XI. State and Activity Diagrams

State Diagrams

Events and States
Superstates
Activity Diagrams

State Diagrams (Statecharts)

- These are state transition diagrams (with some interesting additions) which can be used to describe the operating environment of the system, interactions of the system with that environment, also the lifetime of some object (a person, a student, ... ) within the system.

- Transitions are supposed to represent actions which occur "quickly" and are not interruptible. A transition can have an associated triple

  \[ \text{Event[Condition]}/\text{Action} \]

  all parts of this triple are optional.

- States are supposed to represent longer-running activities (or other things). What constitutes "quickly" and "longer-running" depends on the application.

State Diagram for Purchase Order

- **Events**
  - An event is a happening that the system needs to know about.
  - For example, completing an assignment, failing an exam, or a system crash are all events.
  - An event may trigger an action by an actor or the system being developed.
  - In UML, there are four types of events:
    - Change events occur when a condition becomes true, e.g., \( \text{when(balance < 0)} \);
    - Signal events designate the receipt of an explicit (real-time) signal from one object or actor to another;
    - Call events indicate the receipt of a call for an operation by an object or actor;
    - Time events mark the passage of a designated period of time, e.g., \( \text{after(10 seconds)} \)

Course Lifetimes

- **States**
  - A state represents a time period during which
    - A predicate is true, e.g., budget - expenses >0,
    - An action is being performed, e.g., check inventory for order items, or
    - Someone waits for an event to happen, e.g., arrival of a missing order item.
  - A state can be "on" or "off".
  - When a state is "on", all its outgoing transitions are eligible to fire. For a transition to fire, its event must occur and its condition must be true. When a transition does fire, its action is carried out.
  - States can have associated activities. Special activity constructs include:
    - do:stateDiagramName(parameterList) -- "calls" another state diagram;
    - entry/action -- carry out the action when entering the activity;
    - exit/action -- carry out the action when exiting;

Superstates

- State transition diagrams can be very hard to read once they grow to more than a few dozen states.
- For UML state diagrams, states can be composed into nested states, or superstates. Such compositions make it possible to view a state diagram at different levels of abstraction.
- A superstate consists of one or more states.
- When an AND superstate is “on”, all its states are also “on”.
- When an OR superstate is “on”, one of its states is “on”.

Order Processing as an AND Superstate

State Diagram for Purchase Order

Course Lifetimes, Again

An OR Superstate

...More on Transmission

Information Systems Analysis and Design

© 2001 Jaelson Castro and John Mylopoulos

State and Activity Diagrams
**Bridge Vulnerability Rules**

**Playing Bridge Rubber**

- **N-S vulnerability**
  - Not vulnerable
  - N-S game
  - Vulnerable
  - N-S wins

- **E-W vulnerability**
  - Not vulnerable
  - E-W game
  - Vulnerable
  - E-W wins

---

**Auto Transmission**

**Ignition**

- Turn key to start
- Transmission in Neutral
- Release key
- On

**Transmission**

- Neutral
  - Select R: Reverse
  - Select F: Forward
  - Select N: Neutral

- Stop
  - First
  - Second
  - Third

---

**Activity Diagrams**

- Activity diagrams describe activities which involve concurrency and synchronization.
- Activity diagrams are a variation of state diagrams that focuses on the flow of actions and events.
- Can be used to:
  - Model a human task (a business process, for instance).
  - Describe a system function that is represented by a use case.
  - In operation specifications, to describe the logic of an operation.

---

**Firing a Transition in Activity Diagrams**

- Activity diagrams use a Petri net-like notation to describe activities which involve concurrency and synchronization.
- Petri nets use transitions which involve several input and output states:

---

**An Example**

**Order Processing**

- Receive Order
- Reorder Item
- Dispatch Order
- Check Line Item
- Assign to Order
- Authorize Payment
- Cancel Order for each line item on order
- In stock
- Need to reorder
- [stock assigned to all line items and payment authorized]
Decision Points in Activity Diagrams

- Decision points:
  - [cost<$50]
  - Charge customer’s account

- Dead ends:
  - There may be transitions in an activity diagram with no destination state; this can mean that:
    - Not all processing has been specified,
    - Or, that another activity diagram will take over.

Swimlanes

Finance
- Receive Order
- Check Line Item
- Assign Goods to Order
- Authorize Payment
- Add Item to Stock
- Cancel Order

Order Processing
- Reorder Item
- Dispatch Order
- Check Outstanding Order Items
- Stock Manager
- Receive Order
- Choose Outstanding Order Items
- Assign Goods to Order
- Authorize Payment
- Add Item to Stock

When to Use What?

- Sequence and collaboration diagrams are useful for modeling interactions; several of them can be used to model dialog structure for a user interface, or a business process.
- State diagrams are good for modeling the lifetime of an object or actor, also for modeling user interfaces and business processes which involve many states.
- Activity diagrams are good for modeling business processes and system processes which involve a lot of concurrency.

Additional Readings