

Preview

Use Cases

for

<Project>

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<date created>

eLearning versions of several popular Process Impact training seminars are available at www.processimpact.com/elearning.shtml, including "In Search of Excellent Requirements," "Exploring User Requirements with Use Cases," and "Writing High-Quality Requirements."

3.2. Trigger

Identify the event that initiates the use case. This could be an external business event or system event that causes the use case to begin, or it could be the first step in the normal flow.

3.3. Description

Provide a brief description of the reason for and outcome of this use case, or a high-level description of the sequence of actions and the outcome of executing the use case.

3.4. Preconditions

List any activities that must take place, or any conditions that must be true, before the use case can be started. Number each precondition. Examples:

1. User's identity has been authenticated.
2. User's computer has sufficient free memory available to launch task.

3.5. Postconditions

Describe the state of the system at the conclusion of the use case execution. Number each postcondition. Examples:

1. Document contains only valid SGML tags.
2. Price of item in database has been updated with new value.

3.6. Normal Flow

Provide a detailed description of the user actions and system responses that will take place during execution of the use case under normal, expected conditions. This dialog sequence will ultimately lead to accomplishing the goal stated in the use case name and description. This description may be written as an answer to the hypothetical question, "How do I <accomplish the task stated in the use case name>?" This is best done as a numbered list of actions performed by the actor, alternating with responses provided by the system. The normal flow is numbered "X.0", where "X" is the Use Case ID.

3.7. Alternative Flows

Document other, legitimate usage scenarios that can take place within this use case separately in this section. State the alternative flow, and describe any differences in the sequence of steps that take place. Number each alternative flow in the form "X.Y", where "X" is the Use Case ID and Y is a sequence number for the alternative flow. For example, "5.3" would indicate the third alternative flow for use case number 5.

3.8. Exceptions

Describe any anticipated error conditions that could occur during execution of the use case, and define how the system is to respond to those conditions. Also, describe how the system is to respond if the use case execution fails for some unanticipated reason. If the use case results in a durable state change in a database or the outside world, state whether the change is rolled back, completed correctly, partially completed with a known state, or left in an undetermined state as a result of the exception. Number each alternative flow in the form "X.Y.E.Z", where "X" is the Use Case ID, Y indicates the normal (0) or alternative (>0) flow during which this exception could take place, "E" indicates an exception, and "Z" is a sequence number for the exceptions. For example "5.0.E.2" would indicate the second exception for the normal flow for use case number 5.