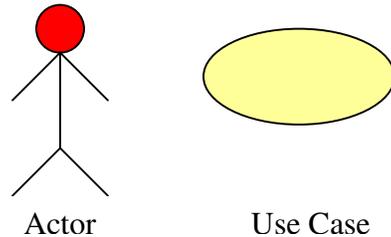


Interactive Media Scriptwriting

UML for Interactive Projects

The Unified Modeling Language (UML) is a standard for communicating how your users will interact with a system. Large system architects and designers most often use the UML standard, established in 1997. By simplifying the standard, it can also be used to communicate the interaction relationships in a multimedia project. The two primary components of a UML diagram are actors and use cases. These are described as follows:



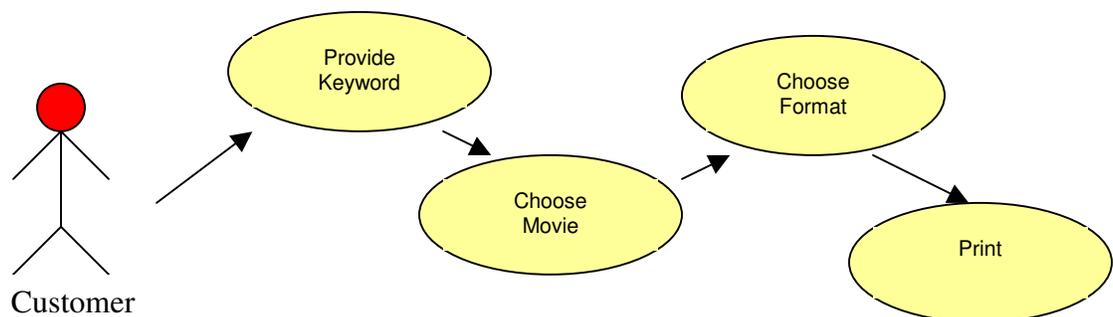
In traditional UML, an actor is any person, system or object that interacts with the system. For standard interactive projects, the actor will be the person using the system.

A use case simply describes an action the user will perform. This action is typically part of a larger task the user is looking to complete.

The first task in developing a UML diagram is to compile a list of use cases. It is likely that as you diagram this list will grow. Begin by outlining the steps a user will follow to complete their intended action. Here is an example for a movie search kiosk:

1. Enter Keyword
2. Choose From list of a matching movies
3. Choose VHS or DVD version
4. Print map and location information

The diagram for this use case would be

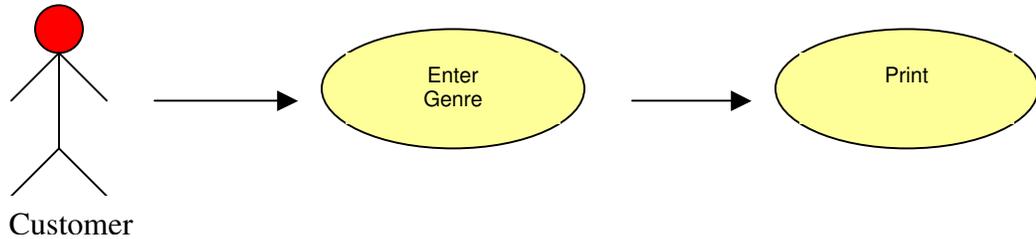


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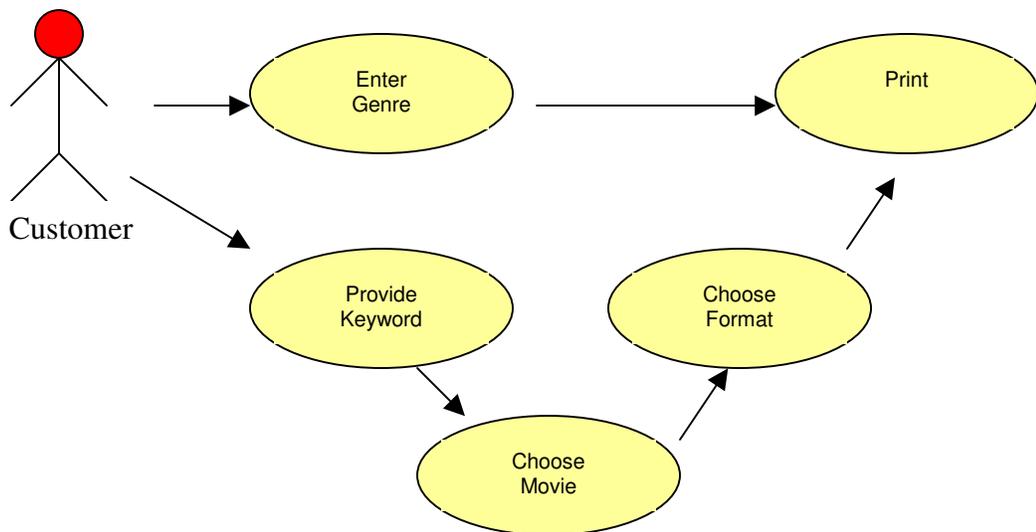
However, if the user could follow a separate sequence:

1. Enter Genre of Film
2. Print map and location information (of genre)

The diagram for this use case would be



It is then common to combine these use cases into a complete diagram.



This diagram can be used to plan the development of the system. It can also help the designer understand the various entrance points to specific interface stages.

As designers move away from linear patterns these diagrammatic representations of interactive events become essential. Diagramming the potential uses of the system helps designers and developers avoid problems. If all the conceivable uses of the system are planned in the system, the system will prove highly usable.