

Capturing Use Cases with DOORS

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Abstract

If Use Cases can do what people claim for software requirements, they should be able to improve systems specifications and business process descriptions too. Many activities fit into the pattern of more-or-less sequential conversations, elaborated by alternatives and exceptional cases. If we are willing to allow machines to play roles, then the workings of distributed systems can be treated as dialogues even when people are not directly involved. I have been exploring how to help people describe processes and hardware/software systems as Use Cases.

Many large organisations use DOORS to manage their requirements. There are definite advantages to holding Use Cases in the same environment as requirements. Scenario steps can directly represent business activities, and, at lower level, system functions. In an appropriate framework, these can be associated with other elements such as constraints and preconditions to create simple and clear specifications. Requirements can be traced to designs and tests as usual. Use Case diagrams and metrics can then be generated automatically.

I have therefore developed software on the DOORS platform to help people create, edit, and manage Use Cases as requirements. It is available free as the Scenario Plus for Use Cases toolkit. In the talk I will describe my experiences with it.

About the Speaker

Ian Alexander is an independent consultant specialising in Requirements Engineering and Business Process Modelling. He provides consultancy and training on requirements in many countries, though he specially likes Scandinavia. He is currently assisting a car maker by investigating whether recasting automobile specifications as use case models separated from design details can make them easier to reuse.

He helps to run the BCS Requirements Engineering Specialist Group. He is setting up a Requirements Engineering Task Group for the new IEE Professional Network for Systems Engineers. He is a Chartered Engineer.