Business Process Management

By Mathias Weske

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Business process management is usually treated from two different perspectives: business administration and computer science. While business administration professionals tend to consider information technology as a subordinate aspect for experts to handle, by contrast computer scientists often consider business goals and organizational regulations as terms that do not deserve much thought but require the appropriate level of abstraction.

Mathias Weske argues that the communities involved need to share a common understanding of the principles underlying business process management. To this end, he develops an overall picture that describes core BPM concepts and technologies and explains their relationships. This picture covers high-level business aspects like business goals, strategies, and value chains, but it concentrates on process modeling techniques and process enactment platforms, taking into account the different stakeholders involved.

After starting with a presentation of general foundations, process orchestrations and process choreographies are covered. Based on control flow patterns, concrete process languages are introduced in a concise manner, including Workflow nets, Event-driven Process Chains, Yet Another Workflow Language, and the Business Process Modeling Notation. The various stages during the design and implementation of process choreographies are discussed. Different soundness properties are investigated in a chapter on formal aspects of business processes. Finally, he investigates concrete architectures to enact business processes, including workflow management architectures, case handling architectures and service-oriented architectures. He also shows how standards like SOAP, WSDL, and BPEL fit into the picture.

This textbook is ideally suited for classes on business process management, information systems architecture, and workflow management. It is also valuable for project managers and IT professionals working in business process management, since it provides a vendor-independent view on the topic. The accompanying website www.bpm-book.com contains further information, such as links to references that are available online, exercises that offer the reader a deeper involvement with the topics addressed, and additional teaching material.

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