

Introduction to Model-Based User Interfaces

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Abstract

This is an introduction to Model-Based User Interfaces covering the benefits and shortcomings of the model-based approach, a collection of use cases, and terminology.

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Table of Contents

Introduction

Benefits from using Model Based UI Development

Use Cases for Model Based UI Design

- 1. Car Rental System
- 2. Digital Home
- 3. Omitting minimalistic UIs through the use of an universal interaction device in production environments
- 4. Story Editor
- 5. Post WIMP Widgets
- 6. <u>UI development in the automotive industry to handle UI varieties and to increase efficiency of UI development processes</u>
- 7. Photo-Browser
- 8. Tourist Web Site (TWS): Migratory UI under Human Control

Common Generic Requirements

Examples of Tools

Glossary of Terms

References

Acknowledgements

Introduction

The development of user interfaces (UIs), ranging from early requirements to software obsolescence, has become a time-consuming and costly process. Typically, the graphical user interface (GUI) of an interactive system represents about 48% of the source code, requires about 45% of the development time and 50% of the implementation time, and covers 37% of the maintenance time (Myers and Rosson, 1992). These figures, evaluated in the early nineties, are increasing dramatically with the spread of new interaction techniques such as vocal and gestural modalities, resulting in additional requirements (Petrasch, 2007).

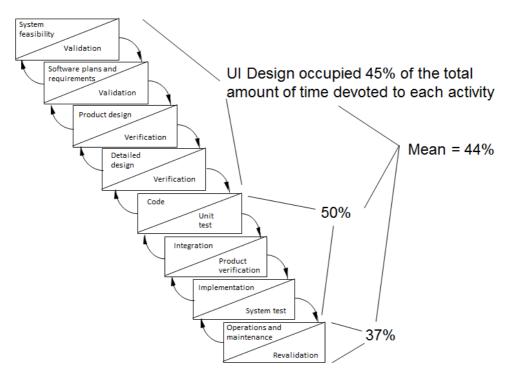


Figure 1. Distribution of UI development effort in a waterfall development life cycle.

Today, developers of UI for interactive systems have to address multiple sources of heterogeneity:

- 1. Heterogeneity of end users: an interactive system is normally used by several different end users. End users differ with respect to their preferences, capabilities, culture (e.g., speaking different languages) and level of experience.
- 2. Heterogeneity of computing platforms, interaction modalities, input/output capabilities: there is a large diversity of computing platforms (e.g., smartphone, desktop PC, tablet, embedded devices) using different input capabilities (e.g., keyboard, mouse, (multi-)touch, data gloves, motion sensors, monitors, head-mounted displays) with different interaction modalities (e.g., graphics, speech, haptics, gesture, Brain-Computer-Interaction).
- 3. Heterogeneity of programming/markup languages and widget toolkits: for developing a UI, developers use different programming/markup languages (e.g., Java, C++, HTML) with different widget libraries (e.g., Swing, Qt, GTK+).
- 4. Heterogeneity of working environments: many workflows in the real world are supported by interactive systems through the pervasiveness of computing devices. As a result, developers have to consider different contextual constraints (e.g., noisy environments, mobility).
- 5. Variability of the context of use (<user, platform, environment>). In addition to being heterogeneous, the context of use dynamically evolves, calling for plastic UIs, i.e. UIs capable of adaptation while preserving human values (Thevenin and Coutaz, 1999). The dimensions that characterize UI plasticity are presented in The Problem Space of UI adaptation, UI Plasticity.

Model-Based User Interface Development (MBUID) is one approach that aims at coping with the above mentioned challenges and at decreasing the effort needed to develop UIs while ensuring UI quality. The purpose of Model-Based Design is to identify high-level models that allow designers to specify and analyse interactive software applications from a more semantic oriented level rather than starting immediately to address the implementation level. This allows them to concentrate on more important aspects without being immediately confused by many implementation

details and then to have tools which update the implementation in order to be consistent with high-level choices.

For a comprehensive overview of the history and evolution of MBUID, we refer to (Meixner, Paternó, and Vanderdonckt, 2011). Different frameworks have been developed to conceptually capture the important aspects of a MBUID process. As early as 1996, Szekely introduced a generic architecture for MBUID (Szekely, 1996). In 2000, Da Silva described an architecture for UI development using a MBUID approach (Da Silva, 2000). The first version of a reference framework for multiple contexts of use Uls in history using a model-based approach, appeared in (Calvary et al., 2001). This version was then extended with additional relationships and definitions to give rise to a revised reference framework published for the first time in July 2002 (Calvary et al., 2002) and in (Calvary et al., 2003). It was then named the Cameleon Reference Framework (CRF) when accepted as a new deliverable of the EU-funded FP 5 CAMELEON project, published in September 2002 (Calvary et al., 2002b). CRF has now become widely accepted in the HCI Engineering community as a reference for structuring and classifying model-based development processes of UIs that support multiple contexts of use. CRF covers both the design time and run time phases. In (Calvary et al., 2003) metamodels and the use of models at runtime are proposed for supporting UI plasticity.

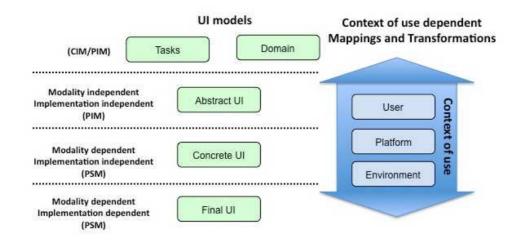


Figure 2. A simplified version of the Cameleon Reference Framework (CRF). Mappings and transformations between levels of abstraction depend on the context of use.

As depicted in Figure 2, the CRF makes explicit a set of UI models (e.g., Tasks, Abstract UI, Concrete UI, Final UI) and their relationships, to serve as a common vocabulary within the HCI Engineering community to discuss and express different perspectives on a UI.

- The Task and Domain models correspond to the hierarchies of tasks that need to be performed on/with domain objects (or domain concepts) in a specific temporal logical order for achieving users' goals (during the interaction with the UI). Using the wording of the OMG Model-Driven Architecture (MDA) in Software Engineering (http://www.omg.org/mda/), the Task and Domain level is either a Computing Independent Model (CIM) or a Platform Independent Model (PIM).
- The Abstract UI (AUI) model expresses the UI in terms of Abstract Interaction Units (AIU) (or Abstract Interaction Objects (AIOs) (Vanderdonckt and Bodart, 1993)), as well as the relationships among them. These AIUs are independent of any implementation technology or modality (e.g., graphical, vocal, gestural). They can be grouped logically to map logically connected tasks or domain objects.

- The Concrete UI (CUI) model expresses the UI in terms of Concrete Interaction Units (CIU) (or Concrete Interaction Objects (CIOs) (Vanderdonckt and Bodart, 1993)). These CIUs are modality-dependent, but implementation technology independent, thus platform specific (PSM). The CUI concretely defines how the UI is perceived and can be manipulated by end users.
- The Final UI (FUI) model expresses the UI in terms of implementation technology dependent source code. A FUI can be represented in any UI programming language (e.g., Java UI toolkit) or mark-up language (e.g., HTML). A FUI can then be compiled or interpreted.

The relationships between the CRF models include (Bouillon and Vanderdonckt, 2002): concretization, abstraction, translation, and reflexion.

- Concretization is an operation that transforms a particular model into another one
 of a lower level of abstraction, until executable/interpretable code is reached.
 CRF shows a four-step concretization process: the Task and Domain level (task
 model and/or the domain model) is "concretized" into an Abstract UI model,
 which in turn leads to a Concrete UI. A Concrete UI is then turned into a Final UI,
 typically by means of code generation techniques.
- Abstraction is an operation that transforms a UI representation from any level of abstraction to a higher level of abstraction. Reverse engineering of user interfaces is a typical example of abstraction.
- Translation is an operation that transforms a description intended for a particular context of use into a description at the same level of abstraction, but aimed at a different context of use.
- Reflexion is an operation that transforms a model into another one at the same level of abstraction for the same context of use (as opposed to different contexts of use as for translation).

The aforementioned relationships always preserve some dimension, either vertically (i.e., concretization and abstraction) or horizontally (i.e., translation, reflexion). In order to address non-horizontal/vertical transformations, Cross-cutting (Limbourg and Vanderdonckt, 2009) is a transformation of a model into another one at a different level of abstraction (higher or lower), while changing the context of use.

Orthogonal to the Task-Domain, AUI, CUI and FUI models, CRF makes explicit the context of use that may have an impact on the nature of the transformations used in the transformation process. The term "context of use" denotes an information space structured into three main models (see right side of Figure 2):

- The user model includes attributes and functions that describe the archetypal person who is intended to use, or is actually using, the interactive system (e.g., profile, idiosyncrasies, current tasks and activities).
- The platform model includes an integrated collection of software and/or hardware technologies and/or resource specifications that bind together the physical environment with the digital world.
- The environment model includes spatio-temporal attributes, rules, and functions that characterize the physical and social places when/where the interaction will take place, or is actually taking place. This includes numeric and/or symbolic times and locations (e.g., in the morning, at 4 o'clock, at home, in a public space, on the move in the street, in the train or car), light and sound conditions, social rules and activities (e.g., hierarchical social organization, roles, spatial and temporal relationships).

Although context of use is mainly defined based on information about users, platforms, and environments, there are also other dimensions that can be relevant to characterize context and to properly adapt an interactive system. The application domain, for instance, can also add relevant information that complete the characteristics of the context of use. For example, in a safety critical environment, knowing that the interactive system supports air traffic control or a nuclear power plant provides useful information about the level of attention that is required from end users.

Unlike the process initiated in the 1980s, which contained one entry point only at a high level of abstraction, CRF enables entry and exit points at any level of abstraction from which any combination of horizontal and vertical bottom-up and top-down transformations can be applied. This theoretical flexibility means that the stakeholders involved in the development of an interactive system can use the development process (e.g., human-centered development processes according to ISO 9241-210) that best suits their practice or the case at hand. Even when using a top down approach, developers can explore multiple development paths in parallel as illustrated in Figure 3. However, due to this high flexibility, developers have to ensure that models are not manipulated "by hand" after a transformation has been done. If so, developers have to ensure model consistency by e.g., using reverse transformations from a more concrete level to a more abstract level.

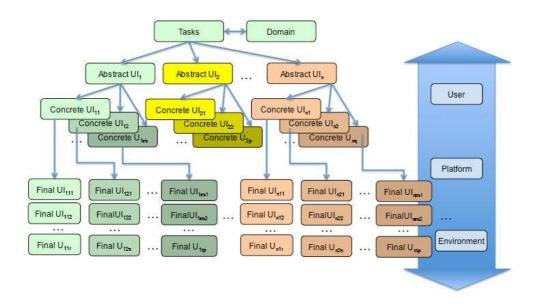


Figure 3. One example of possible transformations across the levels of CRF according to different contexts of use, starting from a unique Task and Domain Model.

Benefits from using Model Based UI Development

This section provides a list of potential benefits that are usually discussed for model-based development and Model-Driven Engineering (MDE) in general. Each potential benefit is then refined in the context of UI development. General MDE benefits are reported in (Hutchinson et al., 2011).

1. Benefits resulting from the existence of a step-wise development life cycle:

- Reducing the gap between requirements and implementation: a modelling phase aims to ensure in advance that the implementation addresses the user-centered requirements. MBUID contributes to this by explicitly defining models related to the UI that are captured and updated throughout the development life cycle. The output of a development step could serve as an input for a next development step. Among typical models are the task model, the domain model, the context of use model, thus promoting a user-centered development life cycle (as recommended by ISO 9241-210). These models are often, but not always, specified according to declarative programming, a programming paradigm in which the logic of the UI is described without describing its control flow. Other programming paradigms (e.g., logic programming, functional programming, imperative/procedural programming) are also used individually or mixed together (Grolaux, Van Roy, Vanderdonckt, 2001).
- Coordinating the involvement of multiple stakeholders: previous planning of the
 development life cycle enables various stakeholders (e.g., project leaders,
 designers, developers, testers, end users, psychologists, marketing people) to
 coordinate their work, e.g., by dividing the interactive system into several parts
 and defining mappings between them. Separation of concerns supports capturing
 various UI aspects in independent, but possibly correlated, models thus enabling
 these different stakeholders to fulfill their respective roles.
- Producing well-structured systems: the stepwise development life cycle together
 with the separation of concerns provide a good basis for producing a
 well-structured system, thus facilitating implementation itself as well as
 maintenance.

2. Benefits resulting from the use of explicit abstract models:

- Planning an adequate level of abstraction: modeling languages provide the
 developer with concepts for planning and reasoning about the developed system
 at the appropriate level of abstraction. MBUID contributes to this benefit by
 defining the levels of abstraction described in CRF.
- Improving communication by explicit models: the explicitness of modeling languages, in particular their visual representation, can lead to increased quality (e.g., understanding, perceiving, exploring, explaining, justifying, comparing, etc.,) of design documents for all stakeholders. For instance, MBUID contributes to this benefit by explicitly defining semantics, syntax, and stylistics for each model.
- Supporting UI quality: (semi-)formal modeling languages explicitly support UI compliance with respect to requirements (e.g., UI quality factors, usability guidelines (Fernandez et al., 2012), accessibility guidelines (e.g., WCAG), validation rules for completeness, consistency, correctness).

3. Benefits from exploring alternative designs:

- Supporting creation & creativity: MBUID efficiently produces alternative models with different design options, parameters, thus fostering the exploration of the design space (Masson, 2010).
- Enabling the production and comparison of alternative designs for multiple contexts of use while preserving quality (e.g., consistency): when UIs need to be produced for multiple contexts of use, MBUID facilitates the rapid production and comparison of alternative designs (e.g., factoring out common parts that are context-independent from specific context-dependent parts), which is particularly

useful in change management (Pilemalm et al., 2012).

- 4. Benefits resulting from code generation: the benefits associated with this appear when the method is enacted.
 - Enhancing development productivity: code generation from a set of models often requires only a small fraction of time compared to the manual production of code. Consequently, MBUID favors UI rapid, iterative, agile development, including UI mockups and prototypes at different levels of fidelity (Coyette, Kieffer, Vanderdonckt, 2007).
 - Capturing and reusing expert knowledge throughout UI development life cycle: expert knowledge – e.g., about user interface design, usability engineering, code structuring, code optimizations, or platform-specific vs platform-independent features – once incorporated in various development steps, expert knowledge can then be reused by all stakeholders (especially developers and designers).
 - Reducing errors: automatic transformation avoids manual errors. "Integranova creates customised solutions in half the time, personalised solutions for half the price, and top-quality, error-free software." (Integranova, 2012).
- 5. Benefits from using models at runtime:
 - Considering contexts of use that were not envisioned at design time: when a new context of use needs to be considered (e.g., opportunistic end users needs), then models can be exploited at runtime to support on the fly adaptation (Garcia Frey, 2012).
 - Explaining and justifying the UI to the end user: the UI is able to explain and to
 justify itself to the end user thanks to the models that capture the design rationale
 and that are embedded at runtime (Garcia Frey, 2013).
 - Going beyond low level adaptation: adaptation can span from the highest level of abstraction (e.g., the task and the domain models) to the lowest level (e.g., the final UI).
 - Enabling UI evolution. When requirements continuously evolve at run time, the UI should be repeatedly modified, and so do its models, as well as the design knowledge used to produce it. This evolution could be governed by the user (i.e., manually by the way of a meta-user interface (Coutaz, 2006)), by the system (i.e., autonomously as in autonomic computing (IBM, 2001)) or by both (i.e., mixed-initiative (Models@run-time, 2009; Eisenstein and Puerta, 2000; Mitrovic et al., 2007)).
- 6. Benefits for supporting method engineering:
 - Defining and enacting method for UI development process: once defined, a method could be enacted and any deviation with respect to the definition could be pointed out.
 - Knowledge about creation of modeling languages: MDE concepts and definitions reflect existing knowledge about modeling, modeling languages, and code generation. MBUID contributes to this benefit by bringing expertise about models for user interface development.
 - Usage of frameworks and tools: various software tools, such as Integrated
 Development Environments (IDEs), could support MBUID. In more advanced
 model-driven engineering of UIs, tools exist that support MDE steps, such as
 creating and processing metamodels, creating modeling editors, and defining and
 executing transformations (e.g., transformation engines).

7. Maintenance of modeling language and transformations:

- Systematic and explicit definition of metamodels and transformations: when all models and transformations are defined according to a common set of meta-models, their usage becomes systematic. This also works for MBUID.
- Maintenance of modeling languages and code generators: modeling languages, associated model-to-model transformations and model-to-code compilation can be maintained at a level of expressiveness that is higher than a traditional programming or markup language.
- Reuse of models, metamodels, and transformations: MDE compliant metamodels and transformations can be understood and reused by others. Models or model fragments could be reused from one use case to another or from one context of use to another, only affecting the portion that is subject to change (Pilemalm et al., 2012). This reuse facilitates the development of plastic user interfaces (Seffah and Javahery, 2004).

Use Cases for Model-Based UI Design

This section provides a list of implemented use cases to illustrate different CRF-compliant development processes. Table 1 provides a synthetic view of the differentiating characteristics of these exemplars where lines refer to the level of abstraction used as the entry point from which transformations are performed, and where columns indicate whether these transformations are performed at design time or at run time. The document Complementary List of Use Cases provides additional examples.

Entry Point / Software Life Cycle Phase	Design Time	Run Time
Task & Domain	UC1 - Car Rental UC2 - Digital Home	UC3 - Minimalistic Uls
Abstract UI	UC4 Story Editor	UC5 - Post WIMP Widgets
Concrete UI	UC6 - Automotive Industry (Infotainment system design)	UC7- Photo-Browser
Final UI		UC8 - Tourism Web Site (TWS)

1. Car Rental System

Responsible:

• Université catholique de Louvain (Jean Vanderdonckt, Vivian Genaro Motti,

Pascal Beaujeant, Nesrine Mezhoudi)

1.1 Introductory Description

The car rental example consists of a scenario in which the interactive system permits users to rent a car. In this sense, various contextual information can be used to adapt application aspects, and to properly display the list of cars to rent, enabling users to make choices and to accomplish the main task.

The key functional requirements to support this task include the capacity to:

- specify the pick-up and return locations of the car;
- specify the period for the car rental;
- access a set of possible cars and select one;
- access and select additional car features (e.g. GPS);
- provide personal information before renting the car;
- access details about the car rental before making the final decision.

Two contexts of use are targeted:

- 1) Context 1: Physical environment is that of a home, platform is a Desktop PC, and the user is an English speaker who does not know the city where the car has to be rented.
- 2) Context 2: Physical environment is a busy street, platform is a smartphone, and the user is walking fast (busy eyes).

Figures UC1.1 and UC1.2 show screenshots for the two targeted contexts of use.





Figure UC1.1. A Concrete User Interface for Context1 "Home, PC, English speaker familiar with the location".



Figure UC1.2. A Concrete User Interface for Context2 "Noisy street, SmartPhone, English speaker walking fast, not familiar with the location".

1.2 Diagram and Discussion

Figure UC1.3 illustrates how a MBUI approach can be applied using successive concretization transformations starting from a single Task and Domain Model to different Abstract User Interfaces (each one corresponding to a specific context of use) and iteratively down to Final User Interfaces.

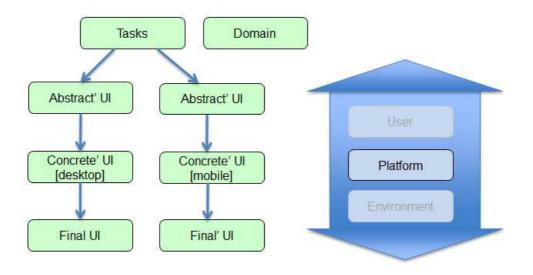


Figure UC1.3. Models involved in the car rental use case and the process.

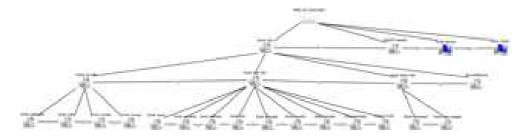


Figure UC1.4. Task models for the two targeted contexts of use.

2. Digital Home

Responsible:

CNR-ISTI (Fabio Paternò, Carmen Santoro, Lucio Davide Spano)

2.1 Introductory Description

Digital home refers to a residence with devices that are connected through a computer network. A digital home has a network of consumer electronics, mobile, and PC devices that cooperate transparently. All computing devices and home appliances conform to a set of interoperable standards so that everything can be controlled by means of an interactive system. Different electronic services can be offered by a digital home system, including but not limited to e.g., manage, synchronize and store personal content, family calendars and files; upload, play and show music, videos and pictures on a home screen (e.g., a TV) using a mobile phone as a remote control; use a mobile phone as a remote control for the other devices, for example a thermostat.

These functionalities are made available through context sensitive user interfaces. In fact, such UIs are capable of adapting to different computing platforms (touch-based devices, web, mobile, TV, PDA, DECT handset, voice portal ...), users (children, teenagers, adults, elderly, disabled people, ...) and environments or situations (at home, away, at night, while music is playing, ...). The final aim is to provide a seamless and unified user experience, which is critical in the digital home domain. To this regard, different automatic UI adaptations can be possible: e.g., zooming the UI if the user has visual problems; enabling multimodal interactions (ex. voice interaction) because the user is doing another task at the same time.

The key functional requirements for this application are the following:

- authenticate a user in order to enable remote access to home devices
- select a room
- select a device inside the room
- inspect and modify the status of a selected device

This application may be used in different contexts of use:

- 1) Context 1: Physical environment is that of a home, platform is a Desktop PC, and the user controls the home devices without accessing directly the physical controls.
- 2) Context 2: Physical environment is a street, and the user is moving. The user controls the home devices remotely, in order to e.g. start heating the home before coming back.

In this use case, the context dimension considered is limited to the platform aspect.

Figures UC2.1 and UC2.2 show screenshots of the Digital Home for two targeted contexts of use.

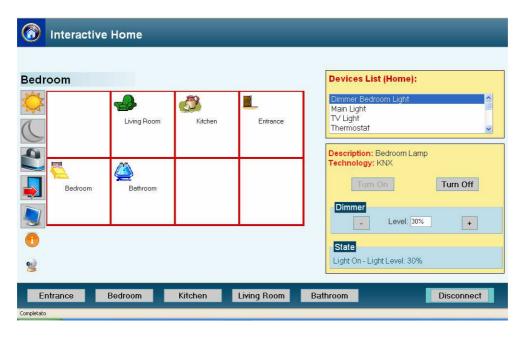


Figure UC2.1: The desktop version of the Digital Home application.



Figure UC2.2: The mobile version of the Digital Home application.

2.2 Diagram and Discussion

The models involved in the Digital Home use case as well as the process involving them are depicted in Figure UC2.3.

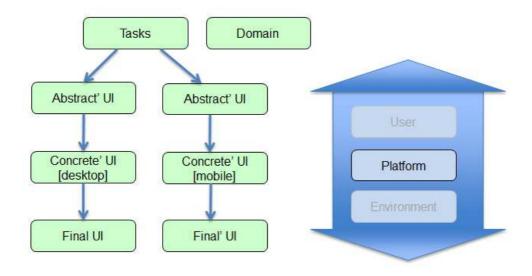


Figure UC2.3. Models involved in the Digital Home use case and the process.

The use case considered in the Digital Home exemplar (Mori et al., 2008) starts from the task model shown in Figure UC2.4. Because we consider the platform as the only dimension of the context of use, the other context aspects have been greyed out in Figure UC2.3. From the task model, it is possible to derive an Abstract UI for each targeted context of use. Let's consider a desktop PC. On the one hand, this AUI will be expressed using a modality and platform -independent vocabulary (also shared by other AUIs addressing different computing platforms), on the other hand, this AUI will include only the abstract interaction units that make sense in that considered computing platform (a desktop PC). From this AUI, it is possible to obtain a Concrete UI and then a Final UI in a specific implementation language suitable for that computing platform. A similar process is followed to obtain a Final UI for a different platform (e.g., the mobile one). From the filtered CTT task model, an Abstract UI is derived and then a CUI and finally an implemented UI expressed in a language supported by the mobile platform is built.

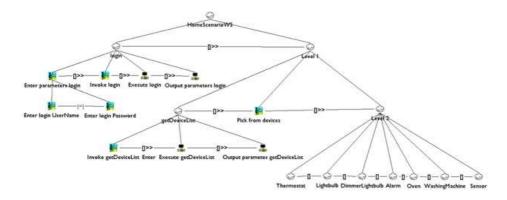


Figure UC2.4. The Task Model for the Digital Home.

3. Omitting minimalistic UIs through the use of an universal interaction device in production environments

Responsible:

- Heilbronn University (Gerrit Meixner)
- DFKI (Marc Seissler):

3.1 Introductory Description

The SmartFactoryKL (see Figure UC3.1) is an arbitrarily modifiable and expandable (flexible) intelligent production environment, connecting components from multiple manufacturers (networked), enabling its components to perform context-related tasks autonomously (self-organizing), and emphasizing user-friendliness (user-oriented). The SmartFactoryKL is the first ambient intelligent production environment for demonstration and development purposes worldwide. Development of user interfaces is a secondary field in the production industry, but the impact of user interface quality is increasingly independent of the application domain, which is a significant factor of success for the entire product. After three years of research, a first prototype has been finished that allows for controlling the production line using a single universal interaction device able to adapt to varying field devices according to the actual context of use, in a complex, model-based approach. To handle the resulting diversity of user interfaces, we developed a universal interaction device – the SmartMote – which is capable of providing control over various devices in these environments. Depending on the context of use, the visualization of the SmartMote is generated and adapted during run-time in order to provide a homogeneous intra-device user experience.

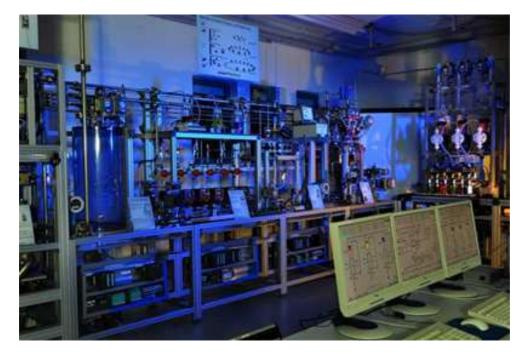


Figure UC3.1. The SmartFactoryKL

The key functional requirements for this application are the following:

- authenticate a user in order to enable remote access to modules or field devices
- select a module or a field device
- inspect and interact (e.g. modify parameters) with a selected module or field device

The SmartMote may be used in one context

1) Context 1: Physical environment is that of a production environment (industrial

factory), platform is a tablet PC (+ modules or field devices from different vendors), one single user

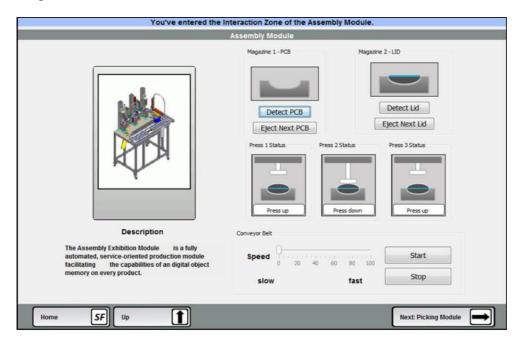


Figure UC3.2. Screenshot of a rendered (final) UI with the SmartMote (Seissler, 2013)

3.2 Diagram and Discussion

For the specification of the context-sensitive UI a model-based architecture has been developed that consists of two core models (AUI-model and CUI-model). The AUI-model is specified using the "Useware Dialog Modeling" Language (useDM) that enables the abstract, modality-independent specification of the user interface. This model is refined via a CUI-model that uses the User Interface Markup Language (UIML) 4.0 for the platform-independent description of the graphical user interface. Adaptation rules are further used to specify the adaptation that can be applied on those models at run-time. To generate the final user interface (FUI) a java-based Renderer – SmartMote – has been developed.

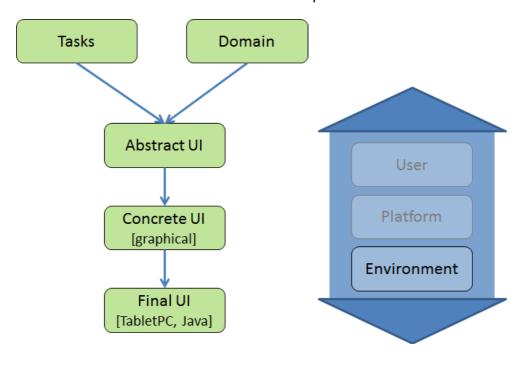


Figure UC3.2. Models involved in the Minimalist-UI use case and the process.

4. Story Editor

Responsible:

• University "La Sapienza" of Rome (Paolo Bottoni)

4.1 Introductory Description

The production of e-learning tools for deaf people meets with several difficulties, connected to the need to resort only to the visual channel, without saturating it, and to the adoption of different cognitive strategies developed within the community. From a field study conducted with deaf people in the context of a national project involving cognitive scientists, linguists, and computer scientists, we adopted the metaphor of a learning story as the basis for organising different types of learning material: videos, pictures, texts, accompanied by translation in the Italian Sign Language. We report on the use of a user interface abstract model in the development of the interactive story editor, to be used by tutors and teachers to organise the course material and path, and which generates interactive pages for the students.

The key functional requirements to support developers of course include:

- specify the activities involved in a learning module;
- specify the logical paths according to which these activities can be performed;
- specify the conditions for progressing along these paths.

The context of use is that of the generation of a course by a teacher, possibly involving in the process tutors who will then have to assist the learners. Learners and tutors will then interact with the generated web pages (Bottoni et al., 2012).

The development relies on an abstract model of the learning domain, in which stories are seen as workflows: (learning) processes in which tasks are assigned to actors (e.g., students and tutors). Stories can be recursively composed by sub-stories, paths define sequences or alternatives for exploration of stories, with transitions connecting sub-stories, and tasks either are defined as simple stories to be explored individually or in a laboratory, or require the exploration of sub-stories. Each story has a single entry point and a single exit point, signalling completion by the student.

Stories are classified with respect to the exploration strategy and associated with abstract patterns. For example, in a star topology tasks can be performed in any order. For each type, the story editor provides a specialised form of interaction, guiding the teacher to define the story according to that type, and a template is used to generate the appropriate main page for the story accordingly. Figure UC4.1 (left) presents the workflow for a story with three sub-stories organised in a star topology. Figure UC4.1 (right) shows the generated page for a story with star topology providing access to five sub-stories. The lateral bars are generated according to a general template.

Figure UC4.1: The workflow for a star-story (left) and a generated page for a star-story (right).

4.2 Diagram and Discussion

The models involved in the Digital Home use case as well as the process involving them are depicted in Figure UC4.2.

The design of the interaction with the Story Editor and of the templates for the generated pages derives from the representation of tasks in the form of patterns composed by specific task trees. For each pattern, the story editor will constrain the interaction to create instances of that pattern, and will generate the specific workflow to be followed while interacting with the generated page. Moreover a corresponding pattern of interaction elements to be included in the generated page is provided as an abstract user interface model.

The target platform is that of Web pages with associated JavaScript components for the interaction with the specific learning content.

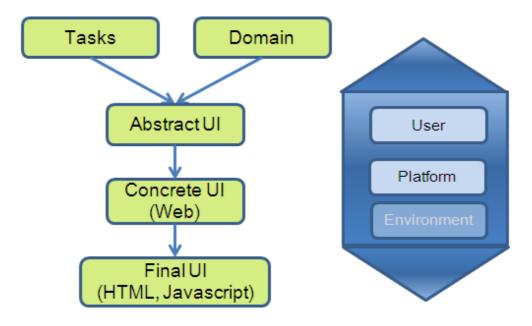


Figure UC4.2. Models involved in the Story Editor use case and the process.

As shown in Figure UC4.3, a StoryContainer will present several individual components, providing context for the interaction, and a PresentationContainer, composed of several different "page contents" in a mutual emphasis relation so that they cannot be shown together). The specific composition of the presentation container

will depend on the type of story to be presented, as prescribed by the Task Model, where either an individual component or a container is associated with each task.

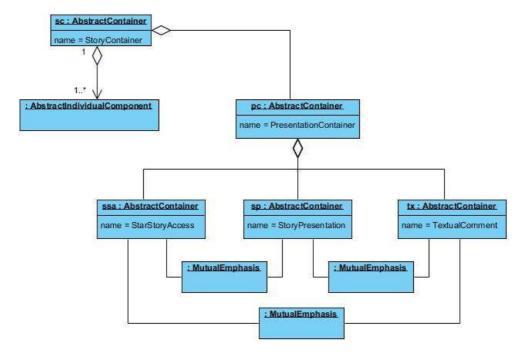


Figure UC4.3: The overall abstract structure of story containers.

5. Post – WIMP Widgets

Responsible:

OFFIS e. V. (Sebastian Feuerstack)

5.1 Introductory Description

With the introduction of technologies like HTML5, CSS3, and SVG, the way people can interact with the web has been fundamentally enhanced. Designers are no longer required to use a predefined set of basic widgets. Instead, interaction can nowadays be driven by self-designed widgets specifically targeted at some specific user needs or specific application requirements. These Post-WIMP widgets are designed to support different combinations of modes and media and can guarantee a certain quality-in-use upon context changes. Based on ubiquitous availability of browsers and corresponding standardized W3C technologies Post-WIMP widgets can be easily designed and manipulated (e.g. SCXML, ECMA), instantly reflect continuous context changes (e.g. by WebSockets) and consider different multimodal setups (e.g. XHTML+Voice, SMIL, and the MMI-Architecture).

The fact that the control and appearance of Post-WIMP widgets is designed with a high degree of freedom has an impact on MBUID approaches: the toolkit and therefore the target of a model transformation can no longer been assumed as static (a fixed set of widgets). The same models (task model, AUI model, CUI model) known from MBUID can be applied to design individual Post-WIMP interactors. Additionally, a statechart-based behavior description captures the enhanced interaction capabilities of a Post-WIMP interactor. As an example we consider two use-cases of Post-WIMP interactors running inside a web application: A mixed reality furniture online shop that can be controlled by gestures and supports inter-reality migration of interactors and an interactive music sheet that can be controlled by head movements.

Web Furniture Shop

In the web furniture shop, a customer can choose between different furniture and fill up a shopping cart. By a drag-and-drop gesture using both hands one can drag furniture interactors virtually out of the monitor displaying the web shop and drop them into an augmented reality to see if the furniture really matches in space and color to the user's environment. An augmented reality frame that surrounds the shopping cart allows to seamlessly switch between realities while crossing it during the drag and drop gesture.

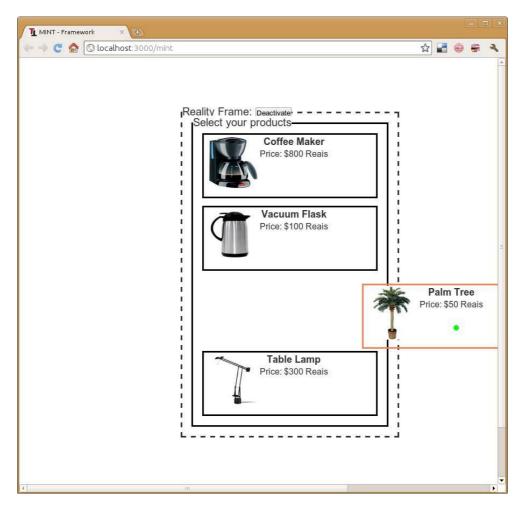


Figure UC5.1: Shopping cart web application with reality frame.

Figure UC5.1 shows the actual shopping cart that is part of a typical online shop and has been enhanced by a Reality Frame. To enable a reality crossing Drag-and-Drop, the Reality Frame needs to be activated, which triggers a calibration of the system that identifies the monitor's physical location in the environment of the user using a camera and a visual marker.



Figures UC5.2a(left) and UC5.2b (right): Two handed gesture to pick and drop furniture.

Figures UC5.2a and UC5.2b depict a user dragging furniture using the left hand for pointing and the right hand for picking up an object in the browser. After the users has crossed the reality frame of the shopping cart in the browser, the web page changes to the augmented scene enabling her to position the furniture in her own environment.

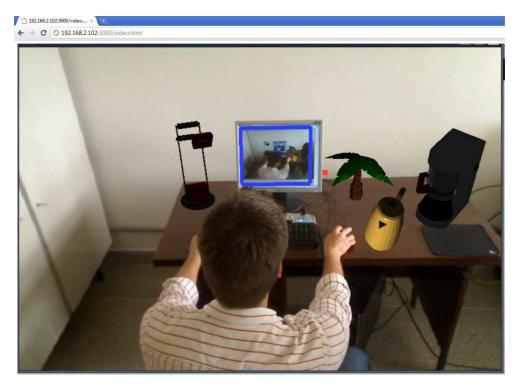


Figure UC5.3: Using a mouse to drag and drop furniture into the environment of the user.

Figure UC5.3 shows an adaptation of the interactors that support the same interaction using a classical mouse and keyboard setup.

The key functional requirements for support the user of the online furniture shop include:

- choose and add furniture to shopping cart
- drag furniture items out of the website
- drop furniture items into the augmented environment of the user

Three contexts of use are targeted:

- 1. Physical environment is the home of the user, platform is a desktopPC to be controlled by a mouse, and user is the online shop customer
- 2. Physical environment is the home of the user, platform is a desktopPC to be controlled by an interaction technique that requires hand gestures with both hands.
- 3. Physical environment is the home of the user, platform is a desktopPC to be controlled by an interaction technique that requires hand gestures using just one hand.

Interactive Music Sheet

When learning to play a musical instrument, or when playing one, a music sheet is used to give guidance as to how to perform the musical piece. However, as songs become longer and more intricate they may span across several sheets, forcing the player to stop playing to turn the page. Although this may become easier as one becomes more experienced with the instrument, it is a barrier for inexperienced players that can be tackled easily using a different mode to turn the pages other than your hand.

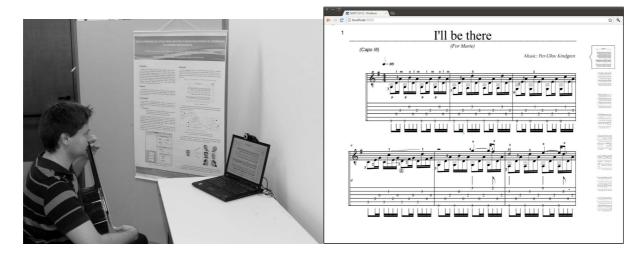


Figure UC5.4 (left): Music sheet control setup Figure UC5.5 (right): Music sheet web application

We propose a UI to turn music sheets with simple head movements that can be captured by a basic VGA webcam, a common part of modern notebooks. The considered setup is shown in Figure UC5.4 and a screenshot of the web browser displaying the music sheet is depicted in Figure UC5.5.

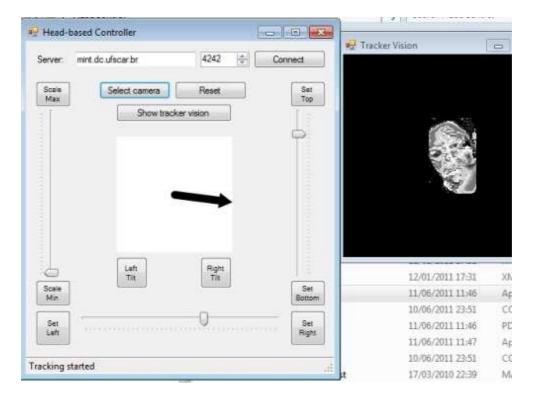


Figure UC5.6: Head Tracking Interactor

A head movement mode interactor supports detecting tilting the head to the side, right and left, as the controller to pass to the next page or return to the previous page, respectively. Figure UC5.6 shows a screenshot of the head tracker. The left side of the figure shows the debugging user interface in that a moving arrow represents the direction of the head movement (mirrored).

The key functional requirements for support the user of the online furniture shop include:

Turn music sheet pages triggered by various head movements

Three contexts of use are targeted:

- 1. Physical environment is the home of the user, platform is a desktopPC to be controlled by an interaction technique that involves tilting the head to the left and to the right.
- 2. Physical environment is the home of the user, platform is a desktopPC to be controlled by an interaction technique that involves turning the head to the left and to the right.
- 3. Physical environment is the home of the user, platform is a desktopPC to be controlled by an interaction technique that requires nodding.

5.2 Diagram and Discussion

The process starts at the final user interface and identifies interface elements (widgets) that should be enhanced to be controllable via various modalities, e.g., gestures or body movements. For each FUI element, a mapping is then defined that identifies the abstract Interface interactor (from a pre-existing abstract interactor model - http://www.multi-access.de/mint/aim) that matches best the behavior of the FUI element. Then, concrete user interface interactors are specified that represent the FUI element's behavior as a model (by a state chart). Finally, the modeled behavior is precisely mapped to the Final UI element (http://www.multi-access.de/mint/mim).

Further control modes or interactor representing media that have been derived from the same AUI interactor and for that already CUI model interactors have been defined can then be used as an additional control mode or representation for the new FUI element (http://www.multi-access.de/mint/irm) (Feuerstack, 2012a).

Different to the other approaches the main intention of the process is to identify and specify interactors on the abstract, concrete and final user interface level to form an interactor repository of re-usable interface elements that synchronize themselves over various control modes and media representations (http://www.multi-access.de/mint-2012-framework/) (Feuerstack2012b)

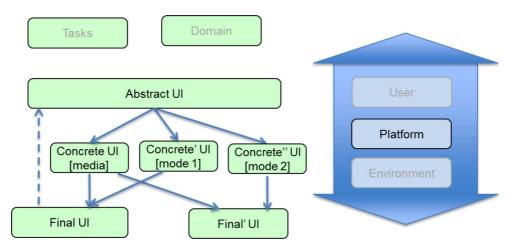


Figure UC5.7. Models used for the Post-WIMP widgets use case, and the process.

6. UI development in the automotive industry to handle UI varieties and to increase efficiency of UI development processes

Responsible:

- CERTH/ITI (Nikolaos Kaklanis)
- DFKI (Marius Orfgen)
- Heilbronn University (Gerrit Meixner)
- Robert Bosch GmbH (Ran Zhang)

6.1 Introductory Description

Car infotainment systems are currently developed using huge textual specifications that are refined iteratively while parallel being implemented. This approach is characterized by diverging specifications and implementation versions, change request negotiations and very late prototyping with cost-intensive bug fixing. Number and variety of involved actors and roles lead to a huge gap between what the designers and ergonomists envision as the final version, what they describe in the system specification and how the specification is understood and implemented by the developers.

Model-based user interface development could speed up the iterative implementation while reducing implementation efforts due to automatic generation of prototype interfaces. Different models could be used to establish a formal and efficient communication between designers, functionality specialists (e.g. Navigation, Telephone and Media), developers and other stakeholders. The resulting reduction of development time would make car infotainment systems more competitive and would

narrow the gap to innovation cycles in the field of consumer electronics.

Another large aspect of modern car infotainment systems is the quality assurance that is performed by the vendors. The complexity of modern infotainment systems (more than 1000 different screens and different modalities) requires large efforts to develop formal test models on the basis of the system specification. The test models are then used by the vendor to test the implementation coming from the supplier. This procedure results in another time and cost-intensive gap that could be bridged by performing consistency checks on the models used to generate the infotainment system instead of testing the implementation.

Moreover, vehicles and their infotainment systems have to be accessible. Even though model-based user interface development could speed up the iterative implementation, a further step is needed to enforce the accessibility of the cars: the description of the user. If user-interface description languages can also describe the user efficiently, including elderly and people with disabilities, then the two definitions (UI & user) could be used in frameworks performing automatic/simulated accessibility evaluation of the prototype interfaces of a car.

The key functional requirements to support UI development in the automotive industry include the capacity to:

- create a prototype UI of a car infotainment system
- view the prototype UI
- edit the prototype UI
- perform automatic functional testing of the prototype UI
- perform automatic accessibility testing of the prototype UI using user models (representing various population groups with or without disabilities)

Two contexts of use are targeted:

- 1) Context 1: Physical environment is that of an automotive company office, platform is a desktop PC and user is a developer.
- 2) Context 2: Physical environment is that of an automotive company office, platform is a Virtual Reality CAVE and user is a designer.

6.2 Diagram and Discussion

The models involved in the automotive industry scenario, as well as the process involving them, are depicted in Figure UC6.1.

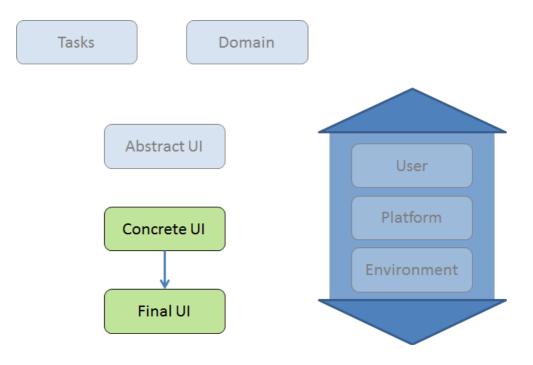


Figure UC6.1. Models used in the Automotive Industry use case, and the process

In the automotive industry UIs are developed starting at the CUI level. Normally developers start with sketches, mock-ups or paper prototypes and iterate. On the basis of mock-ups interaction and graphical designers refine the mock-ups to wireframes and finally develop the graphical design e.g., with Adobe Photoshop. In the end the prototypes are manually transferred into a final UI for a specific infotainment system. The project automotiveHMI (http://www.automotive-hmi.org/) is developing a process and a UIDL to integrate the working artifacts of the involved developers to generate the FUI automatically.

7. Photo-Browser

Contributors:

University of Grenoble (Joelle Coutaz, Gaëlle Calvary)

7.1 Introductory Description

Photo-Browser supports photo browsing in a centralized or distributing way depending on the availability of a dynamic set of interactive devices (http://iihm.imag.fr /demo/photobrowser/). These include a multi-touch interactive table, a projected display on a wall, an Android SmartPhone, and a kinect to track gestures. As shown in Figure UC7.1, the UI of Photo-Browser is dynamically composed of the following components: a Tcl-Tk component running on the multipoint interactive surface (Fig. UC7.1d), a component that transforms an HTLM-like CUI into HTML code to serve as input to a Web browser (this code supports the task "sequential navigation through the image portfolio") (Fig. UC7.1c), a Java component that provides a list of the photo names (Fig. UC7.1b), and a Java component running on the SmartPhone to navigate through the photos sequentially using the Next and Previous buttons.



Figure UC7.1. Photo-browser: a dynamic composition of executable and transformable components managed by a dynamic set of interconnected factories (a) running on different platforms (Windows, MacOS X, and Android).

When the user, say Alice, enters the room, the interactive table starts automatically and shows Bob's last opened photo portfolio. By performing a "wipe" gesture from the table to the wall, the current selected photo of the table is replicated on the wall. As Alice brings her SmartPhone in contact with the table, the phone can be used as a remote controller (Figure UC7.2). Using a wipe gesture over the table provokes the table to shut down. Alice can carry on her task using the wall as a large display and the SmartPhone as a remote controller. Here, a meta-UI has (Coutaz, 2006) been developed to support two classes of functions: (a) Dynamic software deployment in the ambient interactive space, and (b) UI redistribution across interactive devices including on-the-fly generation from a CUI HTML-like to native HTML code.

The key functional requirements to support UI migration for photo-browser include the capacity to:

- specify the source picture,
- specify the target device where to display the source content,
- add a device (e.g., SmartPhone)
- suppress a device (e.g., interactive table).

Four contexts of use are targeted:

- 1) Context 1: Physical environment is that of an office, platform is an interactive table PC, one single user.
- 2) Context 2: Physical environment unchanged, platform is composed of an interactive table and of a PC equipped with a beamer, one single user.
- 3) Context 3: Physical environment unchanged, platform is composed of an interactive table, a PC equipped with a beamer, and a SmartPhone, and a single user

4) Context 4: Physical environment unchanged, platform is composed of a PC equipped with a beamer, and a SmartPhone, and a single user.





Figure UC7.2. (Left) Connecting a SmartPhone to the interactive space by laying it down on the interactive table. (Right) Using the SmartPhone as a remote-controller to browse photos displayed by the HTML-based UI component of Figure UC7.1c and video-projected on the wall.

In this scenario, "Alice entering the room" corresponds to a situation that the Context Manager is able to recognize: "it is User Alice and Alice has entered Room Ambient Space". The action that the Context Manager must perform has been specified earlier by Alice using an end-user development tool (or has been learnt automatically by the ambient space and confirmed by Alice). For example, using a pseudo-natural language programming language, Alice has instructed the context manager that "when I enter Room Ambient Space, please start the table with my last opened photo roll". This sentence is then translated into an Architectural Description Language (ADL) whose interpretation by a middleware at runtime automatically deploys or stops the appropriate software components.

The UI of the meta-UI includes the recognition of three gestures: (1) a "wipe" gesture that allows the user to command the migration of the current selected photo from the table to the wall, (2) a "wipe" gesture that commands the system to shut down the table, and (3) the contact of the SmartPhone with the interactive table.

7.2 Diagram and Discussion

The diagram of Figure UC7.3 makes explicit the use of models at runtime: full coverage of the context of use, and remolding performed by on-the-fly transformation of one single component: that of the HTML-like CUI to the native HTML code of the target browser running on the PC. The other components are not transformed but are meta-described and dynamically recruited as resources of the platform.

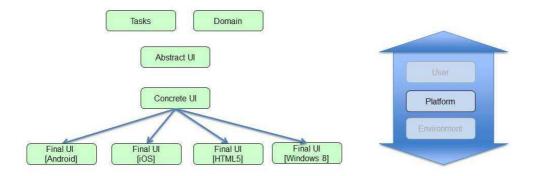


Figure UC7.3. Models used in the Photo-Browser use case, and the process.

8. Tourist Web Site (TWS): Migratory UI under Human Control

Contributors:

University of Grenoble (Gaëlle Calvary, Joëlle Coutaz)

8.1 Introductory Description

The Tourist Web Site (TWS) provides tourists with information for visiting and sojourning in the Sedan-Bouillon area, including a selection of hotels, camping, and restaurants. The UI of TWS is centralized when used from a PC workstation. Preparing a trip for vacation is an exciting experience when shared by a group of people (Figure UC8.1-left). However, one single PC screen does not necessarily favor collaborative exploration. By dynamically logging to the same website with a SmartPhone, users are informed on the SmartPhone that they can distribute the UI components of the site across the interaction resources currently available. Using a form, the user asks for the following configuration: the title of Web pages must appear on the SmartPhone as well as on the PC (the title slots are ticked for the two browsers available), whereas the content should stay on the PC whose screen is projected on the wall, and the navigation bar should migrate to the SmartPhone (Figure UC8.1-right). This form, which allow users to reconfigure the UI of TWS is the user interface of the meta-UI of the system (Coutaz, 2006).

The key functional requirements to support UI migration for TWS include the capacity to:

- specify the intention to redistribute the UI,
- specify the source content elements of web pages,
- specify the target device where to display the source content.

Two contexts of use are targeted:

- 1) Context 1: Physical environment is that of a home, platform is a Desktop PC, one family member as a single user.
- 2) Context 2: Physical environment is that of a home, platform is composed of a Desktop PC and of a SmartPhone, family members as users.

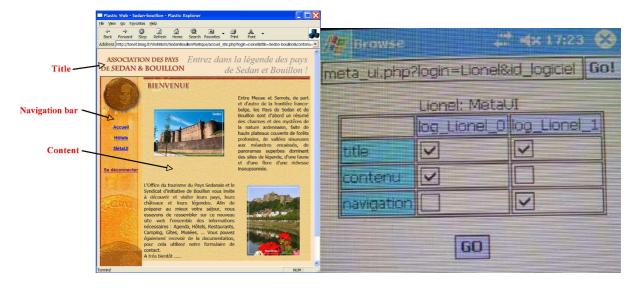


Figure UC8.1. The TWS web site. UI centralized on a PC screen (left). The control

panel of the meta-UI to distribute the presentation units across the resources of the interactive ambient space (right). The lines of the matrix correspond to the pieces of content that can be redistributed, and the columns denote the browsers currently used by the same user.

At any time, the user can ask for a reconfiguration of the UI by selecting the "meta-UI" link in the navigation bar (Figure UC8.2). The UI will be reconfigured accordingly. In this example, the function supported by the meta-UI is UI redistribution using a typical form-based interaction technique.

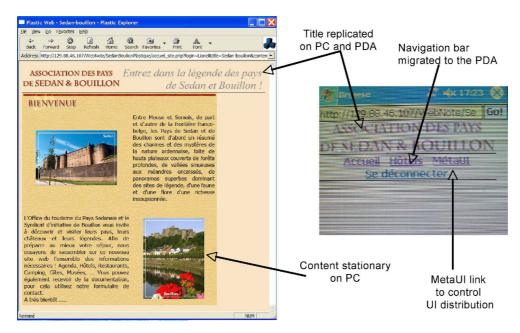


Figure UC8.2. The TWS web site when distributed across the resources of the ambient interactive space. The MetaUI link allows users to return to the configuration panel shown on the right of Figure UC8.1.

8.2 Diagram and Discussion

As shown in Figure UC8.3 for the TWS example, the Final UI is abstracted away at run time up to the AUI level. In turn, this AUI serves as input for retargeting and redistribution using a combination of the user's request produced by the way of the meta-UI and of the platform model maintained in the context of use. The diagram shows the transformation process going from the PC centralized version to the distributed version. The reverse process holds when moving from distributed to centralized use.

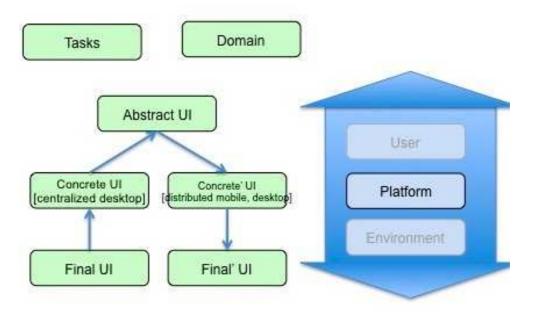


Figure UC8.3. Models used in the TWS use case, and the process.

Common Generic Requirements

This section presents a list of non-functional requirements that must drive the process of producing various models defined at different abstraction levels found in the CRF and that are applicable to any meta-modelling approach. They were identified based on the aforementioned use cases. These requirements are not assumed to be exhaustive, but rather are intended to be constructive in order to ensure the quality of meta-models and models produced according to these meta-models. Each respective meta-model may refine any generic requirement into a specific requirement that precises how to address each requirement in each specific case.

GR1: Completeness.

Refers to the ability of a (meta-)model to abstract all real world aspects of interest via appropriate concepts, attributes, and relationships. In theory, completeness is aimed at producing a (meta-)model that covers all real world aspects of interest. In practice however, it may turn out that not all aspects of interested could be captured in a (meta-)model. For this reason, completeness is sometimes reduced to expressiveness, which refers to the ability of a (meta-)model models to abstract a significant subset of real world aspects of interest that is considered enough for the purpose of its usage. A sub-property of completeness, respectively expressiveness, is the graphical completeness, respectively graphical expressiveness. Both refer to the ability of a (meta-)model to represent abstractions relevant for this (meta-)model through appropriate graphical representations of the concepts, attributes, and relationships. Note that it is not necessary that all the concepts, attributes, and relationships of a (meta-)model should be represented graphically. Therefore, graphical completeness is often substituted by graphical expressiveness.

GR2: Consistency.

Consistency is often decomposed into two sub-properties: external consistency and internal consistency. External consistency refers to the ability of a (meta-)model to produce abstractions of the real world that reproduce the behaviours of the real world aspects of interest in the same way and that preserves this behaviour throughout any

manipulation of the (meta-)model. Internal consistency refers to the ability of two or more (meta-)models to produce abstractions according to the same methodological approach. This includes: define a common vocabulary (e.g., the glossary), use this vocabulary in a systematic way in every (meta-)modelling activity so as to produce abstractions in the same way, avoid non-unique names. Rules for ensuring internal consistency could be defined in this way.

• GR3: Separation of Concerns.

Refers to the ability of a (meta-)model to abstract any real world aspect of interest into one single abstraction belonging to one single (meta-)model with as little overlapping as possible with other abstractions belonging to other (meta-)models.

• GR4: Extensibility.

Refers to the ability of a (meta-)model to extend the definition of existing abstractions for more specific purposes without affecting the stability of the overall definition.

• GR5: Concision

Refers to the ability of a (meta-)model to produce abstractions of real-world aspects of interest in a way that is as compact as possible with respect to the real-world. A related principle to concision is the Don't repeat yourself (DRY) principle, which refers to the ability of a (meta-)model to produce abstractions of real-world aspects of interest in a single, unambiguous, and authoritative representation.

• GR6: Correlability.

Refers to the ability of one or more (meta-)models to establish relationships between themselves in order to represent a real-world aspect of interest. Therefore, correlability is often decomposed into internal versus external correlability depending on the type of relationship involved (intra-model versus inter-model). There are several ways to establish relationships within a (meta-)model or across (meta-)models such as, but not limited to: mapping, transformation, mathematical relationships.

Examples of Tools

A number of model-based UI tools are available for download. Although most of them adhere to the principles of the Cameleon framework, none of them, so far, implements the MBUID standard. Table 2 below present these tools in a synthetic manner. The interested reader can access a detailed description of the tool from its URL.

Table 2. Examples of tools

Name	Authors	URL	CRF Levels coverage	Design time/ Run time tool	Implementation
ConcurTaskTrees Environment	CNR-ISTI, HIIS	http://giove.isti.cnr.it /tools/CTTE/home	Task	Design time	Java application

(CTTE)	Laboratory				
Model-based IAnguage foR Interactive Applications Environment (MARIAE)	HIIS	http://giove.isti.cnr.it /tools /MARIAE/home	Task, AUI, CUI, FUI	Design time	Java application

Table 2. Examples of tools (continued).

Name	Functional coverage - Specific features
	Modelling and analysis of single-user and cooperative CTT task models. In detail:
	- Visualise/Edit task models;
	- Interactively simulate task models;
	- Automatic check the validity/completeness of task models;
	- Save task models in various formats;
ConcurTaskTrees Environment (CTTE)	- Support the use of informal descriptions for task modelling;
	- Filter nomadic task models according to platform;
	- Support multiple interactive views of CTT task model specification;
	- Support the generation of CTT task models from WSDL;
	- Support the generation of Maria AUIs from CTT task models;
	- Support the generation of Maria CUIs for various platforms (e.g., desktop, mobile, vocal, multimodal,);
	- Support the generation of Maria FUIs for various implementation languages (e.g. Desktop HTML, Mobile HTML, X+V Desktop, X+V Mobile,)
Model-based IAnguage foR Interactive Applications	Modelling and analysis of various types of UI models.

	In detail:	
	Visualise/Edit Task/AUI/CUI models;Edit and apply model transformations;	
	- Support Web Service -based development of interactive applications;	
Environment	- Support the simulation of CTT task models;	
(MARIAE)	- Support the generation of Maria AUIs from CTT task models;	
	- Support the generation of Maria CUIs for various platforms (desktop, mobile, vocal, multimodal,);	
	- Support the generation of Maria FUIs for various implementation languages (e.g. Desktop HTML, Mobile HTML, X+V Desktop, X+V Mobile,)	

Glossary of Terms

A separate <u>glossary of terms</u> for the Model-Based User Interface domain has been provided. It contains informal, commonly agreed definitions of relevant terms and explanatory resources (examples, links etc.)

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