Happy 20th, Architecture

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x.commerce
an eBay Inc. company
My perspective, circa 1998
A $200M marketecture

Quack Execution Engine
Quack Speech Layer
SpeechWorks
Proxy Manager
Web server
Customer Mgmt EJB
Query Cache
Advertising EJB
ExistantContext EJB
Updated Engine
Rule Base
Execution Schedule
Fusion Engine
Replicator
Replication to other hosts
Session-oriented load balancing

QUECK
QUICK
QUECK
Oracle BI
WebLogic 4.5.1
WebLogic 4.5.1
Is this useful?
Low Ceremony Architecture
(or, architect like a startup)

• Startup(-y) companies are allergic to big-“A” architecture
  – Rooted in a disconnection between “architects” and the practice of development

• Ironically, these companies need architecture practice most
My Working Definition

“A system’s architecture codifies a set of decisions that are both hardest to change and that have the most significant impact on the way the system manifests its quality attributes.”
Lessons

• Architecture is the bearer of quality, but reasoning about architecture is reasoning about potential.
• You’ll rarely (never?) know in advance if a decision is right, but make sure you know afterward.
• Enabling autonomy of organizations and systems is the way you scale.
• Don’t let “pragmatism” become a disguise for shortsightedness.
• Plan for technology retirement, not just adoption.
• Don’t boil the frog with standards.