

Connecting Flex to Your Data Via ColdFusion

“So how do I hook my shiny new Flex app up to CF?”
“RPC Services in Flex”

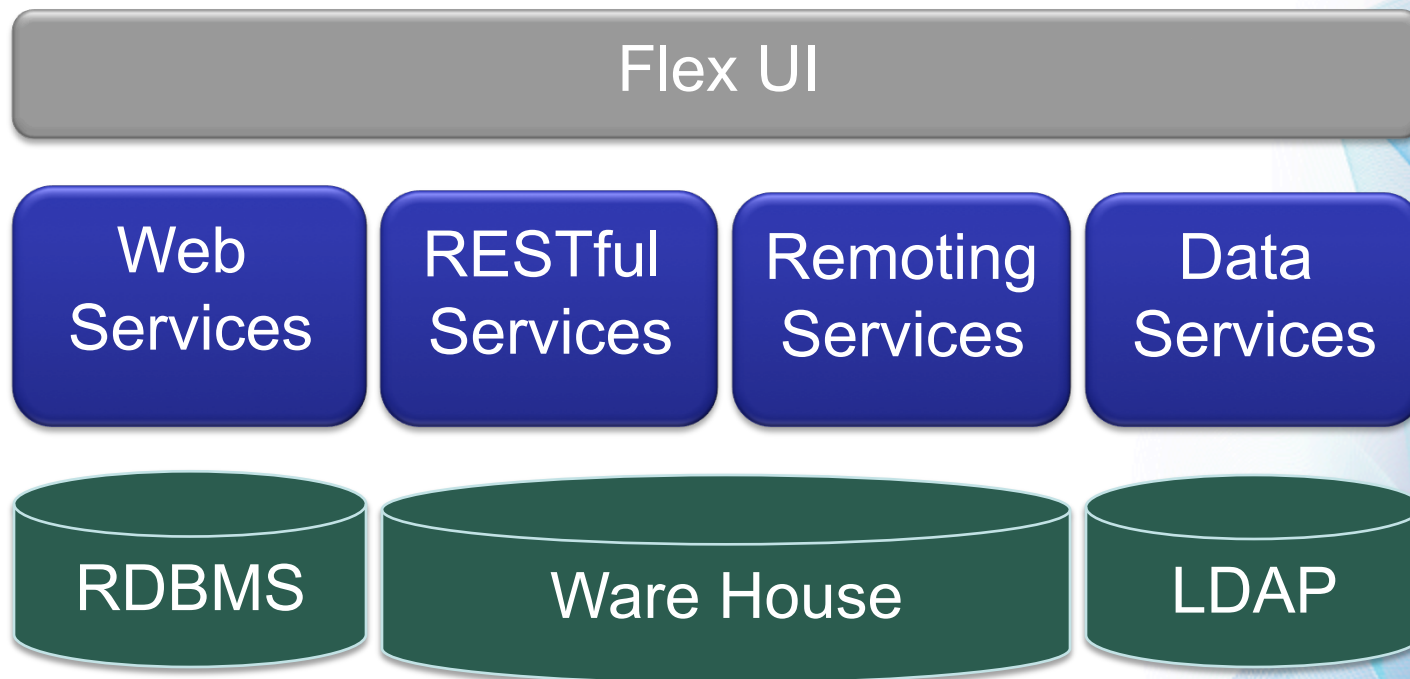
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Agenda

- RPC Services in Flex
- How does CF fit in?
- HTTP Services
- WebServices
- RemoteObjects
- Code!
- Comparison



A Flex Stack



And then there were three.



RPC Services in Flex

RPC Services in Flex

- HTTPService
 - old fashioned RESTful calls
 - Can perform GETs, POSTs, etc
 - Easy way to get XML based data
 - Can work with legacy back end code
 - AKA RESTful webservices
 - ex: `<HttpService id="myHTTPService"`
 - Think Twitter, LastFM, 88 Miles

RPC Services in Flex

- WebServices
 - SOAP-compliant web calls
 - Useful in disparate systems
 - verbose, but can use compression...maybe
 - AKA Big Web Services
 - ex: `<mx:WebService id="myWebService"`
 - Think Enterprise; OWAS, Amazon, Siebel

RPC Services in Flex

- RemoteObject
 - Uses AMF, a proprietary binary compression protocol
 - Need ColdFusion or DS
 - Maps CFCs to ActionScript Objects and back again
 - ex: `<mx:RemoteObject id="myRO">`

How does CF fit in?

- ColdFusion 7.0.2+
 - Flash Remoting: AMF3, RemoteObject, Datatype marshalling, CFC to and from AS mapping
 - Flex Messaging Gateway: A event gateway for push-pull messaging to a Flex client
 - Data Services Adapter: enabling the use of Flex Data Management Services with CFCs
 - ColdFusion extensions for Eclipse: RDS for Eclipse, and a few wizards

How does CF fit in?

- What about other CF versions?
- CFMX < 7.0.2
 - REST calls and WebServices
- CF <= 5
 - REST calls

How does CF fit in?

- HTTPService
 - Expose a CFM page
 - Use XML, JSON, etc..
 - Expose a CFC method
 - access="remote"
 - `http://my.url.com/path/to/cfc?method=foo&arg1=val1&arg2=val2`
 - returnFormat
 - You can add returnFormat to the URL call also

How does CF fit in?

- WebServices
 - Expose CFCs
 - access="remote" for methods
 - <http://url.com/path/to/cfc.wsdl>
 - Be wary of returning structures or queries

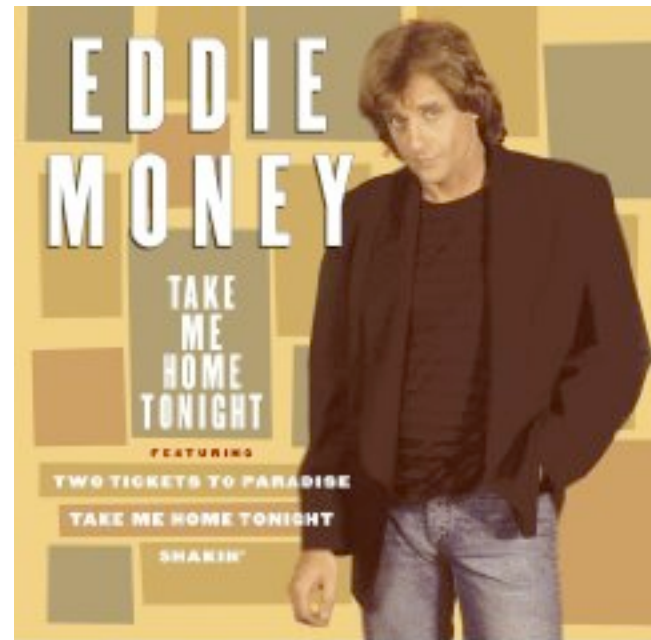
How does CF fit in?

- RemoteObject
 - Expose CFCs
 - access="remote" for methods
 - Access via class path
 - Can return queries directly...was that a groan?
 - [RemoteClass(alias="path.to.MyCFC")]
 - <CFProperty> for each exposed property
 - Properties can be exposed via accessors

How does CF fit in?

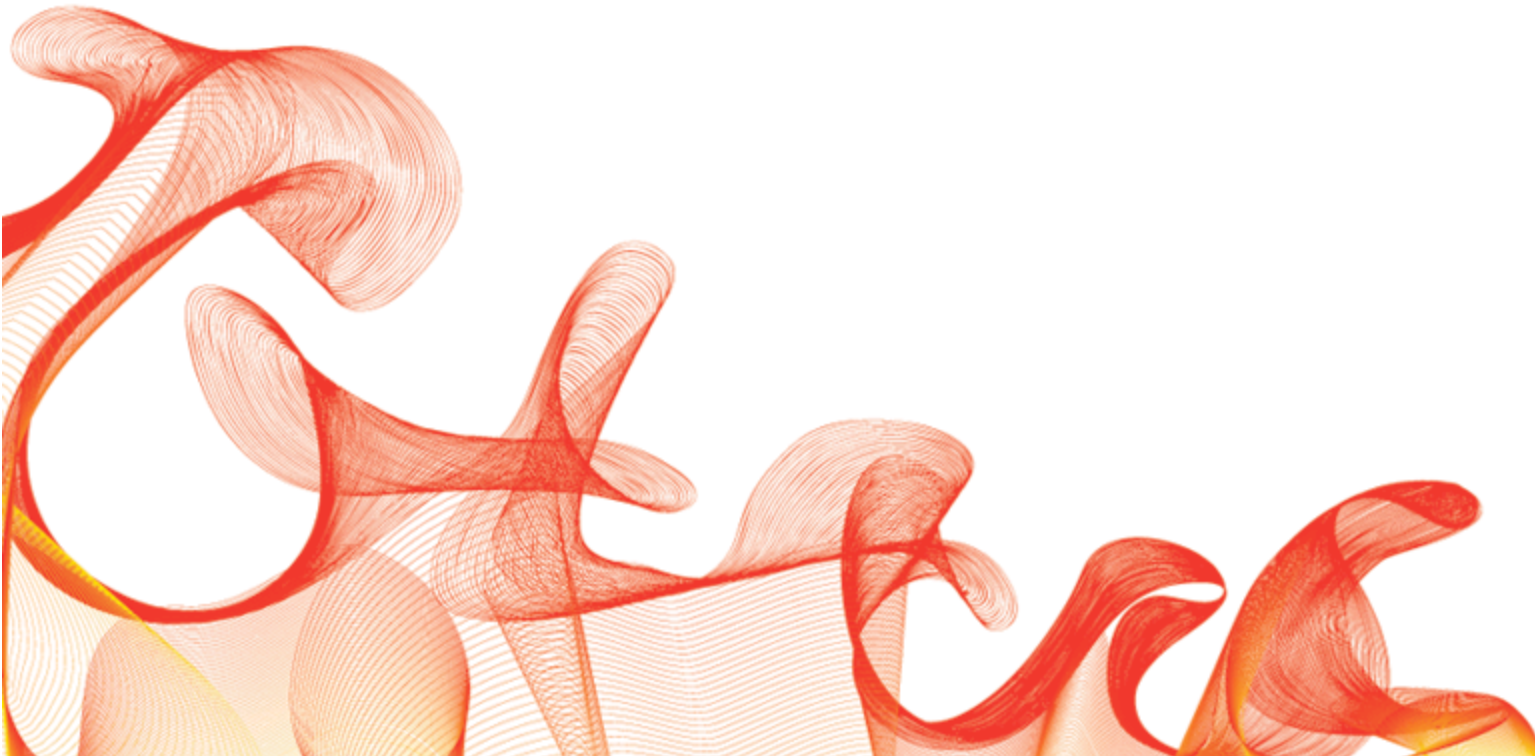


Take me home...I mean to the code!



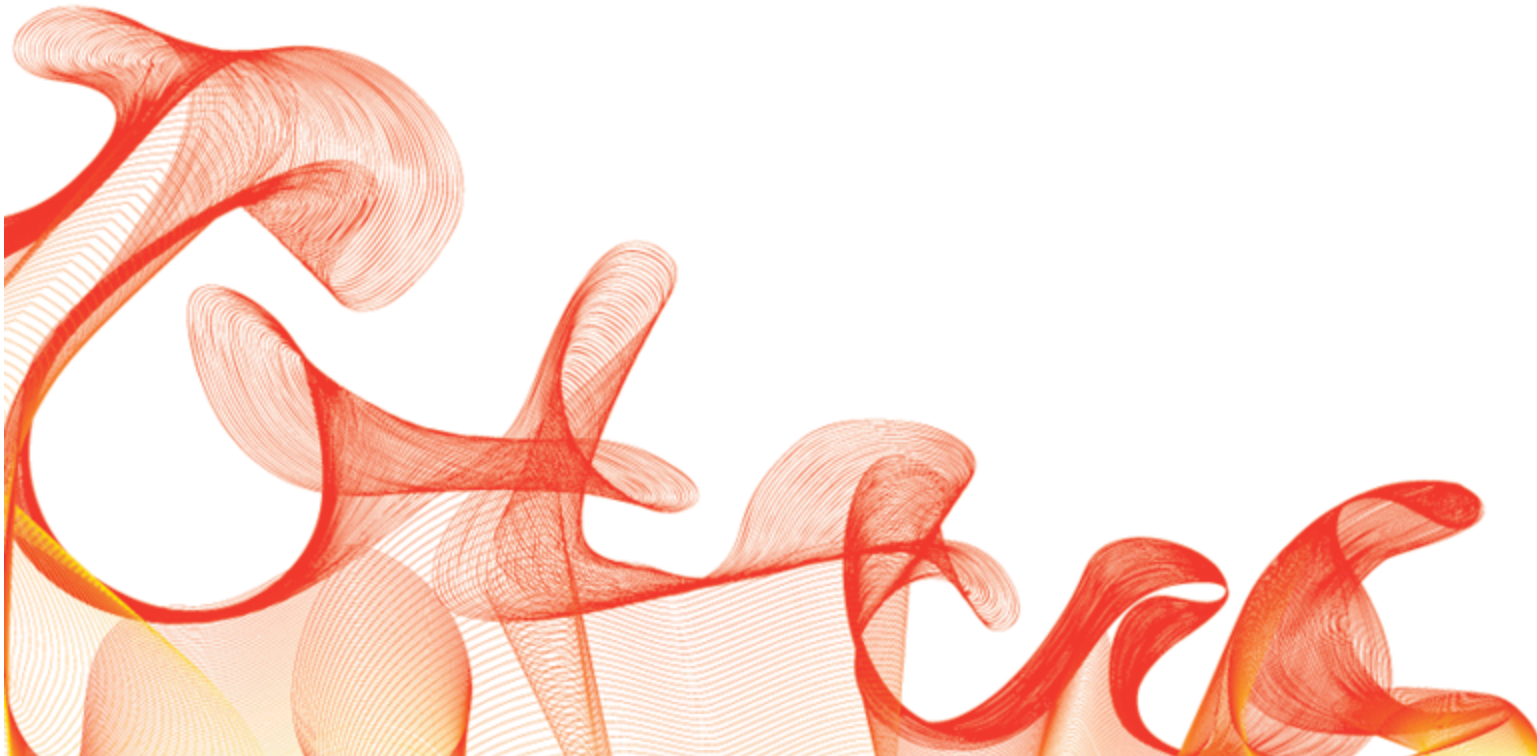
HTTPService

- Examples in code view



Web Service

- Examples in code view



Remote Object

- Examples in code view



So Which To Use?

- My professional opinion? It Depends!
 - HTTPService: simple REST, easy, fast, free, but may not be so robust for your situation. Quite popular for public API exposure.
 - WebService: easy in CF, disparate systems, may be more difficult to secure, verbose(gZip)
 - RemoteObject: free with CF, data/object type marshalling, published protocol, binary format, can be fast! Adobe touts it.

Q.....and.....A!



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Resources

- Adobe Flex - <http://www.adobe.com/products/flex/>
- Adobe CF 7.0.2 updater - <http://www.adobe.com/cfusion/knowledgebase/index.cfm?id=4ac796d0> NOT NEEDED FOR CF8 or CF9!
- LiveDocs - <http://livedocs.macromedia.com/>
- FlexCoders! flexcoders-subscribe@yahoogroups.com
- FlexCoders Archive - <http://www.mail-archive.com/flexcoders%40yahoogroups.com>
- <http://www.jamesward.com/census/>
- <http://www.programmableweb.com/>

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