



Fundamentals and Strategic Design



Introduction to Domain-Driven Design (DDD)





- What is DDD and why it matters?
- Understanding domains, subdomains, and bounded contexts



What is DDD and why it matters?

What is Domain-Driven Design (DDD)?

- Domain-Driven Design (DDD) is a software development approach that focuses on modeling software based on real-world business domains.
- It emphasizes collaboration between **developers and domain experts** to create a shared understanding of the **problem space**, ensuring that **software solutions** align with **business goals**.





Key Concepts of DDD

- **Domain** The problem space where the business operates.
- **Ubiquitous Language** A common, consistent language used by developers and business experts.
- Bounded Context A defined boundary where a specific model applies.
- Entities & Value Objects Fundamental building blocks representing business concepts.
- Aggregates A cluster of domain objects treated as a single unit.
- Repositories Interfaces for accessing domain objects.
- **Domain Events** Notifications indicating changes in the domain state.
- Application Services Coordinate domain logic and communication between services.





Why DDD Matters?

- Aligns Software with Business Needs Ensures software solutions are built around business goals and domain knowledge.
- Improves Communication Encourages collaboration between developers and domain experts using a shared language.
- Manages Complexity Helps structure complex business logic into modular, maintainable components.
- **Enhances Scalability** Provides a clear separation of concerns, making systems easier to scale and modify.
- Encourages Long-Term Maintainability Helps reduce technical debt by focusing on business rules rather than just technology.



What is a Domain?

- A domain is the area of **knowledge**, **business**, **or activity** that your software system is designed to serve.
- It represents the core problem space of the business.

Example:

• In an **e-commerce application**, the domain is **online retail**, which includes processes like product management, order processing, and customer interactions.



What are Subdomains?

- A subdomain is a smaller, specialized part of the overall domain.
- Large domains are divided into multiple subdomains, each responsible for a specific business function.
- Types of Subdomains in DDD:
 - Core Domain
 - Supporting Subdomain
 - Generic Subdomain



- What is a Bounded Context?
 - A bounded context defines a clear boundary within which a particular domain model is consistent and valid.
 - It ensures that different subdomains do not interfere with each other, reducing complexity and conflicts.
- Key Characteristics of a Bounded Context:
 - Clearly defined boundaries around a specific part of the application.
 - Contains its own models, logic, and database schema.
 - Uses a **Ubiquitous Language** specific to its domain.
 - Interacts with other bounded contexts via APIs or messaging systems.



- Example:
 - In an **e-commerce platform**, the following **bounded contexts** might exist:
 - **Product Catalog Context** → Manages products, categories, and descriptions.
 - Order Management Context → Handles order placement, tracking, and fulfillment.
 - Payment Processing Context → Processes payments securely using a payment gateway.
- Each bounded context operates independently and follows its own rules, preventing conflicts in business logic.



Strategic Design Principles





- Identifying core, supporting, and generic domains
- Designing bounded contexts and context mapping
- Cultivating collaboration between business and technical teams



- In Domain-Driven Design (DDD), strategic design helps in organizing a complex system by categorizing different parts of the business into core, supporting, and generic domains.
- This classification helps teams focus their efforts efficiently.



Core Domain

- The most important and valuable part of the business. This is where the competitive advantage lies and requires custom development.
- Key Characteristics:
 - Directly impacts the company's success.
 - Needs deep domain expertise.
 - Often complex and evolving.
 - Must be highly optimized for business needs.
- Example (E-commerce System):
 - **Pricing and discount engine** Determines special discounts, dynamic pricing, and personalized offers, giving the business a competitive edge.



Supporting Subdomain

- A domain that is necessary for the business but not its main focus.
- These can often be implemented with standard solutions or customized slightly.
- Key Characteristics:
 - Supports the core domain but does not differentiate the business.
 - Often developed in-house but doesn't require deep customization.
 - Can be optimized for efficiency rather than innovation.
- Example (E-commerce System):
 - **Inventory management** Ensures stock availability but doesn't directly influence the company's uniqueness.



- Generic Subdomain
 - A domain that is **common across industries** and can be handled using **third-party solutions** or open-source frameworks.
- Key Characteristics:
 - Doesn't require custom development.
 - Can be outsourced or implemented using off-the-shelf solutions.
 - Provides a non-differentiating service to the business.
- Example (E-commerce System):
 - Payment processing Most businesses integrate Stripe, PayPal, or Square instead of building their own payment system.



- Why Does This Classification Matter?
 - Optimized Resource Allocation Focus development efforts on the core domain.
 - Better Scalability Supporting and generic domains can use third-party solutions.
 - Improved Maintainability Separates concerns, making the system more manageable.
 - **Cost Efficiency** Reduces unnecessary custom development for generic solutions.



- When building complex systems using Domain-Driven Design (DDD), it's essential to break the domain into manageable bounded contexts and define how they interact.
- This helps in organizing teams, maintaining clear domain boundaries, and reducing complexity.



- What is a Bounded Context?
 - A bounded context is a well-defined boundary within which a particular domain model is consistent and applicable. Each bounded context has:
 - Its own domain logic and data model
 - A **Ubiquitous Language** (common terminology used by developers and domain experts)
 - Clear interfaces for communication with other bounded contexts
- Example (E-Commerce System):
 - Product Catalog Context → Manages product details and descriptions.
 - Order Management Context → Handles order placement, tracking, and fulfillment.
 - **Payment Processing Context** → Processes payments and transactions.
- Each context has its own database, models, and services.



- How to Design Bounded Contexts?
- Step 1: Identify Business Subdomains
 - Analyze the business and break it into core, supporting, and generic subdomains.
 - Example: In an e-commerce system, the **order management** and **payment processing** subdomains have different rules and must be separate.
- Step 2: Define Context Boundaries
 - Ensure that **each context has a clear purpose** and does not overlap with others.
 - Use **Ubiquitous Language** specific to each bounded context.
 - Example: "Order" might mean a customer purchase in Order Management but a financial transaction in Payment Processing.



- Step 3: Establish Communication Between Contexts
 - Use APIs, messaging, or events for communication between contexts.
 - Anti-Corruption Layer (ACL): A pattern that translates between two models to avoid direct dependencies.
 - Example: **Order Management** requests **Payment Processing** to charge a customer using an event-driven architecture.



- What is Context Mapping?
 - Context Mapping defines how multiple bounded contexts interact within a system. It visualizes dependencies and relationships between different parts of the domain.
- Common Context Mapping Patterns:
 - Shared Kernel Two contexts share a common part of the model but evolve independently.
 - Customer-Supplier One context depends on another (e.g., Order Management depends on Product Catalog).
 - Anti-Corruption Layer (ACL) Translates models between contexts to prevent dependencies.
 - Separate Ways Two contexts are independent and do not share data directly.



- Example (E-Commerce System Context Map):
 - **Product Catalog Context** provides data to **Order Management** (Customer-Supplier).
 - Order Management Context interacts with Payment Processing using an Anti-Corruption Layer (ACL).
- Why is This Important?
 - Reduces Complexity Clear boundaries prevent overlapping responsibilities.
 - Improves Maintainability Changes in one context don't break the entire system.
 - Enhances Scalability Different teams can manage their own bounded contexts independently.
 - Enables Distributed Architecture Microservices can be built based on bounded contexts.



- In **Domain-Driven Design (DDD)**, successful software development depends on **strong collaboration** between **business experts** and **technical teams**.
- Bridging the gap ensures that the software aligns with real-world business needs and is built with a deep understanding of the domain.



- Why Collaboration is Critical?
 - **Reduces Miscommunication** Ensures both teams speak the same language.
 - Aligns Software with Business Goals Helps developers build features that truly matter.
 - Improves Domain Knowledge Developers gain insights from business experts.
 - Accelerates Decision-Making Faster problem-solving through shared understanding.



- Strategies to Enhance Collaboration
- 1. Establish a Ubiquitous Language
 - A shared language that both business and technical teams understand and use.
 - Helps avoid misunderstandings and misinterpretations.
 - Defines **key business terms** clearly and consistently.
- Example:
 - Instead of calling it a "Purchase Order" in one part of the system and an "Invoice" in another, both teams agree to use "Order."
- Action Step: Maintain a **glossary** of domain terms and ensure they are used in code, discussions, and documentation.



- 2. Engage Business Experts in Modeling Sessions
 - Regular collaborative modeling sessions where both teams shape the domain model together.
 - Use **Event Storming, Domain Storytelling, or Context Mapping** to visualize business processes.
 - Business experts provide real-world insights; developers translate them into domain models.
- Action Step: Schedule frequent domain workshops where business users explain real-world scenarios while developers translate them into software models.



- 3. Involve Developers in Business Discussions
 - Developers participate in business meetings to understand real business challenges.
 - Helps them design better models and make informed technical decisions.
- Action Step: Invite engineers to product strategy meetings, so they can contribute ideas early and align technical feasibility with business goals.



- 4. Use Bounded Contexts to Define Clear Responsibilities
 - Splitting a large system into **bounded contexts** helps each team focus on a specific business area.
 - Encourages domain-driven team structures, making it easier for teams to own and understand their areas.
- Action Step: Assign cross-functional teams to different bounded contexts to ensure each domain gets the right expertise.



- 5. Implement Continuous Feedback Loops
 - **Regular check-ins** between business and development teams to refine the domain model.
 - Helps in **adjusting requirements** and ensuring the software stays aligned with business needs.
 - Encourages early issue detection before they become costly.
- Action Step: Set up weekly sync meetings and use feedback tools like Slack channels or internal forums for ongoing discussions.



- 6. Tools to Facilitate Collaboration
 - Event Storming A visual technique to map out business processes.
 - Domain Storytelling A method to describe domain scenarios in a simple way.
 - Collaboration Boards (Miro, MURAL) To visualize workflows and relationships.
 - API Documentation & Contracts Ensures clarity between business logic and technical implementation.



- Final Takeaways
 - DDD is not just a technical approach—it requires strong business involvement.
 - Ubiquitous Language ensures a shared understanding of domain concepts.
 - **Regular workshops** and feedback loops keep development aligned with business needs.
 - Bounded Contexts help create focused teams with clear responsibilities.



Tactical Design and Practical Applications



Tactical Design Principles





- Entities, Value Objects, and Aggregates
- Domain Events and Repositories
- Leveraging factories and application services



- Tactical design in Domain-Driven Design (DDD) provides practical building blocks to implement domain models effectively.
- The key elements include **Entities, Value Objects, and Aggregates**, which help in structuring complex business logic while maintaining consistency.



Entities

- An Entity is a domain object that has a distinct identity and persists over time.
- Identified by a unique identifier (ID) rather than just its attributes.
- Can change over time while maintaining the same identity.

Key Characteristics:

- Has a unique identity that remains consistent.
- Encapsulates business logic and state changes.
- Mutability is allowed, as entities evolve.

Example

 Orders, Customers, and Employees are typical Entities because they must be uniquely identified.



- Value Objects
 - A Value Object represents a descriptive characteristic of a domain without a unique identity.
 - Immutable Once created, its state cannot change.
 - Used for modeling concepts like addresses, money, and measurements.
- Key Characteristics:
 - No identity Two value objects with the same attributes are considered equal.
 - Immutable Cannot be modified after creation.
 - Reusable Used across multiple entities.
- Example
 - Address, Money, and Dimensions are perfect Value Objects because they
 only store data and don't require an identity.



Aggregates

- An Aggregate is a cluster of related domain objects (Entities + Value Objects) that should be treated as a single unit.
- Defines a **root entity (Aggregate Root)** that ensures data consistency within the boundary.
- Other objects within the aggregate can only be accessed via the aggregate root.
- Key Characteristics:
 - Ensures data consistency across multiple objects.
 - Encapsulates business rules and prevents invalid states.
 - Restricts direct access to child entities.



- Why Use Aggregates?
 - Protects data integrity by ensuring all related objects are modified together.
 - Prevents direct access to nested entities (e.g., OrderItem cannot be modified outside Order).
 - Helps manage transaction boundaries efficiently.
- Best Practices for Using Tactical Design in DDD
 - Keep Entities Small Avoid bloated entities by moving logic to Value Objects or Services.
 - **Prefer Value Objects When Possible** Use them to make the model simpler and immutable.
 - Design Aggregates Carefully Each Aggregate Root should enforce data integrity.
 - Avoid Large Aggregates Overly complex aggregates lead to performance issues.





- Domain Events
 - A **Domain Event** represents something **important that happened** in the domain that business stakeholders care about.
 - Events capture **changes in state** and help **decouple business logic** from the rest of the system.
- Why Use Domain Events?
 - **Decouples different parts of the system** (e.g., notifying users when an order is placed).
 - Improves scalability by enabling event-driven architectures.
 - Ensures business rules are followed by broadcasting events.



Domain Events and Repositories

- How to Handle Domain Events?
 - Publish Event When an order is placed, trigger OrderPlacedEvent.
 - Listen to Event The OrderPlacedEventHandler listens and performs actions (e.g., send an email).
- Best Practices for Domain Events:
 - Use immutable event objects to ensure consistency.
 - Keep event handling logic separate from the main business logic.
 - Use an event bus (like Spring Events or Kafka) for real-world applications.





- Repositories
 - A **Repository** provides an **interface** for accessing domain objects, abstracting away database interactions.
- Why Use Repositories?
 - Separates database logic from business logic.
 - Encapsulates queries and persistence logic for domain objects.
 - Simplifies testing by allowing mocking of database calls.
- Best Practices for Repositories:
 - Expose only necessary methods (avoid generic CRUD methods).
 - **Keep repositories focused on aggregates** (handle one aggregate per repository).
 - **Use Specification Pattern** for complex queries instead of bloating repositories.



Leveraging factories and application services

- Factories in DDD
 - A Factory is a design pattern used to create complex domain objects while hiding the construction logic.
- Why Use Factories?
 - Encapsulates complex creation logic in one place.
 - Ensures object consistency by applying business rules at creation time.
 - Simplifies object creation by avoiding large constructors in entities.
- Factory Benefits:
 - Keeps services clean by offloading creation logic.
 - Ensures domain rules are applied before object creation.
 - Improves maintainability by centralizing object construction.

Leveraging factories and application services

- Application Services in DDD
 - **Application Services** handle use cases by coordinating domain logic, repositories, and domain events.
- Why Use Application Services?
 - Separates application logic from domain logic.
 - Manages transactions and security.
 - Orchestrates multiple domain objects and repositories.
- Application Service Benefits:
 - Keeps domain models clean by handling external concerns.
 - Encapsulates transactions and event publishing.
 - Simplifies testing by isolating business logic from infrastructure.



Implementing DDD





- Real-world examples of DDD in action
- Transitioning from a legacy system to a DDD approach
- Common pitfalls and how to avoid them



Real-world examples of DDD in action

Scenario: Order Fulfillment System in a Supply Chain

Define the Business Problem

- A supply chain company needs an efficient order fulfillment system that ensures:
 - Customers place orders for products.
 - Inventory is checked for availability.
 - Orders are packed and shipped.
 - Customers receive tracking updates.



Real-world examples of DDD in action

Business Goal: Food Delivery System

- To enhance operational efficiency, the company aims to redesign the food delivery system using Domain-Driven Design (DDD) principles. The objective is to:
- **Streamline Order Processing** Reduce delays in order confirmation and preparation.
- Improve Payment Reliability Ensure smooth transactions and order validation.
- Optimize Delivery Assignment Assign drivers based on availability and proximity.
- Enhance Customer Experience Provide real-time order tracking and notifications.
- Improve Communication Between Teams Integrate restaurant, delivery, and payment workflows efficiently.



- Migrating from a monolithic, tightly coupled legacy system to a DDDbased architecture is challenging but rewarding.
- The goal is to **incrementally** refactor and **modernize** the system while ensuring business continuity.



- Key Steps for Transitioning to DDD
- Understanding the Legacy System
 - Identify core business processes and their dependencies.
 - Analyze existing domain models (if any).
 - Recognize pain points (e.g., high coupling, scalability issues, slow changes).
 - Document business rules and workflows.

Example:

- A legacy **E-commerce Monolith** has the following tightly coupled modules:
 - Order Management
 - Payment Processing
 - Inventory Management
 - Customer Service



Define Bounded Contexts

- **Bounded Contexts** define the **scope** of each business domain to reduce complexity and dependency issues.
- Identify **subdomains** (Core, Supporting, Generic).
- Define clear boundaries where business logic applies.
- Establish ubiquitous language for each context.

• Example:

- Order Context → Manages orders, order statuses, and customer purchases.
- **Payment Context** → Handles transactions, refunds, and invoicing.
- Inventory Context → Tracks product stock levels.



- Gradual Refactoring Using the Strangler Pattern
 - The Strangler Pattern allows incremental migration by replacing legacy components one by one.
 - Start small with a non-critical service.
 - Introduce a **new microservice** implementing DDD principles.
 - Route new functionality to the modern service while keeping the old system running.
 - Decommission the legacy module after a full transition.

Example:

- Phase 1: Introduce a new **OrderService** using DDD principles alongside the legacy system.
- Phase 2: Move Payments to a new service, integrating with Orders.
- Phase 3: Migrate Inventory Management, finally deprecating the monolith.



- Implement Tactical Design Patterns
 - Use Entities & Value Objects to model domain concepts.
 - Define Aggregates to maintain data integrity.
 - Introduce Repositories to abstract database access.
 - Implement **Domain Events** for decoupled communication.
- Example:
 - Migrating Orders from the monolith to a DDD-based service.



Introduce Application Services

 Application Services help orchestrate domain logic while keeping the domain layer clean.

Integrate with the Legacy System

- During the transition, legacy and DDD services must co-exist.
- Use **Event Sourcing** to track domain changes.
- Implement Anti-Corruption Layer (ACL) to prevent legacy pollution in new services.
- Leverage Message Queues (Kafka, RabbitMQ) for communication between services.
- Example: Implementing Anti-Corruption Layer



- Modernize Data Access with Repositories
 - Legacy systems often have direct database access across modules. Use repositories to abstract database interactions.
 - Introduce Repository Pattern to handle persistence.
 - Use **CQRS** (Command Query Responsibility Segregation) to separate read and write operations.
 - Example: Separate Read and Write Repositories



- Fully Transition to a DDD-Based Architecture
 - Gradually **decommission** the legacy monolith.
 - Ensure all services follow DDD principles.
 - Implement CI/CD pipelines for efficient deployments.
 - Conduct domain-driven refactoring as the business evolves.



Summary of Transition Approach

Step	Action
Analyze Legacy System	Identify pain points, business rules, and dependencies.
Define Bounded Contexts	Separate domain models and align with business.
Apply Strangler Pattern	Incrementally replace monolith modules with
	microservices.
Implement Tactical DDD	Use Aggregates, Entities, Repositories, and Domain Events.
Introduce Application Services	Separate domain logic from infrastructure concerns.
Integrate with Legacy System	Use Event Sourcing, ACL, and message queues.
Modernize Data Access	Implement Repository and CQRS patterns.
Fully Transition to DDD	Decommission monolith and embrace modular
	architecture.



- 1. Treating DDD as Just Another Technical Framework
- Pitfall:
 - Many teams adopt DDD purely as a technical approach without focusing on its real purpose—aligning software design with business needs.
- How to Avoid:
 - Understand the Business First Engage domain experts before writing code.
 - Focus on Ubiquitous Language Ensure both business and technical teams
 use the same terms.
 - **DDD is a Mindset, Not a Framework** Use it for problem-solving, not just coding patterns.



2. Ignoring Ubiquitous Language

- Pitfall:
 - Developers and business experts use different terminologies, leading to misunderstandings and inconsistent models.
- How to Avoid:
 - **Develop a shared glossary** Ensure **everyone** speaks the same language.
 - Use the Ubiquitous Language in Code Class and method names should reflect real-world domain terms.
 - Hold regular meetings between developers and domain experts to refine the model.



- 3. Poorly Defined Bounded Contexts
- Pitfall:
 - Teams either create too many small contexts or one giant context.
- How to Avoid:
 - Identify Core, Supporting, and Generic Domains before defining contexts.
 - Use Context Mapping to visualize relationships between services.
 - Apply Anti-Corruption Layer (ACL) when integrating legacy systems to prevent contamination.



- 4. Overusing Entities Instead of Value Objects
- Pitfall:
 - Developers treat every object as an Entity, leading to unnecessary complexity and bloated databases.
- How to Avoid:
 - Use Value Objects for immutable data (e.g., Money, Address, Coordinates).
 - Reserve Entities for objects with unique identity (e.g., User, Order).



5. Incorrect Aggregate Design

- Pitfall:
 - Aggregates are either too large (causing performance issues) or too small (leading to data consistency problems).
- How to Avoid:
 - Follow the Single Responsibility Principle Aggregates should manage only what they own.
 - Use Factories for Aggregate Creation Prevent invalid object states.
 - Reference Other Aggregates by ID instead of embedding full objects.



6. Treating Repositories as CRUD Services

- Pitfall:
 - Repositories should **only handle domain objects**, but teams often turn them into **generic database access layers**.
- How to Avoid:
 - Repositories should retrieve Aggregates, not just raw data.
 - Use Specification Pattern for complex queries.
 - Keep business logic inside Aggregates, not Repositories.



- 8. Trying to Apply DDD Everywhere
- Pitfall:
 - Applying DDD principles to every module, even in simple CRUD applications, increases complexity.
- How to Avoid:
 - Use DDD only for Complex Business Domains (e.g., finance, logistics).
 - For simple modules, use traditional CRUD or Service-Oriented approaches.
 - Follow the 80/20 Rule: Focus DDD on core business logic, not generic services.



Hands-on Exercises and Case Studies



Hands-on Exercises and Case Studies

- Building a domain model for a sample business scenario
- Context mapping workshop to align team understanding



Hands-on Exercises and Case Studies

Problem Statement: Digital Payment System

- A **fintech company** wants to build a **digital payment system** that allows users to:
 - Transfer money between wallets or bank accounts.
 - Top up wallets via bank transfers or cards.
 - Process payments for merchants securely.
 - Detect fraudulent transactions based on user behavior.
- The system must be **secure**, **scalable**, **and maintainable** while ensuring **seamless transactions** across different services.



Happy Learning:)