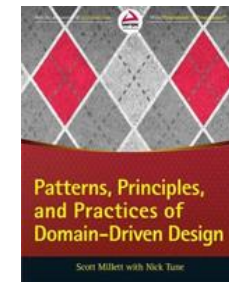
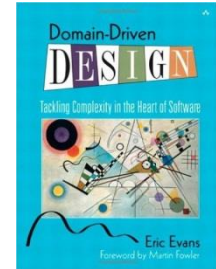


What is wrong with these “metrics” and “best practice” recommendations?

- ➔ Context matters, as M. Fowler pointed out at [Agile Australia 2018](#) (or: one size does not fit all)

Domain-Driven Design (DDD) to the Remedy

- **Emphasizes need for modeling and communication**
 - Ubiquitous language (vocabulary) – the *domain model*
- **Tactic DDD – “Object-Oriented Analysis and Design (OOAD) done right”**
 - Emphasis on business logic in layered architecture
 - Decomposes [Domain Model](#) pattern from M. Fowler
 - Patterns for common roles, e.g. Entity, Value Object, Repository, Factory, Service; grouped into *Aggregates*
- **Strategic DDD – “agile Enterprise Architecture and/or Portfolio Management”**
 - Models have boundaries
 - Teams, systems and their relations shown in *Context Maps of Bounded Contexts*

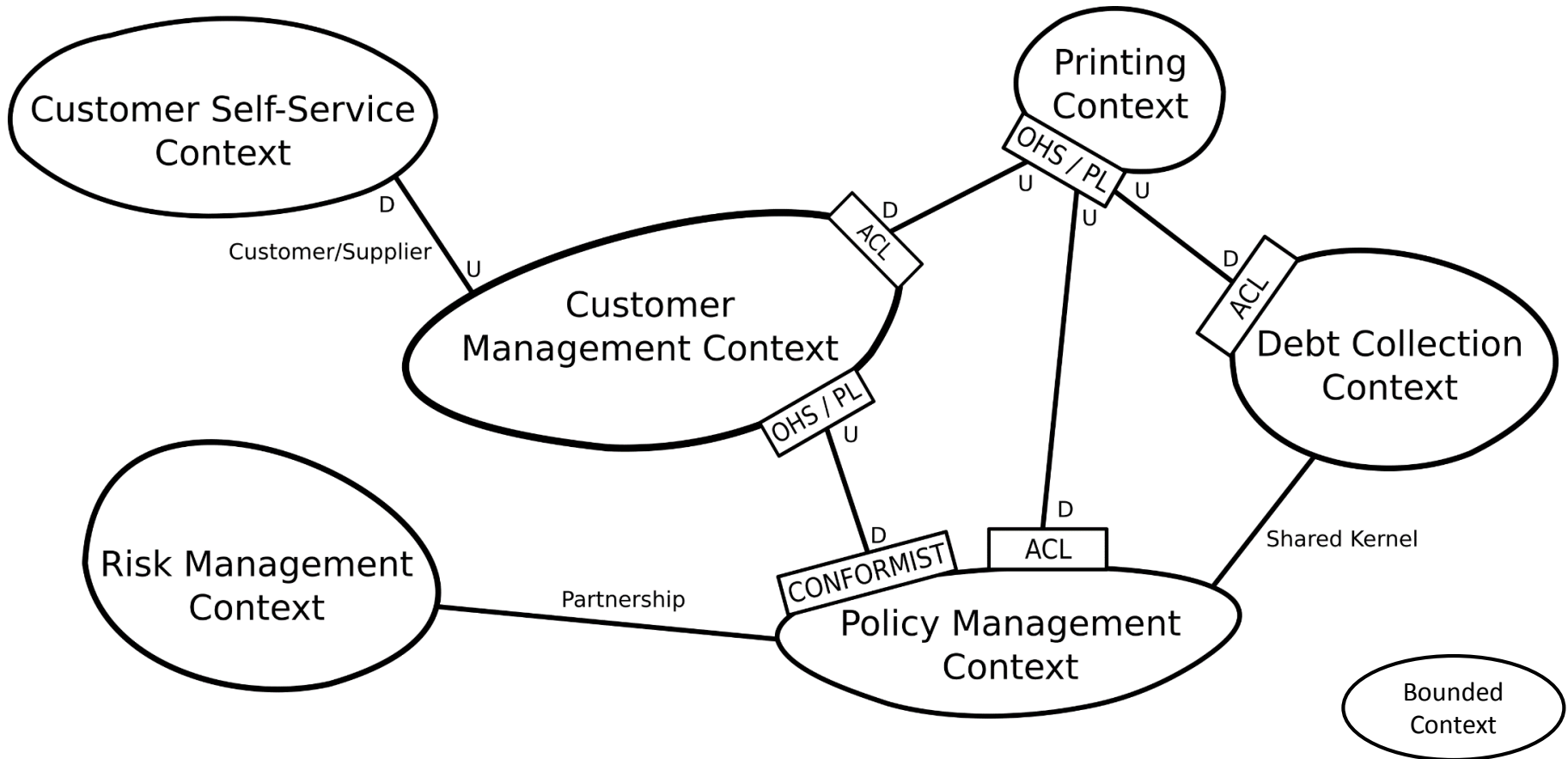


Books (Selection, Reverse Chronological Order)

- M. Ploed, [Hands-on Domain-driven Design - by example](#), Leanpub
- [Domain-Driven Design: The First 15 Years](#), Leanpub
- V. Vernon, [DDD Distilled](#); a German translation is available: [DDD Kompakt](#)
- S. Millett with N. Tune, [Patterns, Principles, and Practices of DDD](#), J. Wiley & Sons 2015
- V. Vaughn, [Implementing DDD](#), Addison Wesley 2014
- F. Marinescu, [Domain-Driven Design Quickly](#) (InfoQ e-book, 2006)

A Strategic DDD Context Map with Relationships

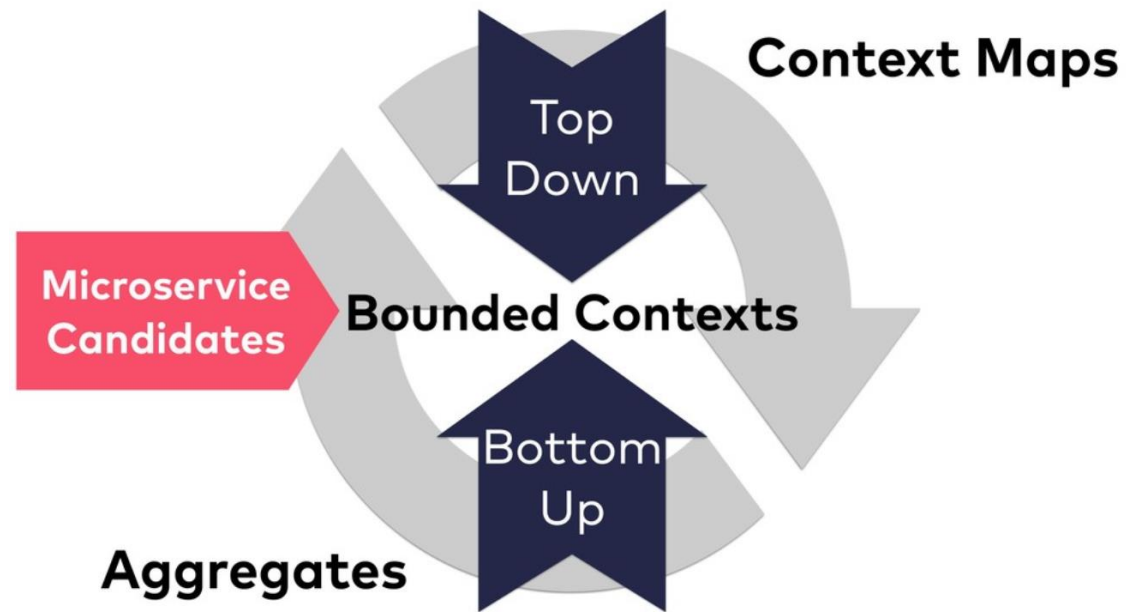
- Insurance scenario modelled at <https://contextmapper.github.io/>



D: [Downstream](#), U: [Upstream](#); ACL: [Anti-Corruption Layer](#), OHS: [Open Host Service](#)

DDD Applied to (Micro-)Service Design

- M. Plöd is one of the “go-to-guys” here (find him on [Speaker Deck](#))
 - Applies and extends DDD books by E. Evans and V. Vernon



Reference: JUG CH presentation, Bern/CH, Jan 9, 2019

DDD Applied to (Micro-)Service Design ctd., Source:

- **N. Tune and S. Millett:** [Designing Autonomous Teams and Services](#)
 - Describe how to coevolve organizational and technical boundaries to architect autonomous applications and teams based on DDD Bounded Contexts and (micro-)services.
- **O. Tigges:** [How to break down a Domain to Bounded Contexts](#)
 - Presents criteria to be used to identify Bounded Contexts.
- **R. Steinegger et al.:** [Overview of a Domain-Driven Design Approach to Build Microservice-Based Applications](#)
 - Describes a development process to build MSA applications based on the DDD concepts, emphasizing the importance of decomposing a system in several iterations.
- **A. Brandolini:** [Introducing Event Storming](#)
 - Proposes a workshop-based technique to analyze a domain and discover bounded contexts, following events through the system/business process and detecting commands, entities (and more) along the way.

From DDD to RESTful HTTP APIs

- **“Implementing DDD” book by V. Vernon (and blog posts, [presentations](#)):**
 - *No 1:1 pass-through (interfaces vs. application/domain layer)*
 - [Bounded Contexts \(BCs\)](#) realized by API provider: one service API and IDE project for each team/system BC (a.k.a. microservice)
 - [Aggregates](#) supply API resources (or responsibilities) of service endpoints
 - [Services](#) donate top-level (home) resources in BC endpoint as well
 - The Root Entity, the Repository and the Factory in an Aggregate suggest top-level resources; contained entities yield sub-resources
 - [Repository](#) lookups as paginated queries (GET with search parameters)
- **Additional rules of thumb (from our [experience](#) and additional [sources](#)):**
 - Master data and transactional data go to different contexts/aggregates
 - Creation requests to Factories become POSTs
 - Entity modifiers become PUTs or PATCHes
 - Value Objects appear in the custom mime types representing resources

Context Mapper: A DSL for Strategic DDD

What is Context Mapper?

Context Mapper provides a DSL to create **Context Maps** based on strategic **Domain-driven Design (DDD)**. DDD with its Bounded Contexts offers an approach for **decomposing a domain or system** into multiple independently deployable (micro-)services. With our **Architectural Refactorings (ARs)** we provide transformation tools to refactor and decompose a system in an iterative way. The tool further allows you to generate **MDSL (micro-)service contracts** providing assistance regarding how your system can be implemented in an **(micro-)service-oriented architecture**. In addition, **PlantUML** diagrams can be generated to transform the Context Maps into a **graphical representation**. With **Service Cutter** you can generate suggestions for new services and Bounded Contexts.



CONTEXT MAPPER

```
ContextMap DDD_CargoSample_Map {  
  type = SYSTEM_LANDSCAPE  
  state = AS_IS  
  
  contains CargoBookingContext  
  contains VoyagePlanningContext  
  contains LocationContext  
  
  CargoBookingContext [SK]<->[SK] VoyagePlanningContext  
  CargoBookingContext [D]<- [U,OHS,PL] LocationContext  
  VoyagePlanningContext [D]<- [U,OHS,PL] LocationContext  
}
```

SK: [Shared Kernel](#), PL: [Published Language](#)

D: [Downstream](#), U: [Upstream](#)

ACL: [Anti-Corruption Layer](#), OHS: [Open Host Service](#)

■ Eclipse plugin, based on:

- Xtext, ANTLR
- Sculptor (tactic DDD DSL)

■ Creator: S. Kapferer

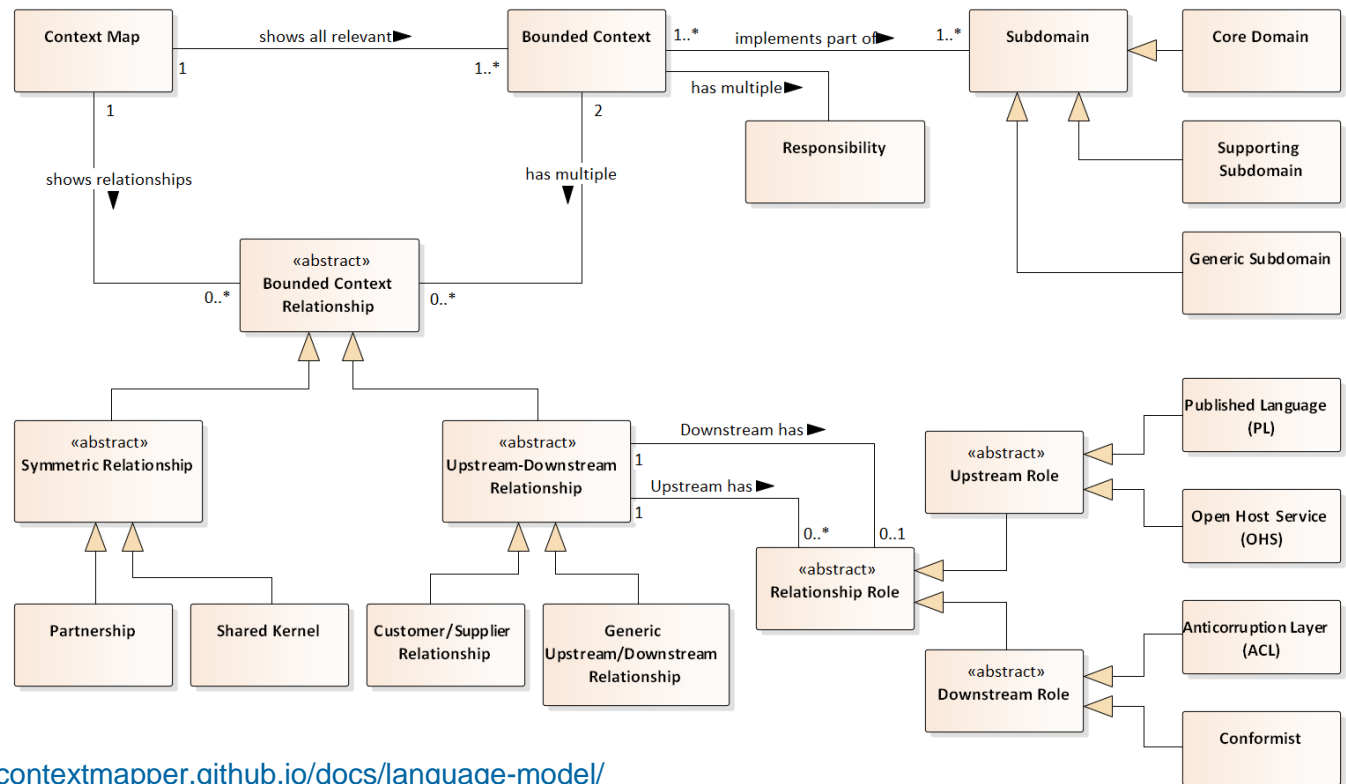
- Term projects @ HSR FHO

Session Outline

- **Presentation Part 1 (20 mins)**
- ***Context Mapper Demo (20 mins)***
 - *Part 1: DSL (Editing, Validations)*
 - *Part 2: Code Generation (PlantUML, MDSL)*
 - *Part 3: Architectural Refactorings (ARs)*
- **Presentation Part 2 (20 mins)**
 - Architectural refactoring
 - Next steps in the BizDevOps tool & practice chain:
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- **Q&A (15 mins)**

Context Mapper: Meta-Model and Semantic Rules

- Goal: provide clear and concise interpretation of the strategic DDD patterns – and valid combinations of them



Reference: <https://contextmapper.github.io/docs/language-model/>

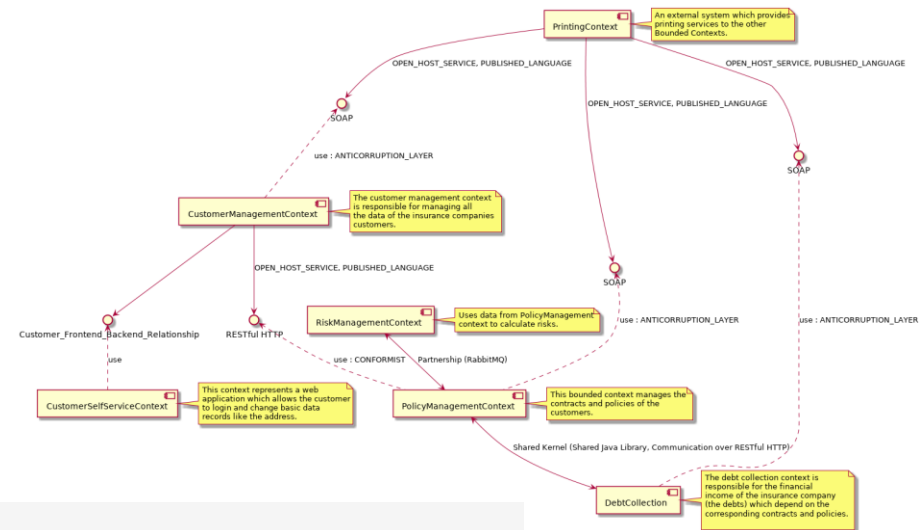
Context Mapper: DSL implements Meta-Model and Semantics

- **A Domain-Specific Language (DSL) for DDD:**
 - Formal, machine-readable DDD Context Maps via *editors and validators*
 - Model/code *generators* to convert models into other representations
 - Model transformations for *refactorings* (e.g., “Split Bounded Context”)

```
2-ContextMap InsuranceContextMap {
3
4   type = SYSTEM_LANDSCAPE
5   state = TO_BE
6
7   /* Add bounded contexts to this context map: */
8   contains CustomerManagementContext
9   contains CustomerSelfServiceContext
10  contains PrintingContext
11  contains PolicyManagementContext
12  contains RiskManagementContext
13  contains DebtCollection
14
15  /* Define the context relationships: */
16
17  CustomerSelfServiceContext [D,C]<-[U,S] CustomerManagementContext : Customer_Fron
18     exposedAggregates = Customers
19  }
20
21  CustomerManagementContext [D,ACL]<-[U,OHS,PL] PrintingContext {
22     implementationTechnology = "SOAP"
23     downstreamRights = INFLUENCER
24     exposedAggregates = Printing
25  }
26
27  PrintingContext [U,OHS,PL]->[D,ACL] PolicyManagementContext {
28     implementationTechnology = "SOAP"
29     exposedAggregates = Printing
30  }
31
32  RiskManagementContext [P]<->[P] PolicyManagementContext {
33     implementationTechnology = "RabbitMQ"
34  }
35
36  PolicyManagementContext [D,CF]<-[U,OHS,PL] CustomerManagementContext {
37     implementationTechnology = "RESTful HTTP"
38  }
```

Context Mapper: Generators (DDD DSL as Input)

- **PlantUML generator**
 - Generate graphical representations of model
- **Service Cutter input generator**
 - Use structured approach to identify service candidates
 - Term project/bachelor thesis at HSR FHO
- **MDSL service contract generator**
 - Generate technology-agnostic (micro-)service contracts from Bounded Contexts/Aggregates

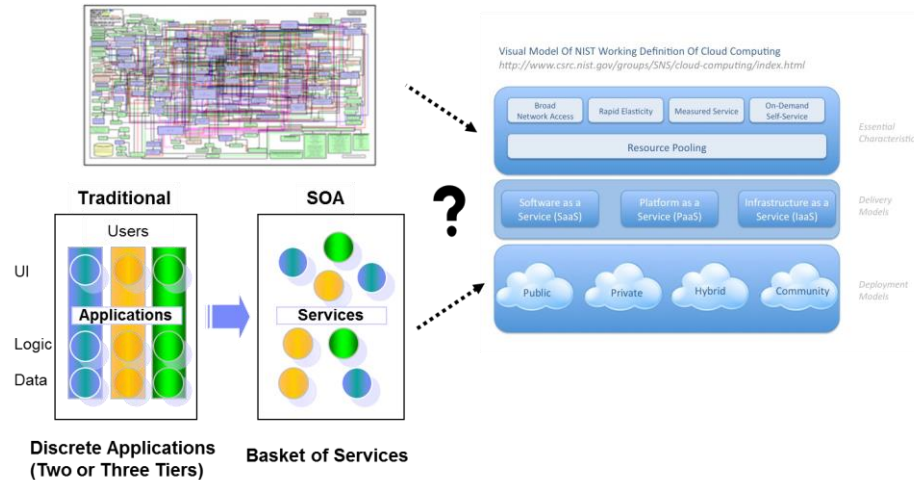


<http://servicecutter.github.io/>

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 - *Architectural refactoring*
 - *Next steps in the BizDevOps tool/practice chain:*
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 - *Microservice API Patterns (MAP)*
- **Q&A (15 mins)**

Open Problem: Refactoring to Microservices



Research and Development Questions

How to *migrate* a modular monolith to a services-based cloud application (a.k.a. cloud migration, brownfield service design)?
Can “micro-migration/modernization” steps be called out?



Which techniques and practices do you employ? Are you content with them?

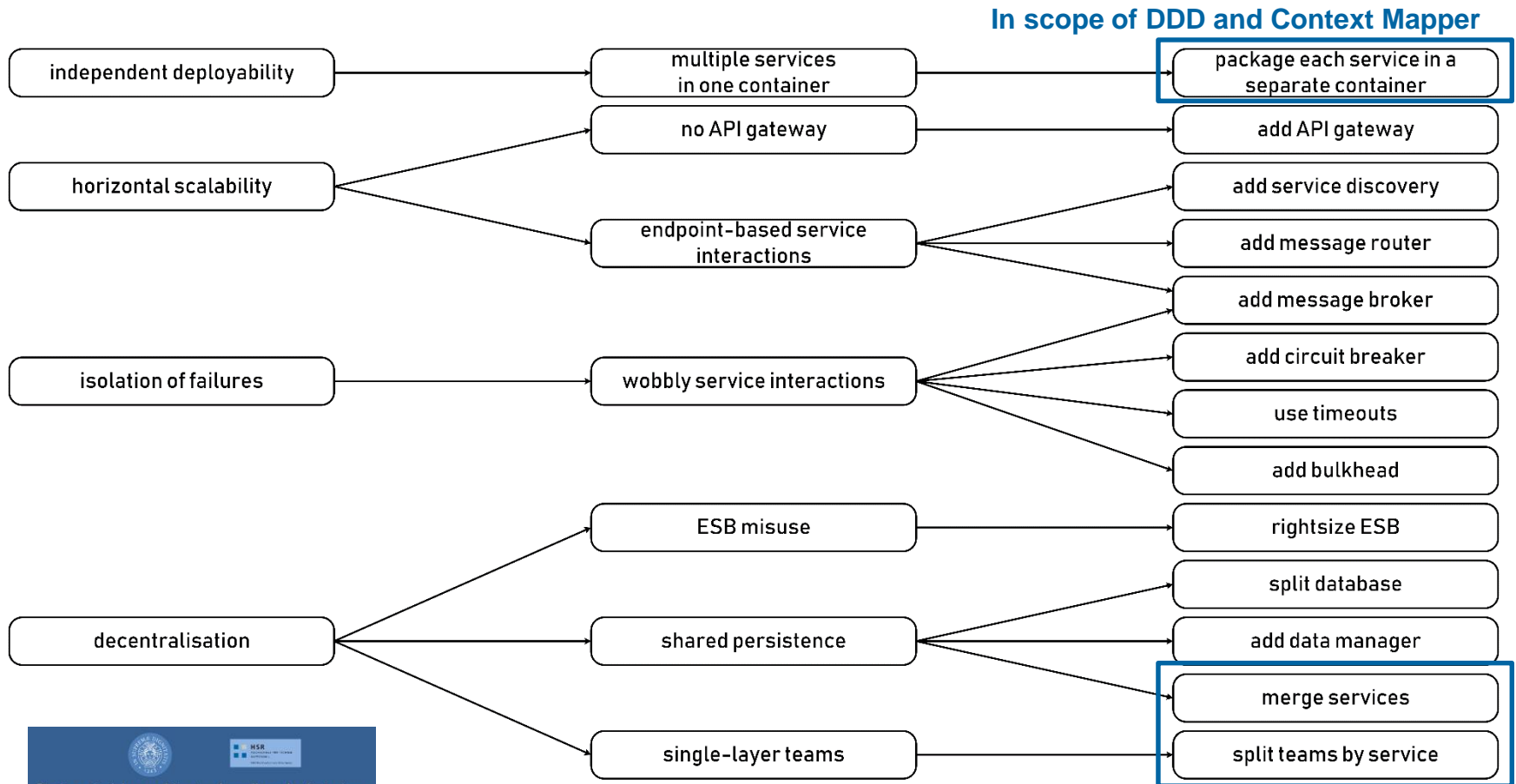
Code Refactoring vs. Architectural Refactoring

- Refactorings are “small behavior-preserving transformations” (M. Fowler 1999)
- Code refactorings such as “extract method”:
 - Operate on Abstract Syntax Tree (AST)
 - Based on compiler theory, so well understood and automation possible (e.g., in Eclipse Java/C++)
 - Catalog and commentary:
 - <http://refactoring.com/> and <https://refactoring.guru/>
- **Architectural refactorings are different:**
 - Resolve one or more bad architectural smells, have impact on quality attributes
 - Bad architectural smell: suspect that architecture is no longer adequate (“good enough”) under current requirements and constraints (may differ from original ones)
 - Are carriers of reengineering knowledge (patterns?)
 - Can only be partially automated



Refactor	Navigate	Search	Project	Run	Window	Help
Rename...						Alt+Shift+R
Move...						Alt+Shift+V
Change Method Signature...						Alt+Shift+C
Extract Method...						Alt+Shift+M
Extract Local Variable...						Alt+Shift+L
Extract Constant...						
Inline...						Alt+Shift+I
Convert Anonymous Class to Nested...						
Convert Member Type to Top Level...						
Convert Local Variable to Field...						
Extract Superclass...						
Extract Interface...						
Use Supertype Where Possible...						
Push Down...						
Pull Up...						
Extract Class...						
Introduce Parameter Object...						
Introduce Indirection...						
Introduce Factory...						
Introduce Parameter...						
Encapsulate Field...						
Generalize Declared Type...						
Infer Generic Type Arguments...						
Migrate JAR File...						
Create Script...						
Apply Script...						
History...						

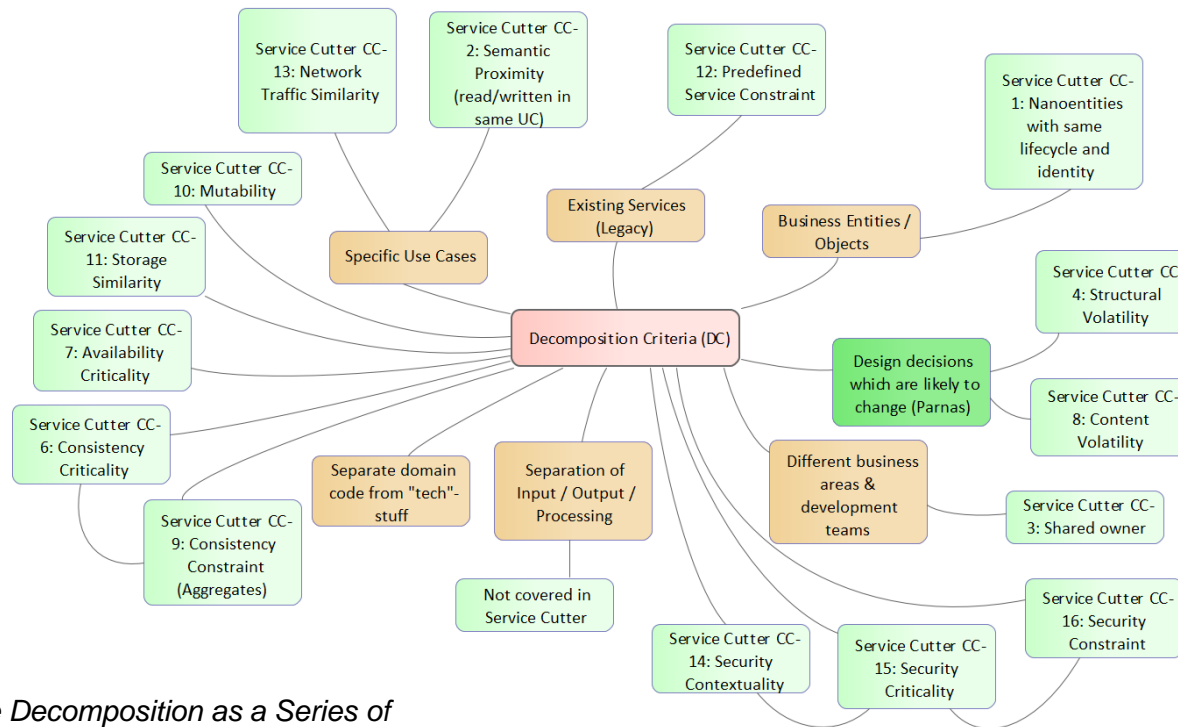
From Biz and Dev to Ops: Bad Smells and Refactorings



Reference: Brogi, A., Neri D., Soldani, J., Zimmermann, O., *Design Principles, Architectural Smells and Refactorings for Microservices: A Multivocal Review*. CoRR abs/1906.01553 and Springer SICS (2019) ([online](#), report [PDF](#), short [presentation](#))

Context Mapper: Refactor by Decomposition Criteria (DC)?

- As a first step, we collected Decomposition Criteria (DC):
 - From literature and own experience; [criteria catalog](#) in Service Cutter

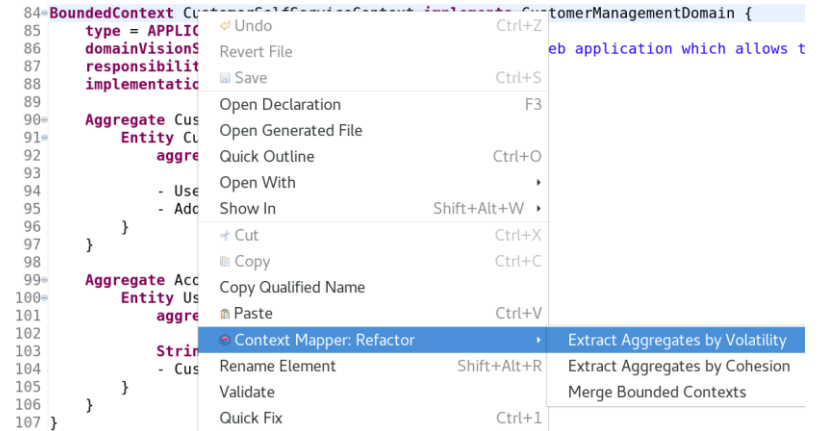


Reference: *Service Decomposition as a Series of Architectural Refactorings*, Stefan Kapferer, student research project HSR FHO 2019 (thesis [PDF](#))

Context Mapper: Architectural Refactorings (ARs)

■ Architectural Refactorings (ARs) then derived from mined/observed *Decomposition Criteria (DC)*

- Compiled from literature and own experience
- Decompose (*split, extract*) and compose (*merge*) DDD bounded contexts and aggregates.



Selected Decomposition Criteria:

DC-1: Business entities (which belong together)

DC-2: Use Cases

DC-3: Business areas & development teams

DC-7: Likelihood for change (volatility)

DC-{8-12}: Generalized non-functional requirement

Derived Architectural Refactorings:

AR-1: Split Aggregate by Entities

AR-2: Split Bounded Context by Use Cases

AR-3: Split Bounded Context by Owner

AR-4: Extract Aggregates by Volatility

AR-5: Extract Aggregates by Cohesion

AR-6: Merge Aggregates

AR-7: Merge Bounded Contexts

Reference: *Service Decomposition as a Series of Architectural Refactorings*, Stefan Kapferer, student research project HSR FHO 2019 (thesis [PDF](#))

How to find suited granularities and achieve loose coupling?

Context

We have decided to go the SOA and/or microservices way. We use DDD for domain modeling and agile practices for requirements elicitation.



Research and Development Problems:

How to identify/specify an adequate number of API endpoints and operations?

How to design message representation structures so that API clients and API providers are loosely coupled and meet their (non-)functional requirements IDEALy?



Which patterns, principles, and practices do you use (code first, contract first)? Do they work well?

Contracts in Microservice Domain-Specific Language (MDSL)

API description SpreadsheetExchangeAPI

```
data type CSVSpreadsheet CSVSheetTab*
data type CSVSheetTab {"name": V<string>,
                       "content": Rows*}
data type Rows {"line": ID<int>,
               "columns": Column+}
data type Column {"position": ID<string>,
                 "header": V<string>?,
                 <<Entity>> "cell": Cell}
data type Cell {"formula": V<string>
               | "intValue": V<int>
               | "longValue": V<long>
               | "text": V<string>}

endpoint type SpreadsheetExchangeEndpoint
exposes
  operation uploadCSVFile
    expecting payload CSVSpreadsheet
    delivering payload "successCode":V<bool>

  operation downloadCSVFile
    expecting payload ID
    delivering payload CSVSpreadsheet
    reporting error "SheetNotFound"
```

API provider SpreadsheetExchangeAPIProvider
offers SpreadsheetExchangeEndpoint

API client SpreadsheetExchangeAPIClient
consumes SpreadsheetExchangeEndpoint

■ Data contract

- Compact, technology-neutral
- Inspired by JSON, regex

■ Endpoints and operations

- Elaborate, terminology from MAP domain model
 - Abstraction of REST resource
 - Abstraction of WS-* concepts

■ API client, provider, gateway; governance (SLA, version, ...)

How does this notation compare to Swagger/JSON Schema and WSDL/XSD?



Reference: <https://socadk.github.io/MDSL/index>

■ Identification Patterns:

- DDD as one practice to find candidate endpoints and operations

Quality Patterns

- How can an API provider achieve a certain level of quality of the offered API, while at the same time using its available resources in a cost-effective way?
- How can the quality tradeoffs be communicated and accounted for?

READ MORE →

Foundation Patterns

- What type of (sub-)systems and components are integrated?
- Where should an API be accessible from?
- How should it be documented?

Responsibility Patterns

- Which is the architectural role played by each API endpoint and its operations?
- How do these roles and the resulting responsibilities impact (micro-)service size and granularity?

READ MORE →

Structure Patterns

- What is an adequate number of representation elements for request and response messages?
- How are these elements structured?
- How can they be grouped and annotated with usage information?

READ MORE →

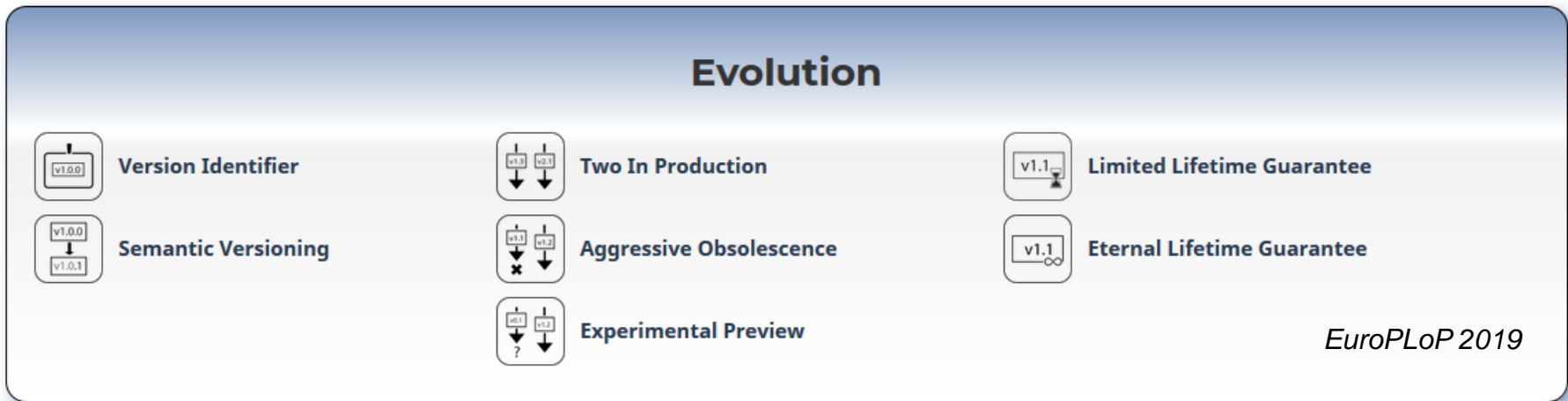
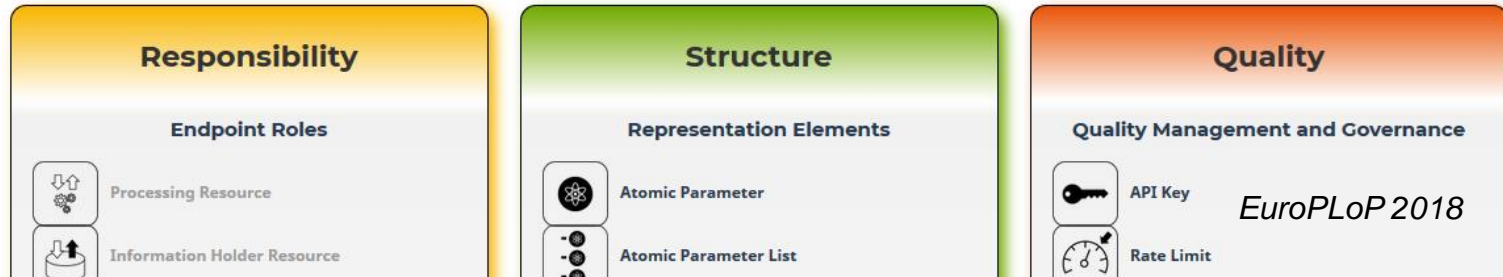
■ Evolution Patterns:

- Recently workshopped (EuroPLoP 2019)

<http://microservice-api-patterns.org>

Microservice API
Patterns (MAP)

Microservices API Patterns (MAP): Patterns by Category



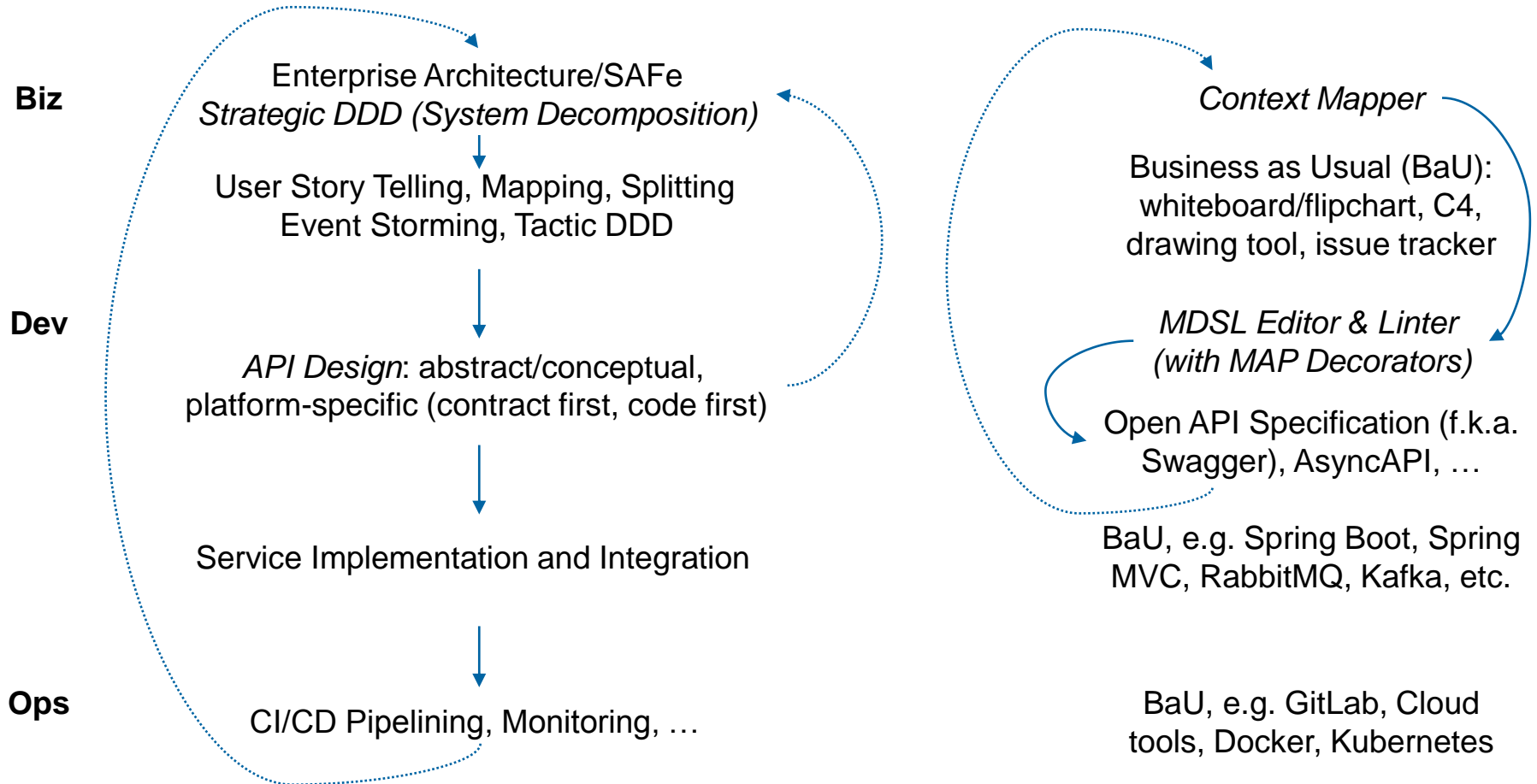
Microservice API Patterns (MAP)

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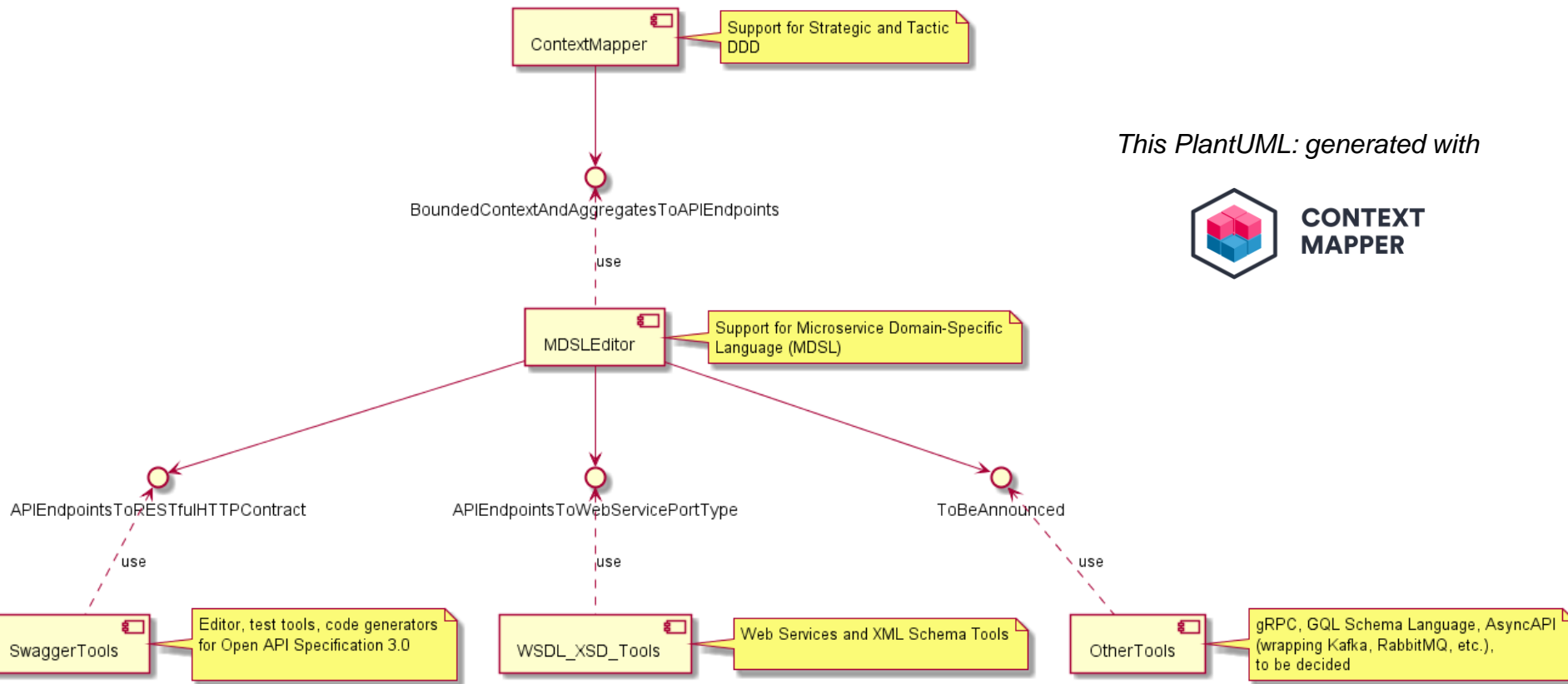
Vision: Agile Tools for BizDevOps (in DDD and MSA Context)

Selected (Agile) Practices (*our focus here*)

Tools (*our proposal*)



DDD Context Map for our Tools



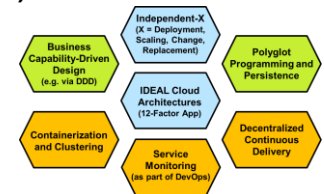
This PlantUML: generated with





■ **Microservices have many predecessors (evolution not revolution)**

- Implementation approach for, and sub-style of, SOA (7 tenets)
 - More emphasis on autonomy and decentralization (of decisions, of data ownership), less vendor-driven
 - Automation advances and novel target environments



■ **Context Mapper (open source/term thesis projects @ HSR)**

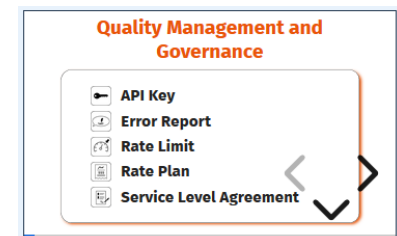
- DSL for modeling strategic DDD Context Maps
- Tool support to evolve models iteratively (ARs)
- PlantUML, Service Cutter, and MDSL generation



■ **Microservice Domain-Specific Language (MDSL) for service contracts**

■ **Microservice API Patterns (MAP) language & [website](#)**

- 20+ patterns, sample implementation, tutorial



Thank you very much! Let's move on to Q&A and discussion...

Feedback appreciated...

- **Did we catch the essence of strategic DDD (context mapping)?**
- **Is the DDD DSL expressive enough, but also easy to understand?**
- **Is anything missing in terms of functionality?**
 - Which decomposition criteria do you use when cutting/carving services?
 - Which architectural refactorings would you like to see in future versions?
 - Which model transformations and code generators would be valuable?
 - E.g. should we look into reverse transformations (from code to DSL)?
- **Can you envision to apply Context Mapper, MDSL, MAP in practice?**
 - Do tools and notations have the potential to improve productivity & quality?
 - What are critical success factors for adoption (NFRs)?
- **Which API design patterns and contract language features are missing?**