Business Modeling and Lists

Introduction

Business models?

I build business models and data models. When I tell people what I do, I get blank stares. The purpose of this article is to relate my modeling to the familiar check list we take to the grocery store. Lists are one element common to all aspects of my business modeling. Your business model is simply a documentation of your business's important lists. Once completed, this document can be leveraged to generate almost all the other business documentation, such as: strategic plans, profit plans, budgets, forecasts, standards, and internal and external financial statements.

Business models save money

Therefore, by speeding up document production, business models can save you money everywhere you use business documents. Whether service or product, this fancy check list works the same for all types of business.

Check Lists

Check lists are used by everybody from sales to production to purchasing to accounting , to management. They are used before, during, and after a sale; before during, and after a purchase, before, during, and after a production.

List Structure

- ***List name***

For example: grocery list.

- ***List item names***

For example: milk, bread, etc.

- ***In text***

Outlines

Also in text, outlines show relationships between lists.

Outlines extend the list structure to show list relationships, or associations between lists. These relationships connect lists, by linking those lists to items in other lists. This linkage hierarchy defines an item in terms of both classification and contrast. Through inheritanceor inherited name and aggregate membership. A listed item inherits it's name from the lists it is describing. While other members provide defining contrasts, it is described by, and provides a name for, a subsequent list. In the abstract, the lines of an outline diagram a hierarchy of steps or levels.

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Outline structure

list name

list item name/ list name

list item name/ list name

list item name/ list name

Relationship Diagrams

(Entity Relationship Diagrams)

Relationship diagrams are a transformation from text to graphics, and from names to relationships.

Relationship diagrams transform the list representation from text to graphics. The graphics shifts the focus from the list names to the list linkage.

They provide a way to see how the lists are linked.

Like the conceptual "lines" of an outline, the physical lines of an entity relationship diagram also show these list relationships; with the entities representing the lists, and the relationship lines representing the list connections.

Flow Diagrams

(Data Flow Diagrams)

Flow diagrams show how the lists are used to produce goods and services.

Once constructed, these lists are handy tools. They can be linked in different ways for different purposes. The lines in a flow diagram show how the lists are used to produce both goods and services and new lists of goods and services.

Worksheets

(Cross Reference, Cross Tabs, Tables, Files, Charts)

Worksheets display the business model's leverage or power.

They leverage elements of the description process and connect the lists to the documents they help produce. Many times lists share descriptive elements. For example, your shopping list shares elements with your one of your recipe's list's, the list of ingredients.

Worksheets show how your lists cross each other.

This description cross reference simplifies the description/ modeling process. Once things are described this way, these documented descriptions can be used for any business documentation.

The point where they cross identifies things.

Very similar to the way crossing streets provide identity to places, the point where lists intersect provides identity to things. It takes at least two lists to identify something. More lists provide the thing's characteristics and associations.