

Good **e-Learning**

ArchiMate® 2.0 Business Layer Informational Concepts

By Steve Else

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Structural and behavioral concepts are mainly concerned with the operational perspective on an enterprise. Informational concepts focus on the “intentional” perspective. They provide a way to link the operational side of an organization to the business goals and products that an organization offers to its customers.

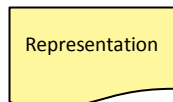
The informational concepts are tightly interwoven. One way of describing this is: a product has value to a customer, which is sold under a binding contract represented by some form of communication (paper, electronic files, etc.) that has meaningful information about the product.

See the Appendix for examples of using the following concepts.

Representation – a logical view of a Business Object

A representation is the perceptible form of the information carried by a business object, such as a document. As such, it can be seen as the realization of the associated business object. If relevant, representations can be classified in various ways; for example, in terms of medium (e.g., electronic, paper, audio) or format (e.g., HTML, PDF, plain text, bar chart).

A single business object can have a number of different representations, can realize one or more specific business objects, may realize one or more business objects, and can be associated with a meaning that it represents.



Meaning – intellectual background of a Business Object or its Representation

A meaning is the contribution of a business object or its representation to the knowledge or expertise of some actor, given a particular context (e.g., the role that the actor fulfills within that context). It is a description that expresses the intent of a representation; i.e., how it informs the external user.

It is possible that different users view the informative functionality of a business object or representation differently. For example, what may be a “registration confirmation” for a client could be a “client mutation” for a CRM department.

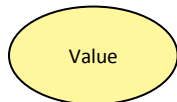
Various different representations may carry essentially the same meaning. For example, various different documents (a web document, a filled-in paper form, a “client contact” report from the call center) may essentially carry the same meaning. A meaning can be associated with a representation that carries this meaning.



Value – the perceived worth, importance or utility of a product

Value can be what a party gets by selling or making available some product or service, or it can be what a party gets by buying or obtaining access to it. Value is often expressed in terms of money, but it has long since been recognized that non-monetary value is also essential to business; for example, practical/functional value (including the right to use a service), and the value of information or knowledge.

Value can apply to internal systems or organizational unit, or it apply to external appreciation of goods, services, information, knowledge, or money, normally as part of some sort of customer-provider relationship. A value can be associated with business services and, indirectly, with the products they are part of, and the roles or actors that use them.



Product – a set of services that is marketed and sold to customers

This definition describes financial, services-based, or information products that are common in information-intensive organizations, rather than physical products.

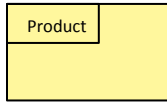
A financial or information product consists of a collection of services, and a contract that specifies the characteristics, rights, and requirements associated with the product.

“Buying” a product gives the customer the right to use the associated services.

Generally, the product concept is used to specify a product type.

The number of product types in an organization is typically relatively stable compared to, for example, the processes that realize or support the products. “Buying” is usually one of the services associated with a product, which results in a new instance of that product (belonging to a specific customer). Similarly, there may be services to modify or destroy a product.

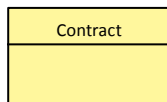
A product may aggregate business services or application services, as well as a contract. A value may be associated with a product.



Contract – the organ legally establishing an agreement between the business and the customer

The contract concept may be used to model a contract in the legal sense, but also a more informal agreement associated with a product. It may also be or include a Service Level Agreement (SLA), describing an agreement about the functionality and quality of the services that are part of a product.

A contract is a specialization of a business object. The relationships that apply to a business object also apply to a contract. In addition, a contract may have an aggregation relationship with a product.

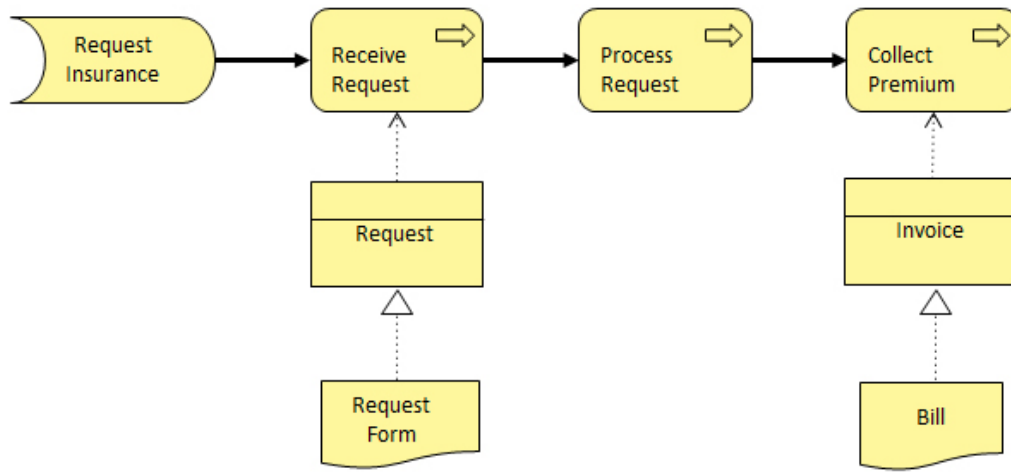


Appendix

Functional Examples of Business Informational Concepts

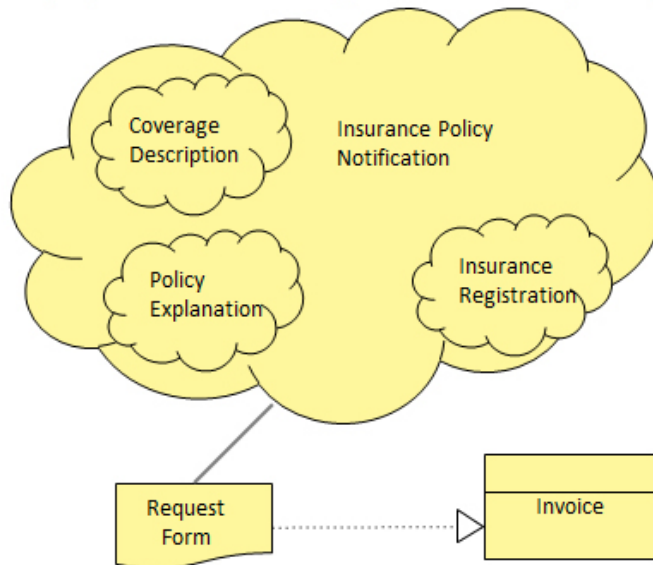
Representation

The model below shows the business object Request for insurance, which is realized (represented) by a (physical) request form. The Invoice business object is realized (represented) by a paper bill.



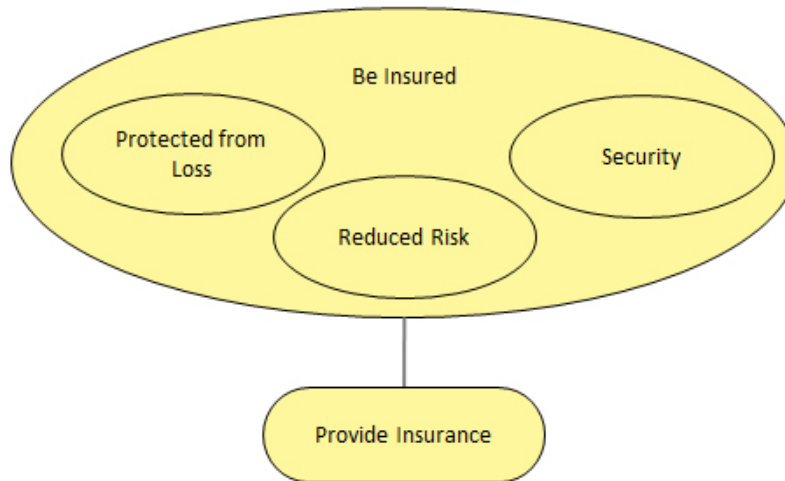
Meaning

The model below shows an Insurance policy document that is the representation of an Insurance policy, which is a business object. The meaning related to this document is the Insurance policy notification, which consists of a Policy explanation, an Insurance registration, and a Coverage description.



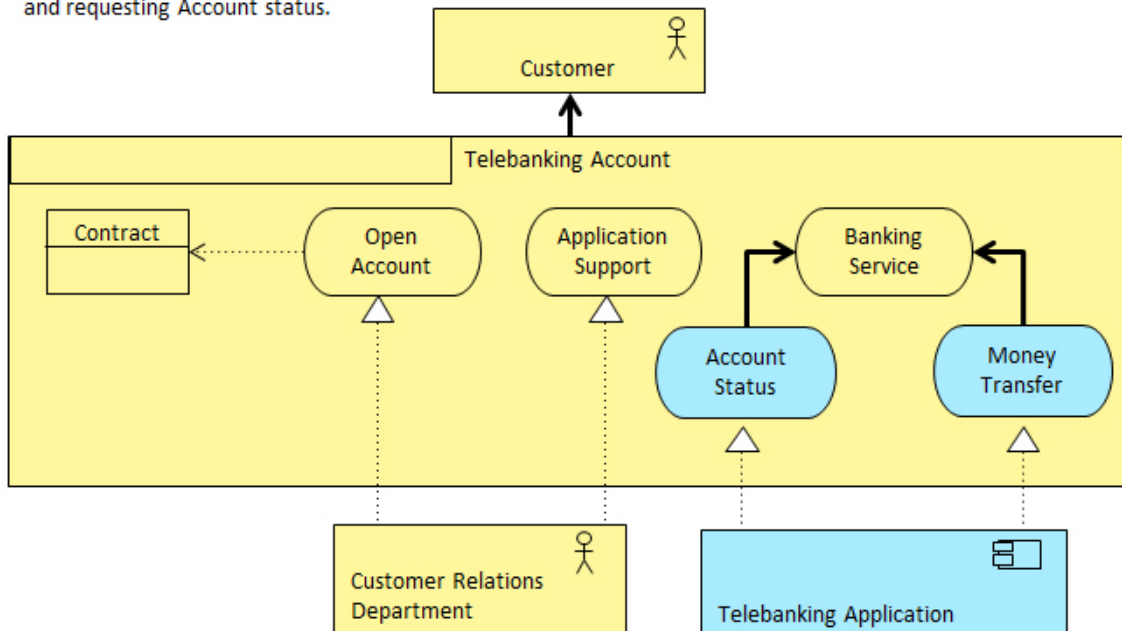
Value

In the model below, the value Be Insured is the highest-level expression of what the service Provide Insurance enables the client to do; three “sub-values” are distinguished that are part of what Be Insured amounts to.



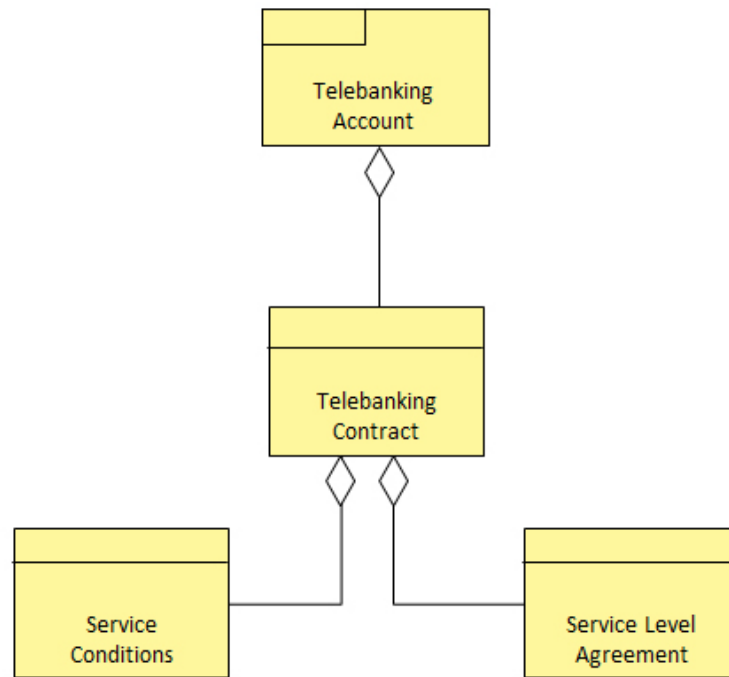
Product

In the model below, a bank offers the product Telebanking account to its customers. Opening an account as well as application support (i.e., helpdesk and the like), are modeled as business services realized by the Customer relations department. As part of the product, the customer can make use of a banking service which offers application services realized by the Telebanking application, such as electronic Money transfer and requesting Account status.



Contract

The model below shows a Telebanking contract associated with the product Telebanking account. The contract consists of two parts (subcontracts): the Service Conditions and a Service Level Agreement.



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