

one who starts off the sequence of events, i.e. initiates the use case. The rest of the actors involved in the use case are the participating actors. The most important actor is the one known as the beneficiary, i.e. the one who gets benefit from the use case: the one using the computer, as specified in the use case, to do something useful for him.

There is some controversy about who should be modelled as the actors associated with a use case. Some practitioners like to show on a use case diagram everyone who is associated with a use case. Some show only the initiating actor, some show only the beneficiary.

In the Wheels case study we have not modelled Customer as an actor although it is often the customer who initiates a use case. We could have modelled the system as in Figure 3.14.

The choice of actors is to a large extent dictated by where we choose to draw the system boundary. If we are producing a high-level model of a whole business system with, for example, the purpose of making the business or company more efficient, the actors will be people outside the company, in the environment. In the case of the Wheels system this would be the Customer and possibly also the Supplier. From this point of view the employees of the company are viewed as resources inside the system boundary and are not modelled as actors. If, on the other hand, we are talking about the automation boundary of a computer system that is part of the overall business system, the actors will be the people who

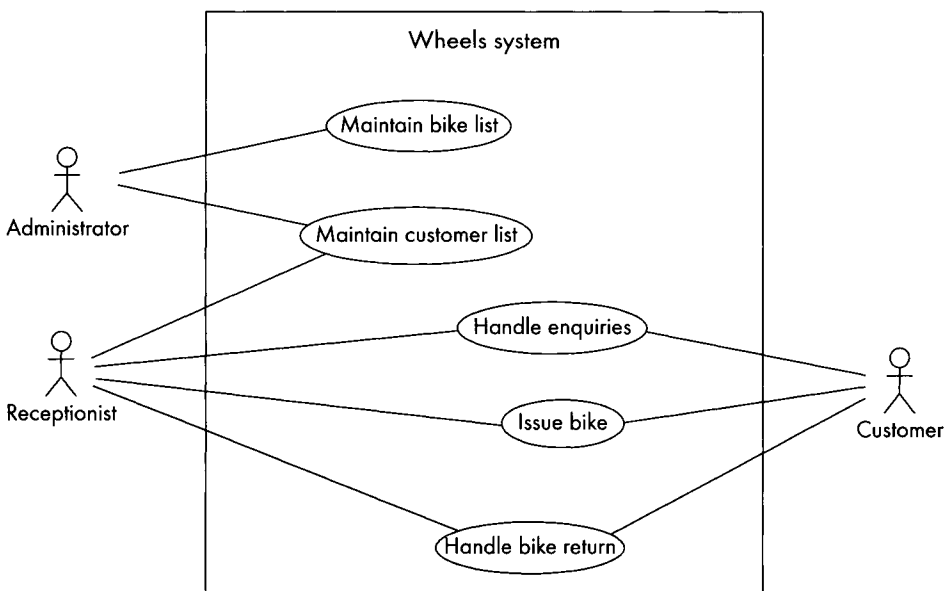


Figure 3.14 Use case diagram with Customer actor