The Decision Management Manifesto

1   Decisions First

1.1   Decisions, especially operational decisions, link an organization's metrics and objectives to its operational systems.

1.2   Decisions are first class objects just like business processes or data and should be identified, described, modeled, reviewed and managed in business terms as part of a business architecture.

1.3   Decisions should be modeled first before considering how business rules and or analytics will be used.

1.4   Decisions support business processes and help organizations respond to events but they are not subsumed by either processes or events, simplifying their expression and management.

1.5   Business, IT, and analytic professionals all have a role in identifying, describing, modeling, reviewing and managing decisions.

2   Explicitly Design Decisions

2.1   The best way to define a Decision is with a question and a set of known, possible answers.

2.2   Making a decision requires defined information—input data—such as transaction information, reference data and other verifiable, definitive information.

2.3   Making a decision often requires information—answers—generated by making *other* decisions.

2.4   A Decision has authorities such as policies, regulations, best practices and expertise that define how it should be made.

2.5   A Decision can have analytic insight that shows how it can be improved or made more accurately.

2.6   Not all decisions are automated; a manual decision can still be modeled and managed.

3   Use Decision Management Technologies

3.1   The details of how a decision is to be made can be represented with business rules, decision tables, decision trees, analytic models, optimization algorithms and other decision metaphors.

3.2   When implementing a decision-making solution a mix of technologies (business rules, data mining, predictive analytics and optimization) may be appropriate.

3.3   If technology is applied to a decision it may be to support a human decision maker or to explicitly automate and manage the decision.

3.4   Technology may be applied to a decision and any decisions on which it depends or only to some decisions in a model or process.

4   Deploy as Decision Management Systems

4.1   Decision Management Systems consist of decision services and supporting infrastructure for managing decision-making—they are not simply business rules or analytics embedded in business processes or user interfaces.

4.2   A Decision Management System is decoupled from and provides decision-making to existing systems, business processes or event processing environments.

5   A Decision Management System Has:

5.1   Design transparency—to see exactly how the decision will be made in the future.

5.2   Execution transparency—to reconstruct how a specific instance of a decision was made in the past.

5.3   Impact analysis—to assess the business impact of a change before it is made.

5.4   A closed loop—for continuous improvement, and to test and learn, experiment and adapt.