

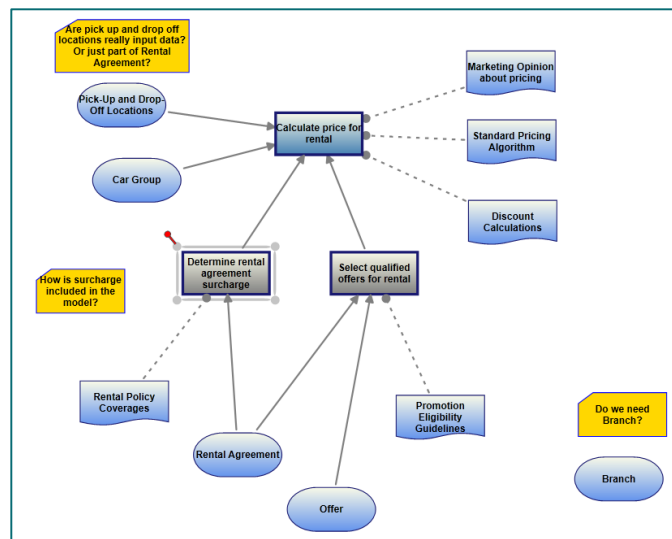
4 Ways Decision Modeling Helps Your First IBM ODM Project Succeed

If you are kicking off your IBM Operational Decision Manager (ODM) implementation project today, don't start by gathering the rules! Often teams will be advised to begin their project by gathering all the relevant rules, in a natural language or rulebook approach.

But these rules-first approaches address issues that don't exist with modern BRMS technology. These rules-first approaches can be redundant and counter-productive when implementing a modern BRMS like IBM ODM.

A decisions-first, decision modeling approach using the Decision Model Notation (DMN) standard is the best practice for business rules projects when implementing a modern BRMS.

Building a decision model that is linked to the business context (metrics, processes, logical data structures) and then implementing this directly in a linked BRMS is faster and cheaper while resulting in more accurate rules, more business engagement and better value realized.



Decision Model in DecisionsFirst Modeler

We have extensive experience with projects implementing a modern BRMS and these projects are much more successful when a decisions-first approach is taken.

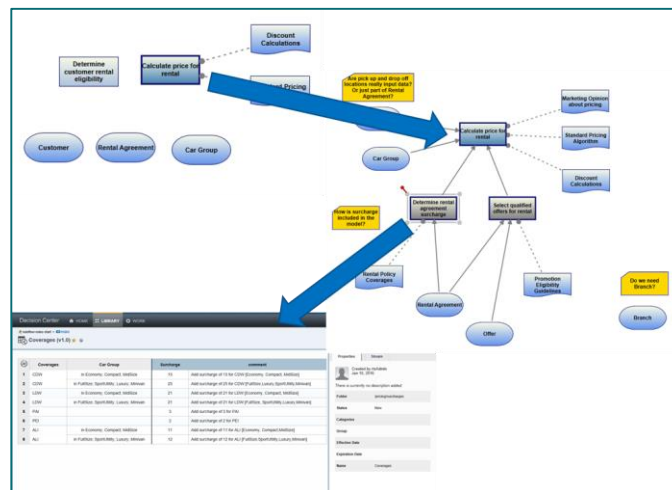
Here are 4 ways decision modeling will help your first IBM ODM project succeed:

1. Shorter time to market
2. Increased business engagement
3. Easier to demonstrate business value
4. Minimize ongoing maintenance costs

I. Shorter Time to Market

Many BRMS projects want to use an agile approach but find that traditional rule analysis forces them toward a waterfall approach. If you need to know all the rules before you start implementing, how can you divide the project into coherent iterations?

Decision modeling is a top-down, decomposition based approach. Teams can build an initial high level model to frame a set of iterations. For each iteration they can pick a decision or a small group of decisions to model in more detail. As each of these models are developed to a suitable level, the business rules can be created that implement the modeled decisions.



Iterative Development with DecisionsFirst Modeler and IBM ODM

This repeats for other decisions in the model, taking advantage of DecisionsFirst Modeler's multiple perspective and shared objects to maximize reuse and ensure that each new iteration stays connected to the overall business problem.

2. Increased Business Engagement

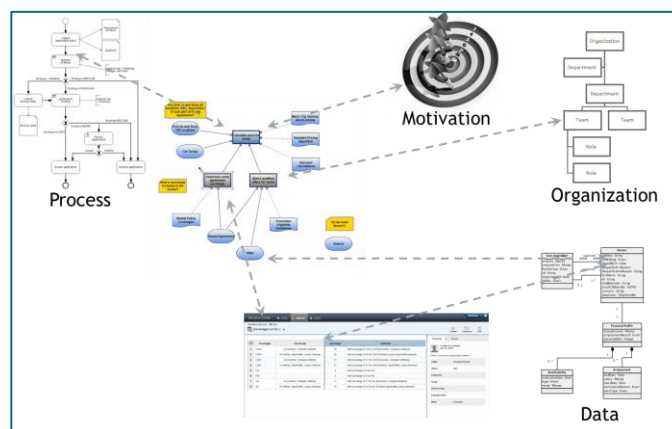
Decision requirements models using DMN are simple to describe and read. Business analysts can readily learn to build decision models with DMN. Managers, executives, compliance, legal and subject matter experts can all read and interact with them.

Far easier to work with and understand than a collection of business rules, decision models allow everyone involved—business owners, subject matter experts, business analysts and IT professionals—to engage effectively in the project.

And this engagement doesn't compromise on managing complexity either. Decision models can model even very complex decisions with a simple palette. Using multiple diagrams to show different perspectives and reusing model elements from a shared repository scale a simple, easy to use technique to solve the hardest problems.

3. Show the Business Value of the Implementation

Business stakeholders need to see and recognize the business value of any project. But once a team starts focusing on implementation, it can easily lose track of the original business purpose. Static requirements documents might try to establish the value but they age and many projects set them aside, losing sight of the original business proposition.



Decision Models link rules to Business Value

Decision modeling ties the decisions being modeled to the business processes, organizational units, business goals and metrics impacted by the decisions being automated. The business value of each set of rules is

clear because the rules implement a decision that has a clear business value and well understood purpose. Because this is managed at the decision level and integrated with the decision model, its available to those writing the rules without getting in their way.

4. Minimize Ongoing Maintenance Costs

Getting to Version 1 of your rules is important. Projects that invest in a BRMS are also thinking about Version 101. Using a BRMS ensures you can keep making changes to your business logic, test those changes and rapidly redeploy your system to keep it current. A decision model minimizes ongoing maintenance cost by adding two critical elements.

First it makes sure that the rules you write are focused and manageable by breaking down the problem into coherent, collaborating sub-decisions. The clarity and decomposition of a decision model leads to better structure in your rules.

Second it ensures business editors can engage with the rules they need to change. Navigating a graphical decision model to find the pain point and going directly from there to Decision Center to edit the rules that matter makes it easy for even occasional rule editors to be effective. Coherent, self-contained rules that are easy for business users to change minimize ongoing maintenance costs and let you maximize the long term value of your BRMS investment.

Decision Modeling Works Before You Start Writing Rules

One more thing. DecisionsFirst Modeler has proven itself effective as a way to understand manual decisions as well as business rules. At the beginning of many business rules projects, the scope of automation is not yet defined and what this scope is can be a point of contention.

DecisionsFirst Modeler lets you model the decisions that will be made manually alongside the decisions targeted for automation in the BRMS. You can model the decisions first and scope the BRMS project more accurately once you do. And when it comes to the decisions that stay outside the BRMs, decision models drive much better dashboards and UIs for decision-makers.

DecisionsFirst Modeler Enterprise Edition and IBM Operational Decision Manager

DecisionsFirst Modeler is a collaborative decision modeling solution based on the Decision Model and Notation (DMN) standard.

DecisionsFirst Modeler Enterprise Edition's IBM ODM Integration allows decision requirements models in DecisionsFirst Modeler to be linked directly to Decision Center and the business rules that implement them in IBM ODM. The DecisionsFirst Modeler IBM ODM Integration provides a complete decision and rule management environment for IBM business rules customers.

Get Started Today

Decision Management Solutions can help you quickly and cost effectively integrate decision modeling using the Decision Model and Notation (DMN) standard into your first IBM ODM project, driving cost and time savings through agile development, business engagement and reduced future maintenance.

- ▶ Reduce implementation time with iterative, agile development.
- ▶ Reduce implementation costs by eliminating out-of-scope effort.
- ▶ Save on ongoing maintenance through business engagement.

Fast, Affordable and Fixed Price

We have extensive experience helping organizations like yours successfully adopt decision modeling on their first BRMS Project.

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