

bike number, type, size, make, model, daily charge rate and deposit. Unfortunately, however, that's all there is on the computer, and the actual hire and return procedures are carried out in much the same, slightly disorganized way that they always have been.

Mike has recently come to realize that, although he has a successful business, he will not be able to expand as he would like to unless he gets his business processes up to date, and that to do this he will have to make much more effective use of the computer. He decides to hire a small local firm to investigate the way things are done at the moment, suggest possible improvements, and develop a computer system that will bring the Wheels business into the twenty-first century.

## Chapter summary

This chapter provides advice on how to get the best from the book as a whole, explaining that developing software systems is a skill that can only be learnt by practice. The chapter fills in some of the background relating to system life cycles and the main features of traditional and object-oriented approaches to development. It also describes briefly the Rational Unified Process (RUP) and the Unified Modelling Language (UML), which is used for the diagrams in the book. Finally, the chapter introduces the Wheels bike hire case study that is the source of examples and exercises in the book.

## Bibliography

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