Use-Case Analysis

What is it?
- An informal, user-friendly, technique useful for functional requirements analysis and specification

From where did it come?
- Ivar Jacobson, a Swedish software engineer at Ericsson, now with Rational, in a method called OOSE (Object-Oriented Software Engineering). Originally called “Usage cases”
- Now “part of” UML

Definition of “Use Case”
- “The specification of sequences of actions that a system, subsystem, or class can perform by interacting with outside actors”


Purpose of a “Use Case”
- “to define a piece of behavior of a [system or subsystem or class] without revealing the internal structure of the [system]”


UML References
Importance of Use Cases

- At least one popular methodology (the Rational Unified Process, based in part on Ivar Jacobson’s earlier OOSE) is said to be Use-Case Driven,

- meaning that most development activities are traceable back to the use cases as defined in agreement with the user or customer.

Nonetheless

- Use cases alone do not constitute a complete SRS.

- For example, they focus on the functional requirements exclusively.

Use-Case References

recommended:

not recommended:

Other Implications

- Use cases could be used for other types of design, and system analysis, not just software.

- Once you know about them, it is hard to imagine an engineering project or business process of almost any kind starting without them.

Characteristics of Use-Case Analysis

- **Use-cases**: The specific ways in which the system is used.

- Each use-case expresses a “complete thought” or end-to-end transaction.

- A “black-box” specification; does not deal with internal structure.

Some Key Components of Use-Case Analysis

- **Actors**: Entities that use or are used by the system; typically people, but could also be other systems or devices as long as they are outside the system being specified.

- **Connections** from Actors to Use-Cases

- **Relationships** between Actors or between Use-Cases
Actors

- Actors are characterized not by the identity of the user or other, but rather by the role played by the actor.
- One person can be several different actors in different roles.
- One actor can be played (at different times) by several different persons.
- An entire committee could be one actor.
- An actor need not be a living thing; it could be another subsystem.

More on Actors

- Actors are not part of the system in question; they supply input to and receive output from, to the system.
- In other words, actors collectively define the environment of the system.
- This does not preclude the possibility of an object in the system standing for an actor.

Minimum Requirement for a Use Case

- Verbal description

Common Components of a Use Case

- Name
- Symbolic label
- List of actors
- Initiator
- Verbal description

Initiator

- The initiator of a use case is the actor that starts the flow of events.

Brief Use-Case Description

OCI: Order from catalog
- Initiator: customer
- Description: Customer calls to order items from the catalog. The sales rep. identifies the item numbers, verifies that the items are in stock, and confirms the order with the customer, giving him the order number. The sales rep. then forwards the order to the Shipping dept.
Flow of Events

Could be more readable for the description to be an enumerated list of events, e.g.:
1. Customer calls to order from catalog.
2. Sales representative identifies item numbers.
4. Sales representative confirms order.
5. Sales representative gives order number to Customer.
6. Sales representative passes order number to Shipping.

Flow-of-event descriptions could contain iteration

An order could contain multiple items. In this case, the event flow should show something like:
- For each item to be ordered:
  - Sales representative checks catalog number.
  - Sales representative verifies stock.
  - Sales representative records item.

Similarly, flow of events could contain conditional (if-then-else) behaviors.

Use Case Diagrams

For visualization of use case interactions; diagrams are not the use cases themselves.
- Don’t tell the whole story
- Useful in brainstorming
- Used in software tools, such as:
  - Rational Rose
  - iLogix Rhapsody

Icon for an Actor

Note: Actors are typically drawn in this "anthropomorphic" way even when the actors aren’t people.

Examples of Actors

Customer
Shipping Dept.

Alternate Actor Icons in UML

Visual Icon

Textual Stereotyping

Textual & Visual Stereotyping
**UML Use of “Stereotypes”**

- The « ... » notation called “guillemets”, (used for quotes in French, Italian, and Spanish)

- These usually indicate the name of a “stereotype”, defined as an informal extension of the UML.

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**Icon for a Use Case**

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**Noting the Initiator**

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**for a mail-order catalog business**

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**Symbology for a simple use-case**

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**Class Exercise**

- Identify several other possible use-cases in the catalog-order enterprise.

- For each use case, indicate the actors, initiator, and flow of events.
Steps in Use-Case Analysis

- Identify system boundaries
- Identify actors:
  - Recall: an actor is an entity playing a particular role with respect to the system.

Steps in Use-Case Analysis (cont’d)

- Identify use cases themselves:
  - Every use case has at least one actor.
  - A specific actor initiates the use case.
  - The same actor may participate in multiple use cases, as initiator in some and not in others.
- Create the description including flow of events
- Identify clarifying scenarios where helpful
- Provide additional information (see later)

Scenarios of a Use Case

- A “scenario” is a single path through the event flow. For example, if there is a conditional part, only one branch is taken in the scenario.
- Obviously we can’t always enumerate all the scenarios; there might be an infinite set of them. If the use case involves iteration, only a finite number of iterations are used in the scenario.

Scenarios (continued)

- Often there will be a “principal” scenario, and several secondary variations.

A Catalog Order Scenario (1 of 3)

- Alice calls company.
- Bert answers the telephone.
- Alice indicates she wishes to place an order.
- Bert asks how the order will be paid.
- Alice indicates via credit card.
- Bert asks for the card number, billing address, and expiration date.
- Alice provides the above info.

A Catalog Order Scenario (2 of 3)

- Bert asks for the first item.
- Alice responds with first item.
- Bert asks for quantity of first item.
- Alice responds with quantity of first item.
- Bert asks for second item.
- Alice responds with second item.
- Bert indicates second item out of stock; does Alice wish it to be back ordered?
- Alice declines to order item.
A Catalog Order Scenario (3 of 3)

- Bert asks for third item.
- Alice responds that there are no more items.
- Bert asks for shipping address.
- Alice indicates that it is the same as the billing address.
- Bert informs Alice of expected shipping date and provides order number.
- Bert thanks Alice.
- Alice hangs up.
- Bert transmits order to Shipping dept.

Use-Case Advice
(Larry Constantine and others)

- Write in the active voice.
- Pair responses with the events that invoke them.
- Identify domain objects that clearly are part of the application context (such as "catalog", "inventory", "fleet" (of automobiles)).
  [A domain dictionary or glossary could be used.]

Sequence Diagram for an ATM Withdrawal Use Case

Scenarios and Exceptions

- One possible use of scenarios is in demonstrating representative exceptional or "what if" behaviors (as opposed to the principal behavior).
- **Example:** In the catalog order use case, what if the customer hangs up or connection is lost in the middle of the dialog?
Scenario Types (Bruegge)

- **Visionary** scenario: Describes future scenario
- **Evaluation** scenarios: Describe user tasks against which system is evaluated
- **Training** scenarios: Used for tutorial purposes
- **As-is** scenarios: Describe current situation (during reengineering)

UML Package Notation

Used for Grouping; Could be Used to Group Use Cases

Car Rental Example

How might the use cases be packaged?

Car Rental Example with Two Packages

Use of Packages

Packages may be used in the transition to a design, and ultimately coding.

However, these connections would not normally be part of the initial discussion with the customer.

Relations between Use Cases
**Inclusion among use-cases**

- Place order using credit card
- Verify credit card

**Extension among use-cases**

- Place order using credit card
- Verify credit card

**extends vs. uses**

- «includes» means this use-case makes use of another use-case, as if a kind of subroutine. This allows us to not have to repeat the included use-case in the description of the including use-case.

- «extends» means that this use-case is a specialization of another use case.

Note: «includes» was formerly called «uses».

**Options of a use case**

- Example: During order processing, the sales representative offers to tell the customer about current specials.

- Such options should be mentioned as an annex to the other use case items.

**Actor Hierarchies**

are possible, similar to extensions
### Caution about Structuring Use-Cases

- Use-case structuring is obviously analogous to structuring in object-oriented systems.
- However, one should not infer that use-case structure implies anything about internal structure of the system.

### Use-cases vs. Requirements

- A use-case describes one "unit" of functionality.
- A single informally-specified functional requirement could translate into multiple use-cases.
- A single use-case could also be involved in satisfying multiple requirements.

### Use-cases vs. Requirements (cont’d)

- Collectively, the use-cases ideally should account for all of the desired functional requirements.
- Non-functional requirements may annotate use-cases, but don't get represented as use-cases directly.

### Further Possible Components of Use Cases

### Goals

- A goal describes the higher purpose of the execution of the use case.
- Example: Goal for catalog order: A customer wishes to order products from the company.

### Pre- and Post-Conditions

- Some use-cases are not meaningful at arbitrary times, but instead only when the system is in a state with certain properties. Such properties are called pre-conditions.
- Similarly, the use-case might leave the system in a state known to satisfy one or more post-conditions.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Example:</th>
<th>Invariants</th>
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| - For the car-rental enterprise, the use case “checkin vehicle” has the pre-condition vehicle is rented to driver and the post-condition: vehicle is on site & vehicle is not rented to a driver. | - A condition that is a pre- and post-condition for all use cases is called an invariant.  
| - For the use-case “checkout vehicle”, these conditions are reversed. | |

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Optional Triggers</th>
<th>Exceptions</th>
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| - A trigger is an event that causes the use case to be run.  
- Example: A catalog order is triggered by a phone call.  
- This is similar to a pre-condition, but is a dynamic event rather than a condition. | - If a use case cannot be completed as described, an exception is said to occur.  
- The description can indicate aspects of the state and output in such cases. |

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<tr>
<th>Alternative to Exceptions</th>
<th>Precedence among Use-Cases</th>
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| - A use case may be allowed explicit success and failure outcomes, each with its own post condition. | - When one use case is used to establish a pre-condition for another, the two may be linked by «precedes».  
- One use of precedence is to factor a use-case into sub-cases, to avoid repetition among different sub-cases. |
Precedence Example

Stock-trading example:

Perform Trade could factor into Enter Buy Order

Get Portfolio «precedes» Enter Sell Order

Subset of “Top 10 Use-Case Pitfalls”
http://www.cs.uwf.edu/~italbot/cen5990/lib/use_case_pitfalls.html

- The use cases aren’t written so the customer can understand them.
- The system boundary is undefined or inconsistent.
- The use cases are written from the system’s (not the actors’) point of view.
- The actor names are inconsistent across use cases.
- The use cases don’t correctly separate actors based on functional entitlement.
- The use-case specifications are too long or confusing.

CS 121

Addendum to Assignment

Due Monday

Develop a Set of Use Cases

- Regarding the requirements that were elicited in the previous exercise:
  - Enumerate in name only as many use cases as would be needed to define the scope of the software.
  - Give detailed description of any five of those use cases, using the attached template.
  - Give a use-case diagram showing your five cases together.

Use-Case Template

Use the following template for use cases:
- Label
- Name
- Goal
- Actors
- Initiator
- Description
- Pre-conditions
- Post-conditions
- Options (if present)
- Scenario, if helpful in clarifying

Traceability Matrix

- Provide a Traceability Matrix, which lists each of the requirements stated here and identifies the use cases that cover those requirements.
Additional Points on Use Cases

Do Not use Use-Cases to Fully Decompose into a Design

- Factoring should be used to simplify the description of use-cases.
- Avoid the temptation of making use-case decompositions into design.
- Use-cases are customer language, not design language or pseudo-code. They describe what, not how.
- There are other tools that are better-suited to the design phase.

Uses of Use-Cases across Development Phases (Bruce Douglass, "Doing Hard Time")

- Analysis phase:
  - Suggest large-scale partitioning of the problem domain
  - Provide structuring of analysis objects (i.e. actors and sub-systems)
  - Clarify system and object responsibilities
  - Capture new features as they are added
  - Validate analysis model

- Design phase:
  - Validate the elaboration of analysis models in the presence of design objects

- Coding phase:
  - Clarify purpose and role of classes for coders
  - Focus coding efforts

- Testing phase:
  - Provide test scenarios for validation

- Deployment phase:
  - Suggest iterative prototypes for spiral development

Levels of Use Cases

- These ideas are from Use Cases: Requirements in Context, Daryl Kulak and Eamonn Guiney, ACM Press, 2000.

- Four iterative levels for specifying use cases:
  - Façade: Outline and high-level descriptions
  - Filled: Broader and deeper descriptions
  - Focused: Narrowing and pruning
  - Finished: Touch-up and fine-tuning

- See the reference for example worked out at all levels.

Façade Use-Case Components

- Name
- [Goal] (I added this.)
- Summary
- Basic course of events
**Filled Use-Case Components**

- Name
- [Goal]
- Summary
- Basic course of events
- Alternative paths
- Exception paths

**Focused Use-Case Components**

- Name
- [Goal]
- Summary
- Basic course of events
- Alternative paths
- Exception paths
- Extension [Option] points
- Trigger
- Assumptions
- Preconditions
- Postconditions
- Related *business rules*

**Business Rules**

- *Business rules* are requirements that represent *constraints* on behaviors, rather than behaviors themselves.

  - Examples:
    - All transactions are in U.S. Dollars.
    - Valid operators license is required in order to rent a car.
    - Late-fee is assessed for enrollment after the second week of the semester.

**Finished Use-Case Components**

- Same components as in the *Focused* iteration, just more polished.

**UML Ways of Clarifying Complex Behaviors in Use Cases**

- These are more technical and may be more appropriate in the *design* phase. However, sometimes they can clarify a use case:
  - *Sequence diagram*: shows messages between actors and sub-systems.
  - *Collaboration diagram*: a sequence diagram organized as a directed graph rather than as a linear sequence of messages.
  - *State chart*: Elucidates behavior in terms of properties of state.
  - *Timing diagram*: a sequence diagram with a time metric applied to the sequence dimension.