

Next-Generation Business Process Management with YAWL

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Acknowledgement



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Outline



- Background WfMS and PAIS
- Conceptual Foundation the Workflow Patterns Initiative
 - Part I
 - Control-flow patterns
 - Data patterns
 - Resource patterns
- Next-Generation Business Process Management with YAWL
 - Part II
 - The YAWL language
 - The YAWL system



Problems in the field of Workflow/BPM



- Lack of commonly accepted conceptual foundations
- Lack of proper formal foundations (this despite the amount of buzz ...)
- No lack of proposed standards ...
- Tools are typically hard to use, expensive and not easily integrated
- Lack of support for processes that need to change on-the-fly
- Lack of proper support for exceptions
- Limited support for design time analysis (verification and validation)
- Resource perspective particularly underwhelming
- Insufficient support for inter-process communication



Workflow 2.0



- Strong multi-perspective integrated support
- Support for the full BPM lifecycle
 - Configuration
 - Modelling
 - Pre-execution analysis (both simulation & verification)
 - Execution (close link to modelling)
 - Monitoring
 - Post-execution analysis
- Flexibility support
 - Exception handling
 - Declarative workflow
 - Evolving workflow
- Service-oriented architecture



YAWL Overview

- Collaboration between TU/e and QUT
- Based on Workflow Patterns Initiative
- YAWL: 2002 newYAWL: 2007
- System development
 - Open source (currently LGPL)
 - Governed by YAWL Foundation
 - Industry collaboration
 - M2 Investments first:telecom (2004)
 - Intercontinental Hotels Group (2005 2007)
 - GECKO (2008)
- Main publication
 - W.M.P. van der Aalst and A.H.M. ter Hofstede. YAWL: Yet Another Workflow Language, Information Systems 30(4):245-275, 2005
- URLs:
 - www.yawlfoundation.org (research)
 - www.sourceforge.net/projects/yawl (system)
 - <u>http://www.yawlgroup.com</u> (consultancy)





YAWL Highlights



YAWL

- Based on the (old) control-flow patterns
- Extends Petri nets
- Formal Foundation
- Verification
- Dynamic workflow
- Declarative workflow
- Exception handling

YAWL System

- Open source
- Service oriented architecture
- Production class
- Comprehensive support for control-flow and resource patterns
- Strong support for flexibility
- Link to ProM for post-execution analysis and simulation



YAWL vs Petri nets

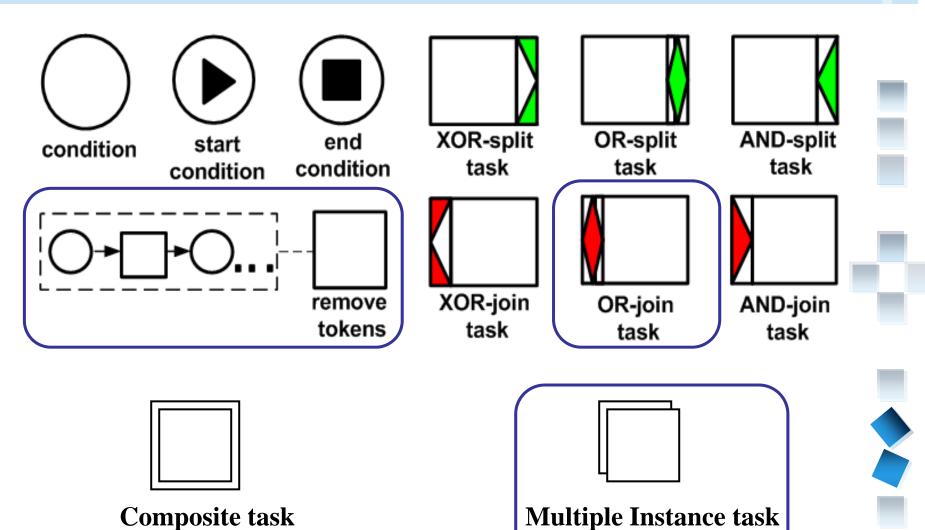


- Petri nets have difficulties capturing:
 - The General Synchronising Merge
 - Patterns involving Multiple Instances
 - Cancellation of a certain part of a process
- For the Control Flow Perspective, YAWL takes some concepts from Petri nets and adds constructs for:
 - OR-join to deal with General Synchronising Merge
 - Multiple Instance (MI) tasks
 - Cancellation regions
 - "Syntactic Sugar" (various splits/joins, direct connections between tasks)



YAWL notation

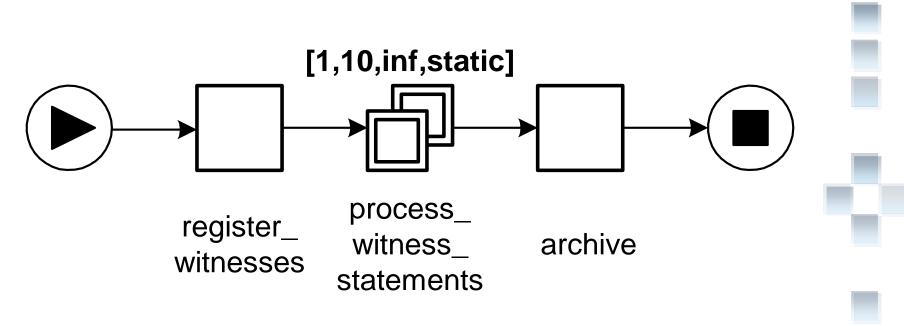






Multiple Instances Example I



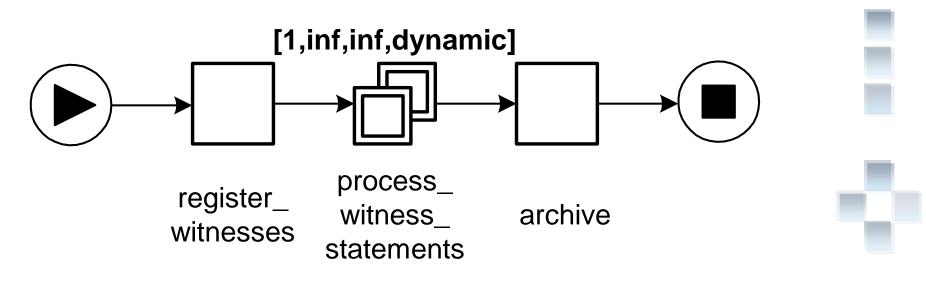


In between 1 and 10 witness statements are processed, witnesses cannot be added after registation of them has finished



Multiple Instances Example II





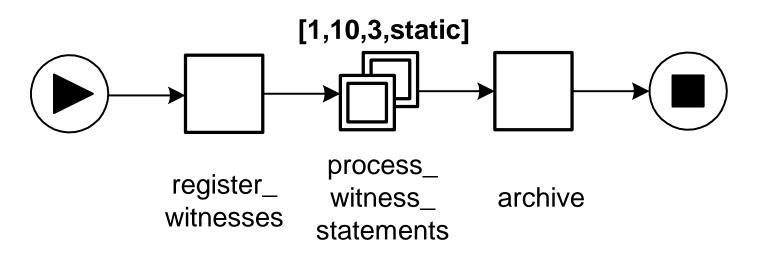
An arbitrary number of witnesses can be processed, furthermore, more witnesses can be incorporated after processgin has started but before archiving





Multiple Instances Example III





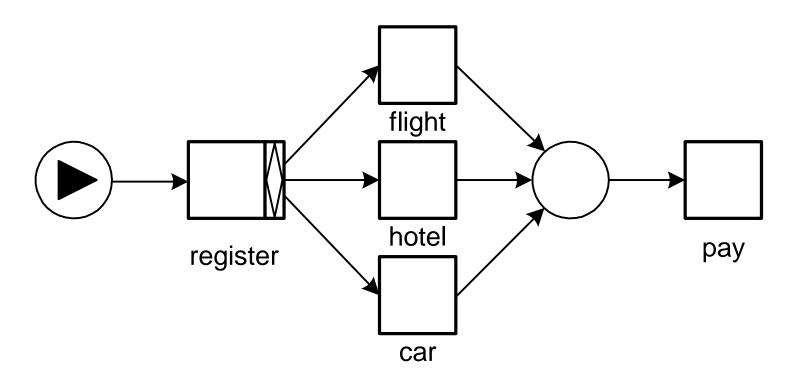
In between 1 and 10 witness statements are to be processed; after three statements have been processed, or all that were started initially, archiving can start





General YAWL Example I

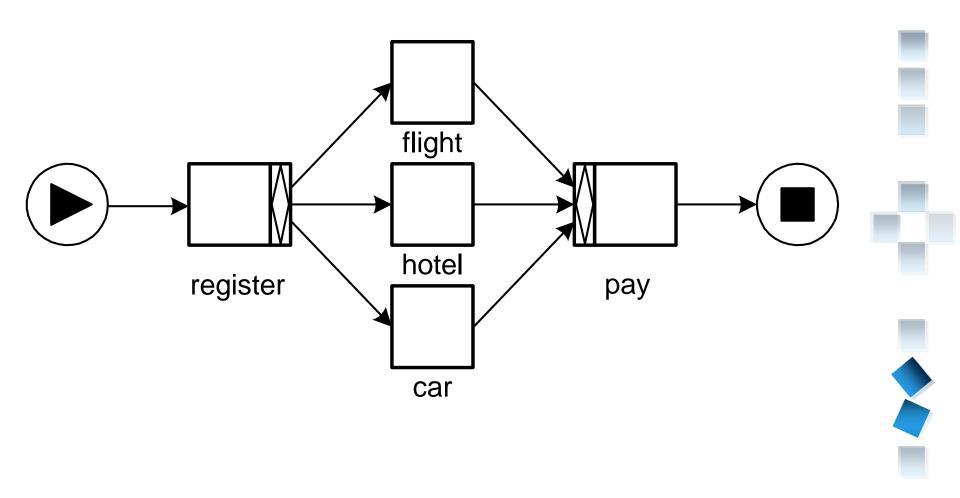






General YAWL Example II

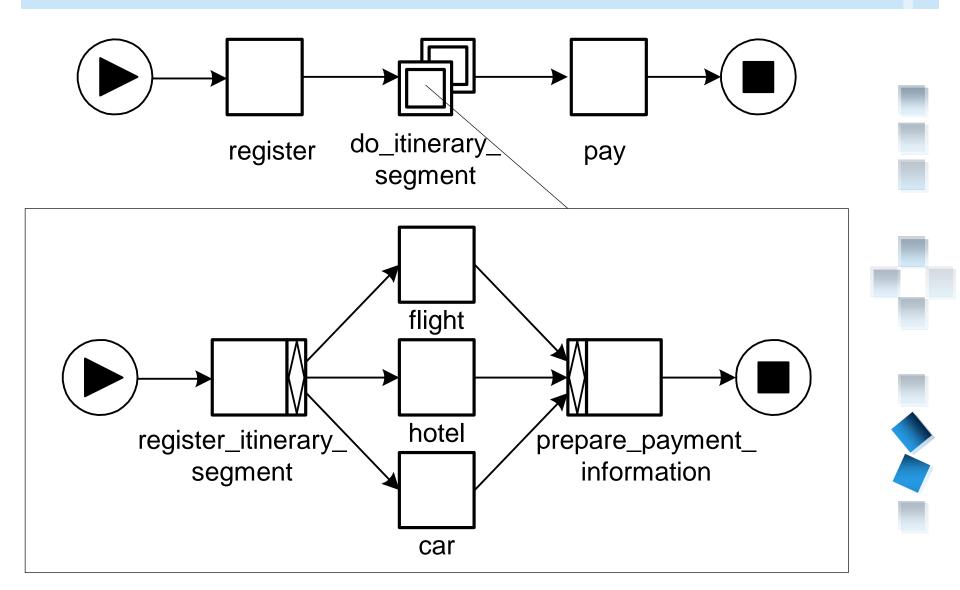






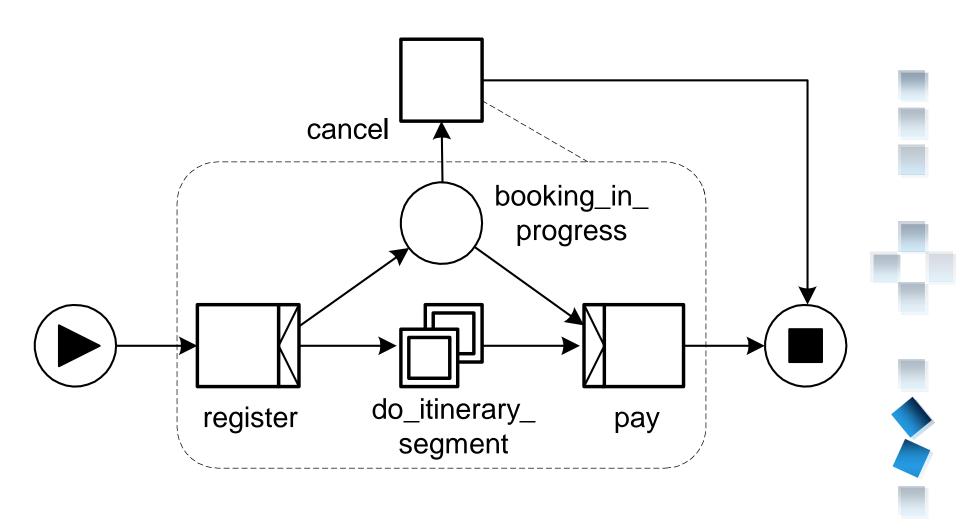
General YAWL Example III





General YAWL Example IV







The YAWL System



- Engine, Graphical Editor
- Custom YAWL Services (e.g. Declare, Worklets, Digital Signature)
- First release November 2003, Open Sourced in May 2004
- Perspectives:
 - Control-flow: comprehensive support
 - Data: using XML technologies
 - Resource: comprehensive support
 - Operational: tasks can be linked to web services, but also to codelets
- Service-oriented architecture
- Automated form generation
- Support for dynamic workflow and exception handling
- Support for design time verification
- Persistence (thanks to first:utility)
- Link to ProM



Native use of XML: Generation of XForms



Edit Work Item: 53.1:register

register	
customer:	Please type name
legs	
leg	- +
departure_location	1:
destination:	
leg · +	
departure_location:	
destination:	
payAccNumber:	
Cancel	Save Complete



Custom Forms



ROPE BURN DIRECTOR: MELVIN MONTALBAN | PRODUCER: ADAM BISHOP TUES, 9-10-2007 Production Managers: ALICE WHITE Shoot Day 1 of 3 1st AD: CHERYL SMITH Police: Eastwood Police Station ph (02) 9858 5944 Hospital: Ryde Hospital 1 Denistone Road Eastwood Fire/Ambulance: 000 NSW 2212 ph (02) 9874 0199 **Production Office** Address Australian Film Television and Radio School: Corner Epping and Balaclava Roads, North Ryde, NSW Fax +61.2.9887 1030 Phone +61.2.9805 6676 Email ropeburnproduction@gmail.com Weather Sunrise: 05:24:00 Sunset: 18:02:00 Forecast: Partly Cloudy Min 14 Max 21 **Call Times** Calls Time Location Crew 08:00:00 AFTRS **Shooting Schedule** ABSOLUTELY NO FOOD OR DRINK (EXCEPT FOR WATER BOTTLES) IN STUDIO Start of Day Notes Pages: 4/8 Timing: 00:00:25 Set: DRESSING ROOM Night / INT Synposis: Charlie's not going to Europe with them PU M/UP WR Character Artist On Set CHARLIE 0630 0745 0715 0815 Eloise Oxer SIMONE 0620 Amelia Best 0715 0845 0815 Insert Row Delete Row Shoot Times: 09:00-11:15 Scene BLOCK-THROUGH 0815-0830 THEN LIGHT/COMPLETE M/UP AND WR 0830-0900 Notes: Pages: 1 2/8 Timing: 00:01:07 Night/INT Set: DRESSING ROOM Synposis: Simone and Charlie get it on but are interrupted. Character Artist M/UP On Set Partial Submission Final Submission Print Save Submission Upload Print Preview



Work Lists: Default View

Admin Queues

Edit Profile



Logout

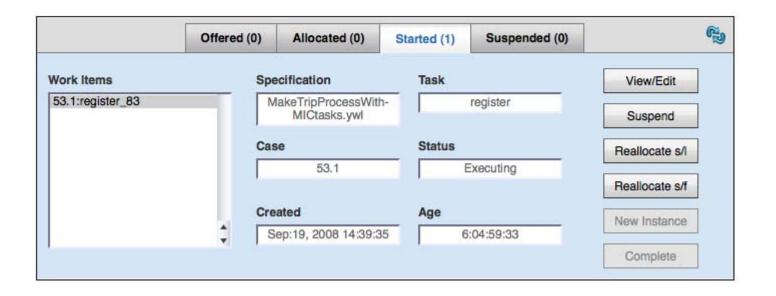
Services



Users

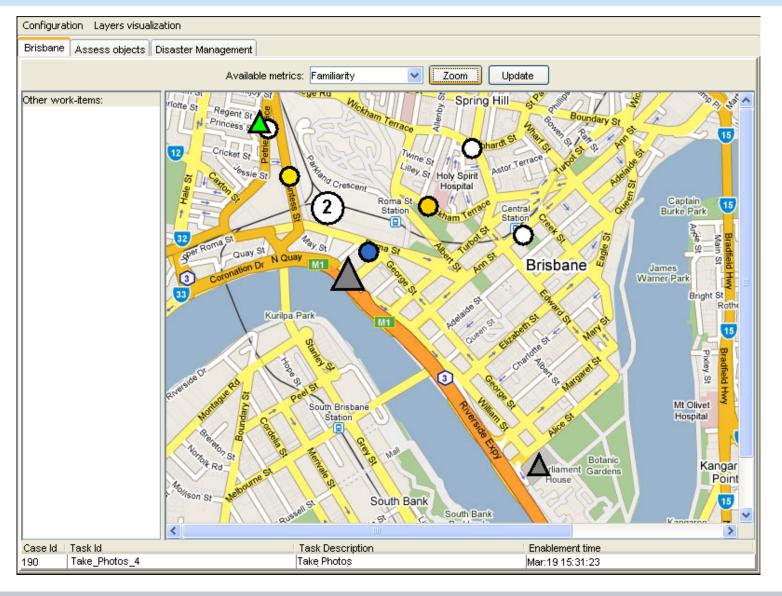
Cases

Org Data



Work Lists: Alternative View I

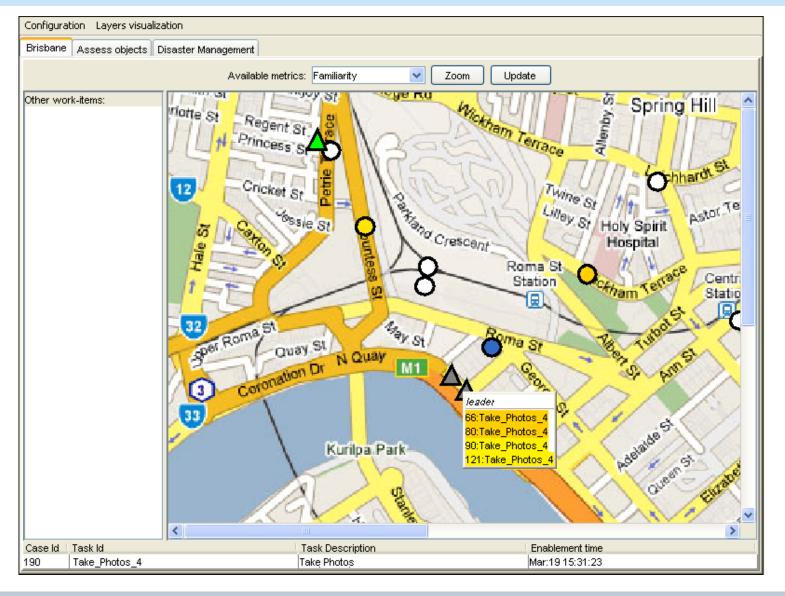






Work Lists: Alternative View I – C'ntd

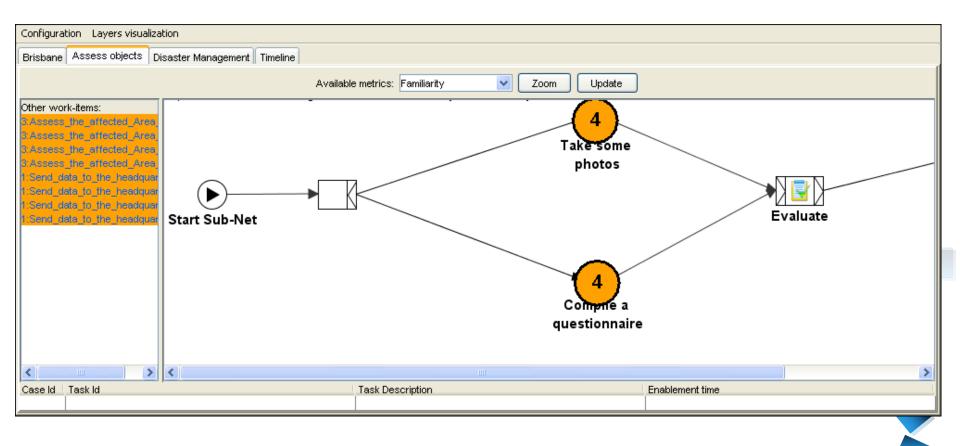






Work Lists: Alternative View II

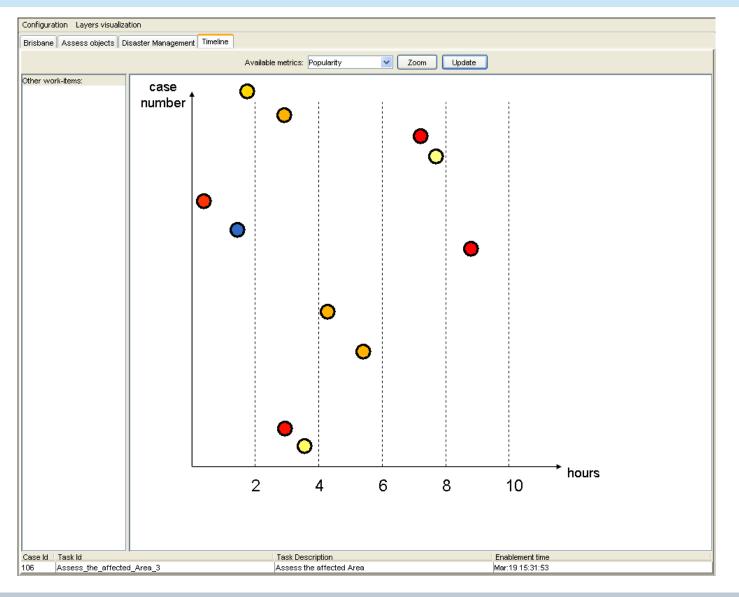






Work Lists: Alternative View III

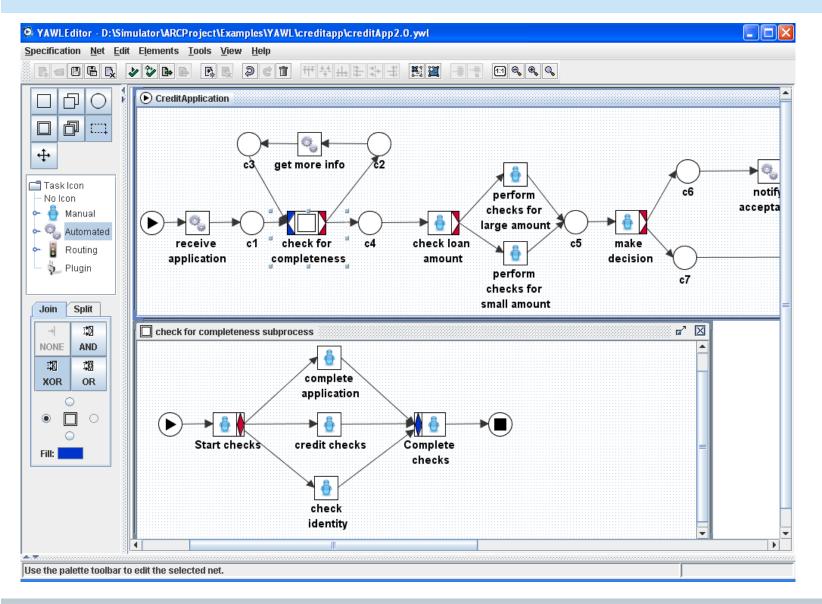






Design: YAWL Editor

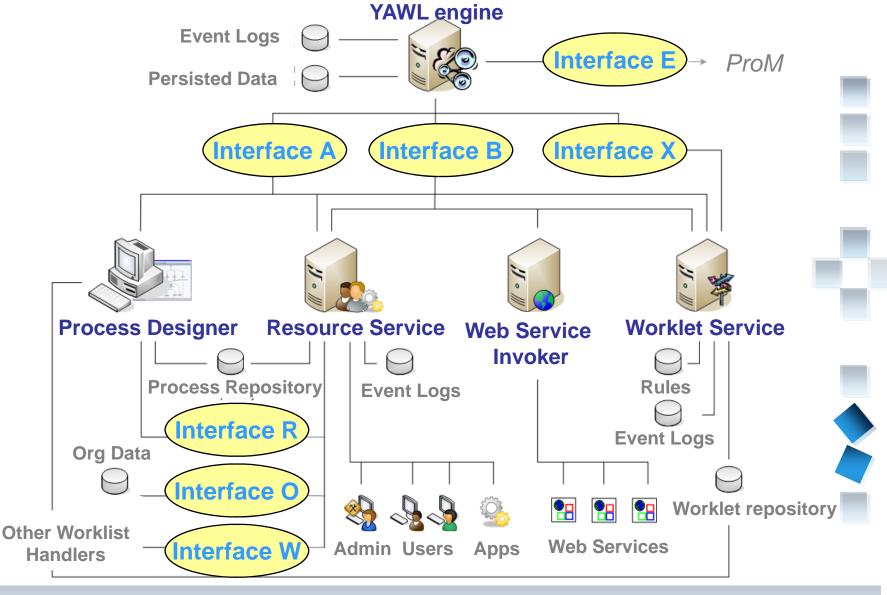






Service Oriented Architecture





Dynamic Workflow and Exception Handling: Workflow Limitations



- Uptake of WfMS is limited to implementation of rigid and/or idealised workflow processes.
- Reason: WfMSs have difficulty dealing with process flexibility:
 - Keeping it simple means ignoring deviations
 - Capturing deviations means complex models
 - difficulty evolving with the work practices they model
 - difficulty representing "real-world" activities
 - limited exception handling capabilities

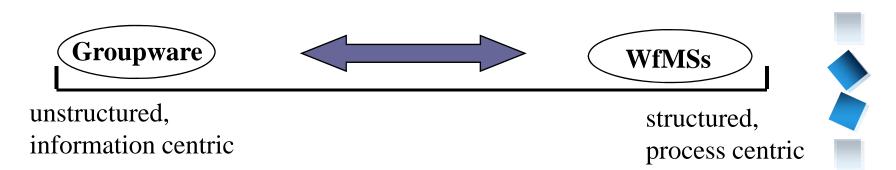




Limitations of the Paradigm



- The enforced rigidity of the "assembly line" paradigm means WfMSs cannot successfully deal with:
 - Exceptional events (i.e. deviations)
 - Developmental or unexpected change
 - Creative or ad-hoc processes
- Real work is complex and often unable to fit the paradigm (so how do people really work?)



Activity Theory



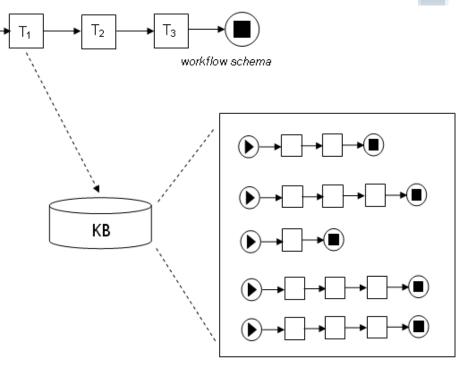
- Activity Theory describes the frameworks associated with human activity.
- Originated in USSR in 1920's as part of the cultural-historical school of psychology.
- Incorporates Marxist ideas of human activity:
 - mediated by artefacts.
 - has strict division of labour.
 - transforms both nature and the worker.
 - uses "activity → action → operation" to delineate the individual's activity from the collective activity.



Worklets



- A worklet is a small, self-contained, complete workflow process which handles one specific action (task) in a larger, composite activity (process).
- Each task of a process instance may be linked to an extensible repertoire of worklets, one of which is contextually chosen at runtime to carry out the task.
- The repertoire is dynamically constructed as different approaches to completing a task are developed, derived from the context of each process instance.
- A sequence of worklets may be chained to form an entire workflow process.



catalog of available actions

Worklet Selection



- Each worklet is a representation of a particular situated action, the runtime selection of which relies on the relevant context of each case instance, derived from case and historical data.
- The worklet selection process is achieved through the use of modified Ripple Down Rules (RDR).
- An RDR Knowledge Base is a collection of simple rules conceptually arranged in a binary tree structure.
- Each rule node may have a false ('or') branch and/or a true ('exception') branch to another rule node
 - the root node has a default rule and can have a true branch only.
- If a rule is satisfied, the true branch is taken and the rule of the child node is evaluated
- If it is not satisfied, the false branch is taken and its child node rule is evaluated.



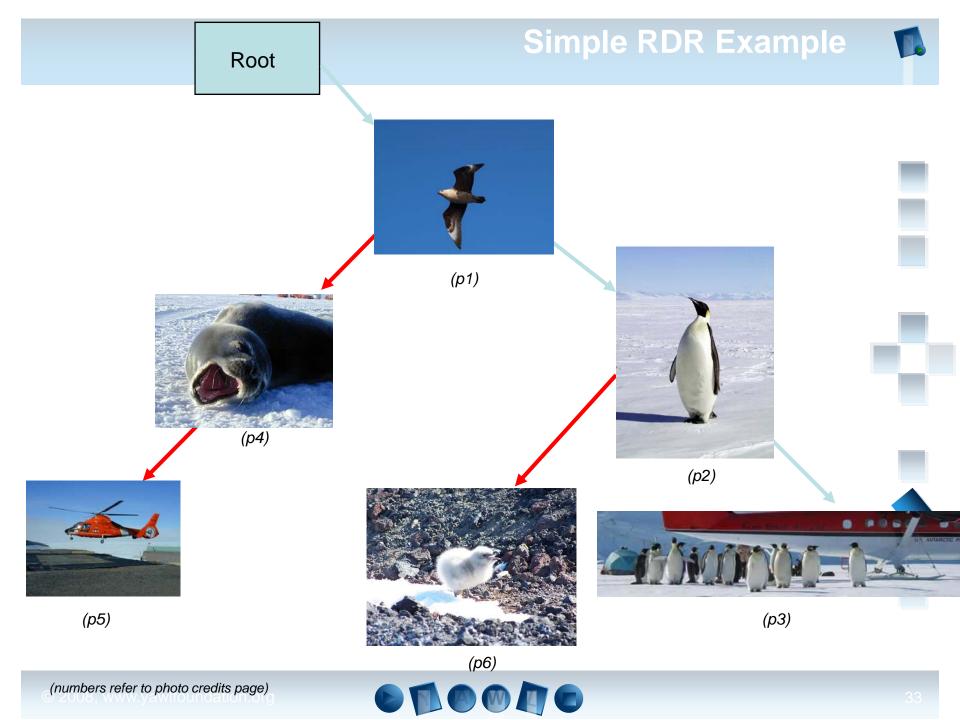
RDR Structure



- When a terminal node is reached:
 - if its rule is satisfied, then its conclusion is returned
 - if its rule is not satisfied, then the conclusion of the last rule satisfied on the path to that node is returned
- If the conclusion returned is found to be unsuitable for a particular case instance, a new rule may be formulated and added as a new leaf node.
 - In essence, each added rule is a refinement of its parent.

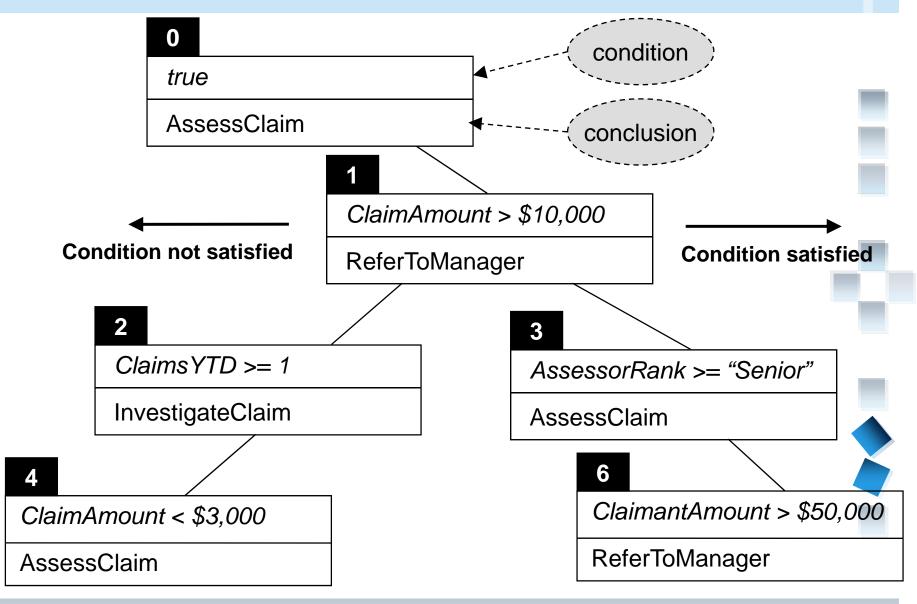






Sample RDR set for a Assess Claim task in Insurance Claim

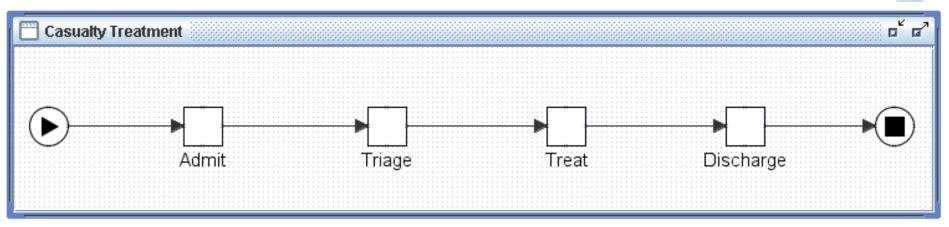






Worklets: A Simple Example



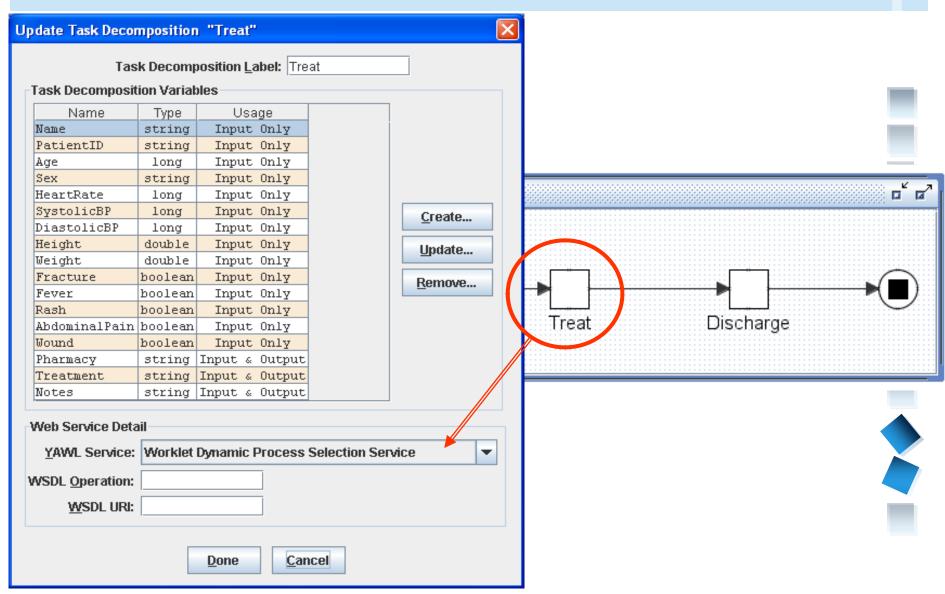






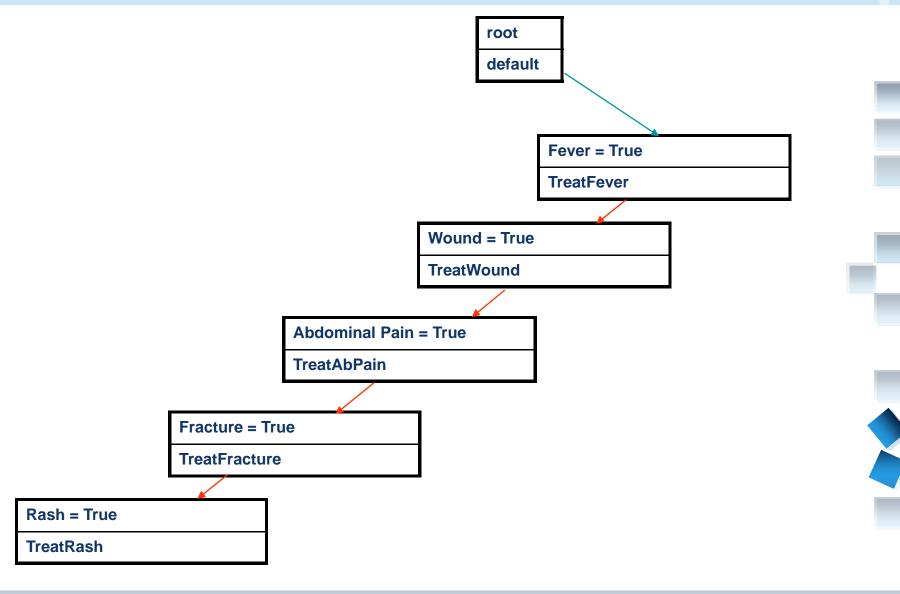
Worklets: A Simple Example





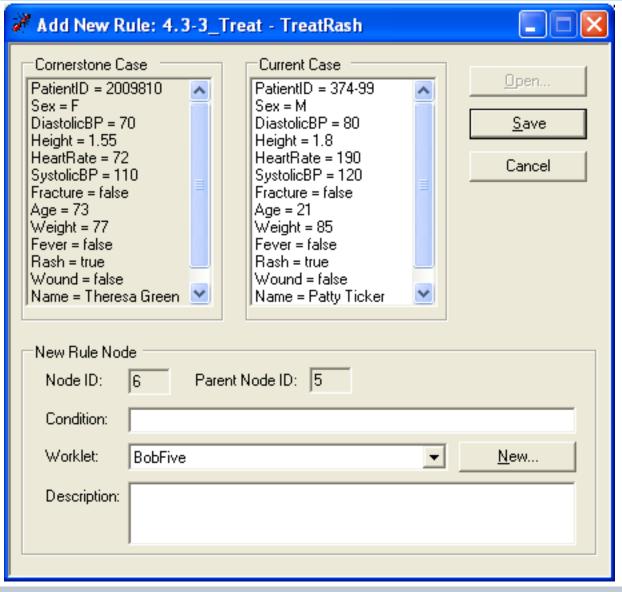
Example Rule Set





Adding a New Rule: Example







Worklet Exception Service



- The Worklet Service also provides support for exception handling.
- Each specification may have a separate RDR rule set defined for each type of possible process exception.
- When an exception occurs:
 - If a process has a rule set defined for that exception type, the worklet service will handle the exception by invoking an appropriately selected exception handling process
 - If there is no associated rule set, the exception is simply ignored.





Worklets & Exceptions



- The Worklet Service uses the same rules framework for selecting exception handlers as it does for worklet substitutions
- For exceptions, a discrete exception handling sequence is selected instead of a single worklet
 - The exception sequence may contain a worklet to run as a compensatory process
- Exception Handling sequences can be defined 'on-the-fly' for unexpected exceptions, which will then be dynamically incorporated into an instance of that workflow process whenever needed.
 - Worklets to handle exceptions are constructed in exactly the same way as those for standard processes.
- Importantly, the method used to handle an exception is captured by the system, and so a history is recorded for future instantiations.
 - In this way, the process model-set undergoes a dynamic natural evolution.



Exception Factors



The Worklet Service can take these actions against these targets for these events



Events
Constraints (pre & post)
Constraint violation
Timeout
Unavailable resource
Task abort
External Triggers



Actions
Suspend
Continue
Restart
Complete
Fail
Remove
Compensate



Targets	
Task	
Case	I
All Cases	
Ancestors	

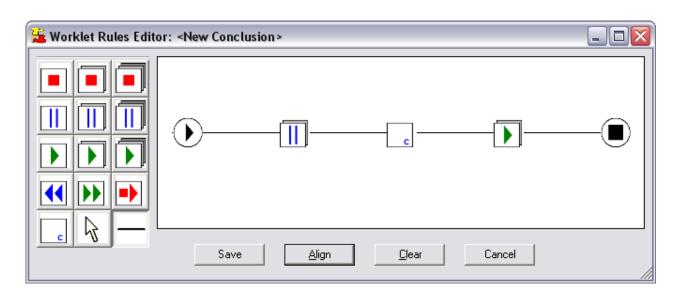




Exception Handlers



- Exception handling sequences are defined using the 'exception handling primitives'
- A specification can have a repertoire of handlers for each exception type the appropriate handler will be chosen contextually at runtime
 - For item-level exceptions, each item in the specification has its own repertoire of handlers
- A sequence can contain any number of compensation primitives, each associated with a worklet.
 - Worklets can run in parallel with the parent task, or while the parent is suspended





Worklet Advantages



- Keeps the parent model clean and simple.
- Promotes the reuse of sub-processes in different models.
- Allows standard processes to be used as exception handling processes, and vice versa.
- An extensible repertoire of actions can be compiled that can be invoked as required during design and/or runtime.
- A system may build a history of executions, providing for a learning system that can take the appropriate actions for certain contexts automatically.



Worklet Advantages



- A fully encapsulated sub-process allows for easier verification and modification.
- Allows a model to evolve without the need to stop and modify the design of the whole model when an exception occurs.
- By de-coupling the monolithic process model, models can be built that vary from loosely to tightly defined and so supports late binding of processes.
- Allows a model to be considered from many levels of granularity.





Verification



- Design time analysis of YAWL specifications
- Important due to long-lived nature of workflows
- Highly complex (both algorithmically and computationally)
- Almost never supported by commercial or open source systems systems
- YAWL environment supports approaches through:
 - Transition Invariants
 - Reset nets



Verification (reset nets)



- Four structural properties
 - Soundness
 - Weak soundness
 - Irreducible cancellation regions
 - Immutable OR-joins
- Different approaches (coverability & reachability)
 - YAWL nets without OR-joins reset net semantics
 - YAWL nets with OR-joins YAWL semantics



Soundness vs. Weak soundness



Option to complete

- A process when started can always complete
- A process when started can complete in some cases (Weak option to complete)

Proper completion

 it should not have any other tasks still running for that process when the process ends

No dead transitions

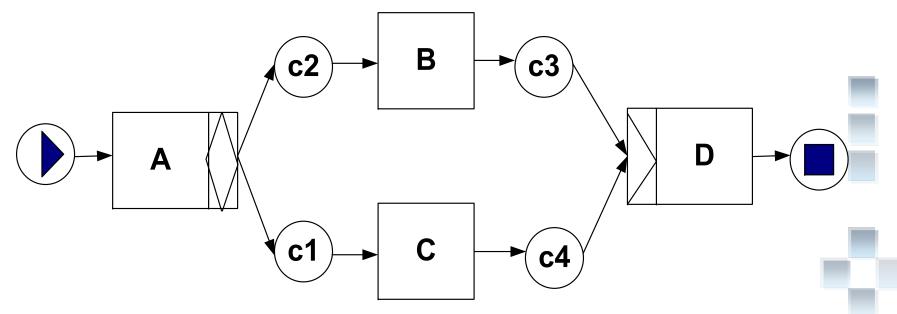
 the process should not contain tasks that will never be executed





Weak soundness example





- i -> c1 -> c4 -> deadlock
- i -> c2 -> c3 -> deadlock
- i -> c1+c2 -> c1+c3 -> c3+c4 -> o
- i -> c1+c2 -> c2+c4 -> c3+c4 -> o
- Weak option to complete



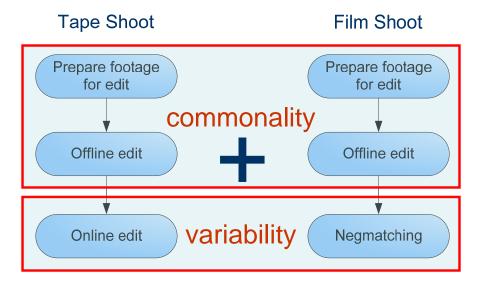


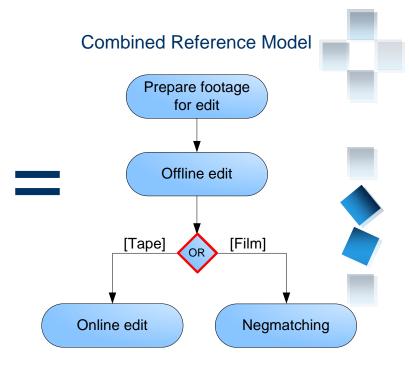
Reference Process Model



Repository of business process models capturing practices in a domain, which can be configured in a specific setting leading to individualized process models:

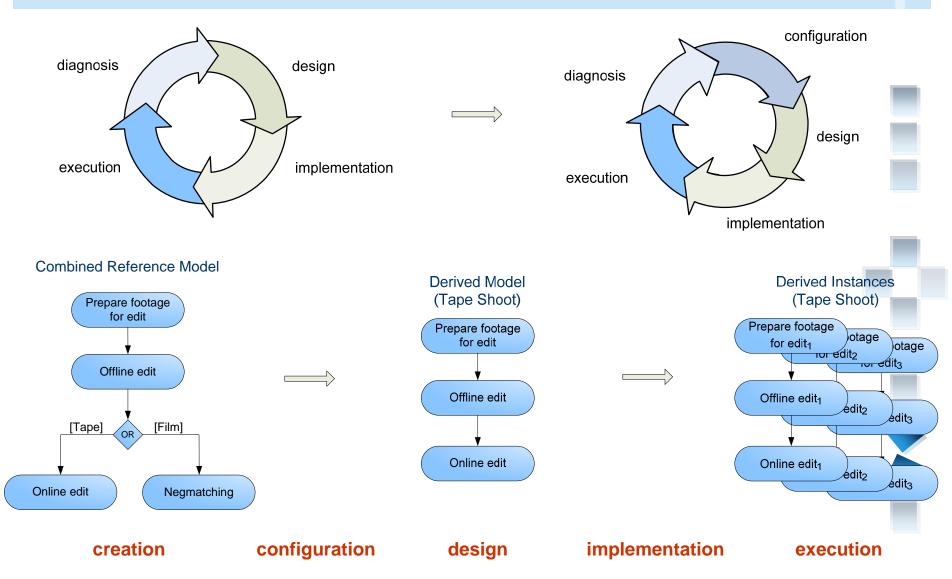
- increased reuse of proven practices,
- reduced modeling effort.





Reference Process Model (C'ntd)





Foundation for Configurable Process Models



- Configuration relies on two operations: hiding and blocking, derived from concepts of inheritance of dynamic behavior
 [van der Aalst, Basten, 2002]
- Variation points divide into inflow and outflow ports:
 - inflow ports can be activated (□), blocked (□) or hidden (□),
 - outflow ports can only be activated (♣) or blocked (♠).



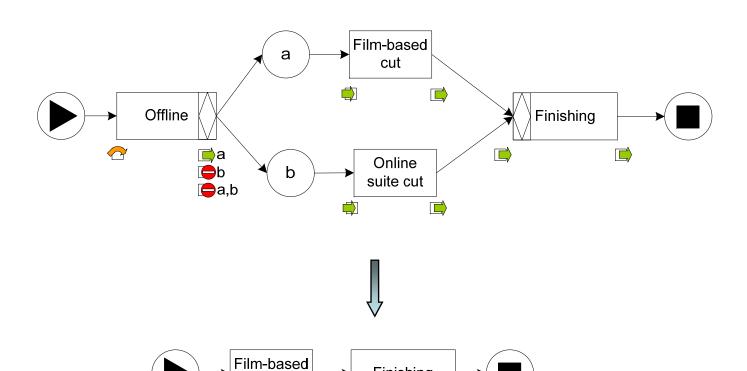




Foundation for Configurable Process Models (C'ntd)



The approach has been applied to YAWL: "configurable-YAWL" (C-YAWL)





Finishing

cut

Questionnaire Model



Reducing the complexity of process model configuration f₄: Cinema T f_1 : Low ($\leq 250,000 \text{ US}$) f₅: TV q₁: What is the allocated q₂: What are the primary f₂: Medium (> 250,000 US, ≤ 1.5mil US) (T) (M) f₆: Home distribution channels? budget for the project? f₇: Mobile f₃: High (> 1.5mil US) f₈: Internet f₁₁: Online cut f₉: Tape shooting (T) M (T) q₄: How is the Picture Cut to q₃: Which shooting media have been used? be performed? f₁₀: Film shooting f₁₂: Film-based cut f₁₆: Analogue tape f₁₃: Tape finish TMq₆: What Tape format q₅: Which are the expected f₁₇: SD digital tape f₁₄: Film finish TM has been shot? deliverables? f₁₈: HD digital tape f₁₅: New Media finish M f₁₉: 16mm film question x simply depends on y q7: What Film format has f₂₀: 35mm film x strictly depends on y fact been shot? mapping question-fact fact true by default T f21: 65mm film mandatory fact (M)



Case Study: YAWL4Film



Background

- Project of "Applying Business Process Management (BPM) to the Creative Industries"
- Part of the ARC Centre of Excellence for Creative Industries and Innovation (CCi)

Collaboration

- QUT's BPM Group and the Australian Film, Television and Radio School (AFTRS)
- Porchlight Film & TV Production





Applying BPM to Screen Business



- Business Process Management (BPM)
 - Well-established approach to achieving cost and time savings
 - Usually not applied in smaller companies
- Screen Business
 - All creative and business-related aspects of processes
 - Preparation, pre-production, production, and post-production
- Bring process innovation to film production
 - Film production process automation
 - YAWL4Film: Automating film production processes using YAWL
- Innovation Barriers



Automating Film Production Processes



Daily Shooting Procedures

- Paper based, manual
- Time-consuming, tedious and error-prone
- May delay progress

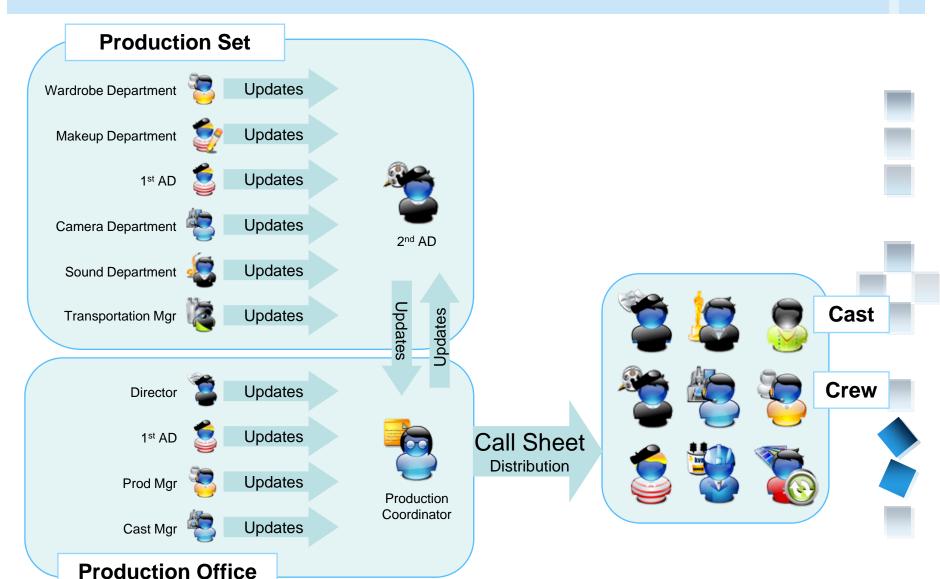
Goals & Benefits

- To optimize the process execution
- To automate document processing and report generation
- To increase efficiency without sacrificing creativity
- To reduce the cost of film production
- To increase the quality of the final product



Traditional Call Sheet Process





YAWL4Film – A Glimpse



Shoot Day 1 of 3

AFTRS

AFTRS

AFTRS

AFTRS

AFTRS

M/UP ON SET

CLD

1645

Total Pages: 2 4/8

0715 0815

08:00:00

08:00:00

07:00:00

07:00:00

07:00:00

08:00:00

08:15:00

18:45:00

Sunrise: 05:24:00 Sunset: 18:02:00 Weather: Partly Cloudy Min 14 Max 21

> 0715 0845 0815

CLD CLD CLD

0620

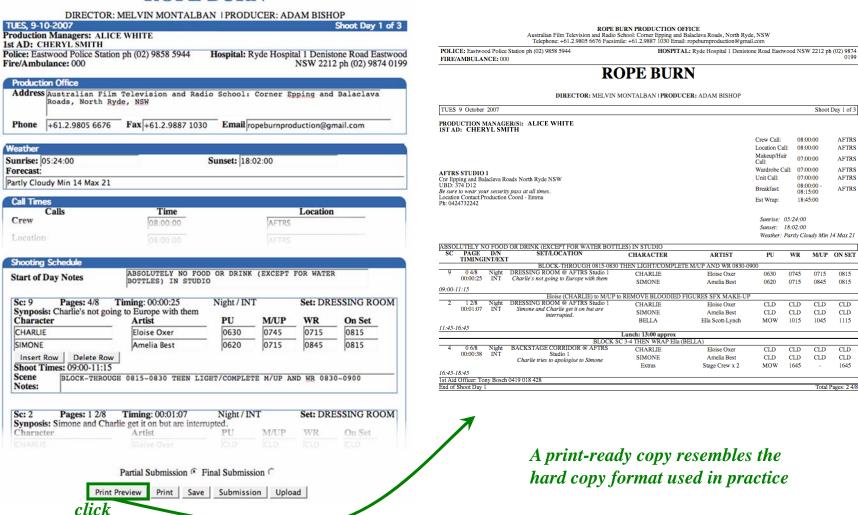
CLD CLD CLD CLD

MOW 1015 1045

CLD CLD CLD CLD

MOW 1645

ROPE BURN



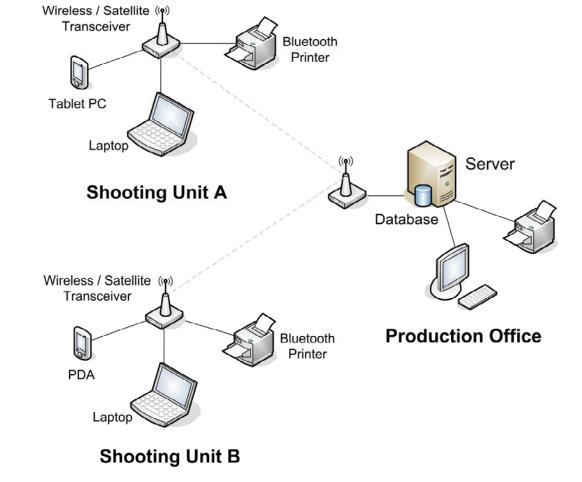




YAWL4Film – Gears









YAWL4Film – Deployment



- YAWL4Film was deployed on two film productions at the AFTRS in October 2007
 - Project 1 "Rope Burn": a three-day shoot in studio with 30 onset crew, 6 cast and 6 production office crew
 - Project 2 "Family Man": a three-day shoot on location and in studio with 35 crew, 5 cast and 4 production office crew
- YAWL4Film shadowed the process of call sheet generation, DPR generation, and cast and crew database update for both productions



Client Testimonials



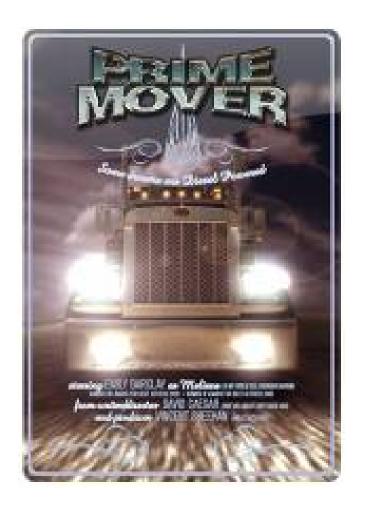
- "I have managed over a dozen productions offices, and the amount of time this system could save is incredible. Seeing the system up and running makes me realize how manual and laborious many of the activities are in any production office." (Production Manager in "Rope Burn")
- "I so often make errors when calculating DPR or even the Call Sheet, it is much easier to use the tool to double check figures and ratios." (Production Manager in "Family Man")
- "I found the electronic form simple and easy to fill in. It was really just the same as using a paper form, but much cleaner and neater e.g. no messy handwriting, smudges or crumpled paper." (2nd Assistant Director in "Family Man")





Field Study: Prime Mover

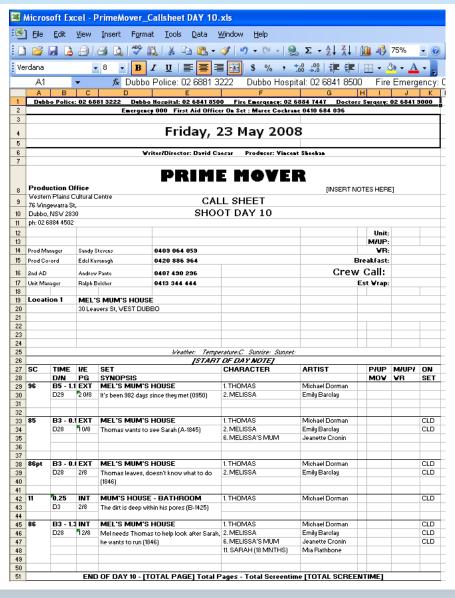






Call Sheet Excel Spreadsheet Format







Scheduler



Home | Disclaimer | Terms YAWL4Fil



:: Schedule ::

Main Schedule 💌

:: Menu :: Home

Cast Crew Locations

Scheduler (Stripboard) Scheduler (Mini)



DAY # 1, Monday 12 May 2008

Sc: 32	EXT DAY	DUBBO TRUCK DEPOT Tom thanks Johnnie for putting a word in (1300)	EST TIME: 0.40	1
sc:2 p/up	EXT DAY	DUBBO TRUCK DEPOT Hero establisher of the yard with Thomas arriving	EST TIME:	1
^{Sc:} 28	E/I DAY	DUBBO DEPOT - PHIL'S TRUCK Tom tries reversing, Johnnie knows someone with money (1026)	EST TIME: 0.50	1
^{Sc:} 16	EXT NIGHT	DUBBO TRUCK DEPOT Johnnie is taking Thomas on a trip (0510)	EST TIME: 0.20	

DAY # 2, Tuesday 13 May 2008

^{Sc:} 25pt.5	INT DAY	DUBBO DEPOT - PAINT SHOP Montage - Thomas painting	EST TIME: 0.00	1
Sc: 14	INT DAY	DUBBO DEPOT - PAINT SHOP Thomas paints, Johnnie offers to take him on a run (0925)	EST TIME: 0.40	1
Sc: 20	INT DAY	DUBBO DEPOT - PAINT SHOP Phil invites Thomas on a run to Perth (1140)	EST TIME: 0.25	1
^{Sc:} 87	EXT DAY	DUBBO TRUCK DEPOT Thomas wouldn't get more than 100K, he's got till Monday (0745)	EST TIME: 1.00	1
Sc: 5pt.6	EXT DAY	DUBBO TRUCK DEPOT Montage - Johnnie loves his car/Thomas hops in car (A)	EST TIME: 0.00	1
Sc: 5pt.1	EXT DAY	DUBBO TRUCK DEPOT Title Montage - Thomas washing trucks as big loads arrive (A)	EST TIME: 1.00	1
^{Sc:} 42pt.8	EXT NIGHT	DUBBO TRUCK DEPOT Montage - Thomas waves to truckies, tightens load	EST TIME: 0.00	1

DAY #3, Wednesday 14 May 2008



Scheduler Overview



I want to move Scene: 1 to Day 1 V Move										
DAY # 1 12 05 08 32 2 p/up	DAY # 2 13 05 08 25pt.5 14 20	DAY # 3 14 05 08 82 80 52	DAY # 4 15 05 08 50,51 51 5pt.5	DAY # 5 16 05 08 26,27pt 35	DAY # 6 19 05 08 3 3B	DAY # 7 20 05 08 27p/u 46pt 63	DAY # 8 21 05 08 22 p/up 22 28	DAY # 9 22 05 08 97pt 99pt 69pt	DAY # 10 23 05 08 96 85 86pt	U/S List BLANK BLANK
16	87 5pt.6 5pt.1 42pt.8	53pt 53	17pt 48pt 21pt 57pt	29 33 84	6 7 p/up	70 74 75	17 40pt 42, 55pt	66pt	11 86	BLANK 3B 65pt.1 19
			69pt 69pt 34pt							20 21 24pt
DAY # 11 26 05 08 66pt	DAY # 12 27 05 08 83 9 24	DAY # 13 28 05 08 62 72 71	DAY # 14 29 05 08 55/57 79pt 66pt 58pt 59 60pt	DAY # 15 30 05 08 65 54 47 25pt. 42pt.2, 9 56 25pt.4	DAY # 16 31 05 08 12 36	DAY # 17 02 06 08 15 102 8	DAY # 18 03 05 08 30 93 95 31 94 99pt 100pt,101	DAY # 19 04 06 08 19 37 38 98	DAY # 20 05 06 08 34 81 88 90 89	25pt1,2 99pt 99pt 66pt 66ptPU 25pt3 25pt.3 25pt.4
DAY # 21 06 06 08 78 77 92 1	DAY # 22 07 06 08 91 5pt.4 61 10	DAY # 23 10 06 08 43 44 45, 46pt	DAY # 24 11 06 08 39 68 76	DAY # 25 12 06 08 57A pt 64 60	DAY # 26 13 06 08	DAY # 27 14 06 08				37 37 40pt 57pt 42pt.3



Current and Future Activities



- Continuation of YAWL4Film
 - Development of Suite of Support Tools
 - Extension to other areas of Creative Industries
- Simulation
- Inter-process communication
- Configurable reference models
- Monitoring Capabilities
- Analysis Capabilities (strengthening link with ProM)



Epilogue



- Join Us!
 - E.g. case studies, joint development, further research
 - YAWL Foundation www.yawlfoundation.org
- Relevant background web sites
 - BPM Center <u>www.bpmcenter.org</u>
 - Workflow Patterns www.workflowpatterns.com
 - YAWL <u>www.yawl-system.com</u> and <u>www.sourceforge.net/projects/yawl</u>
- Commercial interest
 - YAWL Group <u>www.yawlgroup.com</u>
 - Acclario BPM <u>www.acclariobpm.com</u> (Scandinavia)
- Other relevant sites
 - Process mining <u>www.processmining.org</u>
 - Service interaction <u>www.serviceinteraction.com</u>
 - ARC Centre of Excellence for Creative Industries & Innovation -http://www.cci.edu.au/



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