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UML Requirements Modeling For Business Analysts



Synopsis

This book provides you with a collection of best practices, guidelines, and tips for using the Unified Modeling Language (UML) for business analysis. The contents have been assembled over the years based on experience and documented best practices. Over sixty easy to understand UML diagram examples will help you to apply these ideas immediately. If you use, expect to use, or think you should use the Unified Modeling Language (UML) or use cases in your business analysis activities, this book will help you: communicate more succinctly and effectively with your stakeholders including your software development team, increase the likelihood that your requirements will be reviewed and understood, reduce requirements analysis, documentation, and review time. The first three chapters explain the reasons for utilizing the UML for business analysis, present a brief history of the UML and its diagram categories, and describe a set of general modeling guidelines and tips applicable to all of the UML diagram types. Each of the next thirteen chapters is dedicated to a different UML diagram type: Use Case Diagrams Activity Diagrams Interaction Overview Diagrams Class Diagrams Object Diagrams State Machine Diagrams Timing Diagrams Sequence Diagrams Communication Diagrams Composite Structure Diagrams Component Diagrams Deployment Diagrams Package Diagrams The next two chapters explain additional diagram types that are important for business analysts and that can be created using UML notation: Context Diagrams using Communication diagram notation Data Models using Class diagram notation These chapters are followed by a chapter that describes criteria for selecting the various diagram types. The final chapter presents a case study.

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Customer Reviews

Norman Daoust should be commended for fighting his way through UML specifications and giving us a much more consumable form of the needed information for the business analyst. My only pushback would be that he would do a bit more filtering but that is a quibble. Mr. Daoust presents 14.5 models (diagrams with text) of which only about four are used with any kind of frequency. The first four chapters of the book are forms of introduction to the models and UML in general. I found it fairly straightforward with a few head scratches. I think Mr. Daoust gets a little too picky with the UML here (make sure we use the terms "model" and "diagram" correctly), it seems to be fair enough. I have to admit, I didn't get chapter three's table 3-1 on frames. I have no idea how that really impacts the business analyst. Chapter five starts the models use cases. I think this is the best model to start with. The diagram can be used to set context and the text can describe a task. While I agree that Use Cases can be used at multiple levels, my understanding is that it was primarily designed to be at a "task" level: a term that is in need of a definition. I was a little sad to see that Mr. Daoust doesn't take that up well. I was also surprised by the use of the terms "Main Success Scenario" and "Extensions". Those are sucky names and I will need to beat up on my buddies on the UML board if those terms came from those nasty specifications. Chapter six is Activity Diagrams and that turned out well. I would then skip to chapter 19, Data Models Using Class Diagram Notation as I think that is far more useful to business analysts than Mr. Daoust's desire to use Class Models (mostly we are talking about the use--or omission in my case--of the methods). Then onto chapter ten on State Diagrams. The rest of the chapters are there because UML says they are there but, while you may use them, you probably won't. Anyway, you wouldn't use but the main four with any kind of frequency so you would suck at them and it would probably be better not to try to model it. One place I differ the most with Mr. Daoust is on the use of Sequence Diagrams and Object Diagrams. Mr. Daoust supports using both and suggests not in my training. I think it has to do with the nature of working with business people. I find that the use of these two diagrams is too technical and confusing for business people. If you are working on a systems project with technical folks who program in an OO language, go for it. There is a nice case study in the back where you can get an overview of how the models might go together. Unfortunately, many models were thrown into the case study and, even though you can model it, I am not sure much value was added. However, if it helps save a ton of rework later, model on. This is a good book and I will be recommending it to my clients as a reference on how the models work and a good reminder of the notation.

Several months ago (before this book was released) I attended a talk by the author at my local IIBA chapter and won a copy in a raffle. The talk was very good and it was clear that he knows the subject well. A few days ago I received my copy. After skimming the whole thing and diving into a few chapters, it looks excellent. Some things I liked:- Daoust clearly spent a great deal of time thinking about which material to include and how to present it. (This is no slap-dash job.)- He relates very well to his business analyst audience.- He gives an excellent description of Structure Diagrams vs Behavior diagrams (the two main subcategories of UML diagrams).- A nice section that describes "which diagrams do I create and when."- In the parts that explain specific types of diagrams (Ch. 5-Ch. 19) the subsections provide just the kind of information that will help BA's: (a) Purpose, (b) Guidelines, (c) Diagram Notation, (d) Diagram Example, (e) Diagram Tips, (f) Naming Guidelines, (g) Modeling Process Summary, (h) Case Study Example Diagram, and (i) Relationships to Other UML Diagrams.- Good ideas you might not have thought of. For example: use Communication Diagram notation to create Context Diagrams and use Class Diagram notation to create Data Models. Neophytes will find it to be an excellent introduction to UML from a business analyst's perspective and experienced readers will find it to be a good reference book, reminder of best practices and probably a source of a few new ideas.

I like this book as a desk reference for learning the SysML. While I read the book titled "SysML Distilled," I felt I need some reference for UML. So I got this book and satisfied with the book in this sense.

Well written and organized. Each chapter builds on the previous but are all laid out symmetrically. You can jump in at any point for reference or read from beginning to end to get a great understanding of business UML as a whole.

I found the material leads to a workable solution, which is all I'm asking for -- I don't feel a "best" solution would provide any significant benefit and would result in wasted time and effort. It is easy to follow and apply to your own scenarios. There was just enough on each diagram type to get you the information you need to do it well without any bloat of examples, details, or opinions.

Requirements definition is a basic skill most of us need to do at some point. Having a standardized way of representing requirements saves a lot of time. Who wants to create an ad hoc methodology

in order to define some requirements when UML handles everything you need to do? Daoust's book is a very practical guide to UML as applied to Use Cases, Activity Diagrams, Interaction Diagrams, Class models, Object models, Timing diagrams, Sequence diagrams, Communications diagrams, and lots of others. He provides concrete examples and anticipates common problems people face when using these techniques. It's essentially an implementation guide for Martin Fowler's classic text "UML Distilled". As a reference book, I bought the Kindle version so I can always have it in case I am on a consulting project and need a quick UML refresher.

Although I haven't read the book from cover to cover, I use it frequently as needs arise. The first few chapters provide a great intro and layout to what follows. I refer to it and can easily find specific applications as needs arise. The format and text are easy to follow and presented in a friendly, useful flow. I've been able to share descriptive excerpts with business stakeholders that needed to understand purpose of work efforts to other business analysts who needed guidance for requirements documentation. The output developed when following Norman's guide provide clear direction for developers and data modelers. Thank you Norman!

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