

Visible Business Templates

Save Time and Money in Building an Integrated Enterprise Architecture

A Template of Business Objects

Universal Model is based on a data model that contains more than 50 business subject areas or primary object classes encompassing over 600 entities with 1,000 attributes. The model is fully normalized with a high level of abstraction making the model reusable. Each of the object classes is centered around a "kernel" entity. The kernel entities were established based on their relevance in the business environment. The object classes constructed around the kernel entity vary in complexity. The object class PERIOD, for example, consists of only three entities. Others, such as PERFORMANCE, are very complex and can consist of between 30 and 40 entities. In the Visible Business Templates, closely related data are grouped by subject area referred to as business objects. While many business activities can be supported by data from a single subject area, other activities need data from several subject areas. The Business Templates show the interdependency of the subject areas. By grouping the activities performed by the Business Templates' business function, the subject area, or data needed to support the business function is determined. The Visible Business Templates contains common object classes that support multiple activities, rather than activity specific object classes often developed numerous times. Recognition of repeating business patterns during the development of business models, has allowed Visible to establish these object classes.

The Visible Business Templates are normalized to "fifth business normal form," which means that it truly is relational and can capture business rules as data, i.e., as static values for entity instances (and tables that are readily changeable).

Constructing an Enterprise Information Architecture

A company using the Visible Business Templates would customize the functions, activities, and data to conform to its enterprise and operational business requirements. First, the company, guided by Visible's skills-transfer consultants, conducts top-down joint application development sessions with executives to determine a vision for the enterprise information architecture. Similar sessions are then held with operational groups. During the process, definitions of key data, business rules, and processes are defined. For example, the company might always refer to customers as "clients" and they define "clients" as having certain characteristics, so the template would be modified accordingly. Then, whenever decision support information was sought on "clients" - such as the growth in the number of new clients during the past quarter - executives could be certain the information was accurate and all-inclusive and would be presented using readily recognizable terminology.

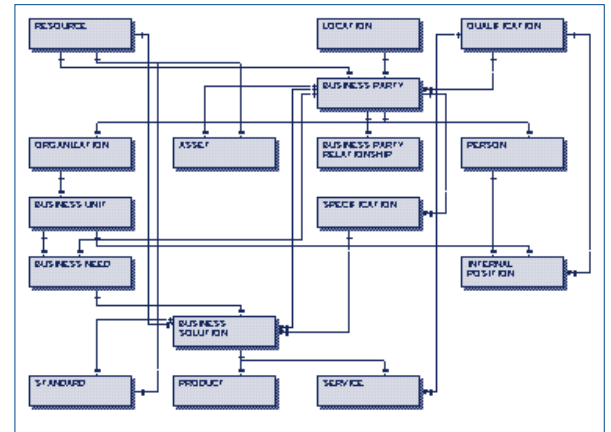
The organization of the Visible Business Templates product into "universal" business objects also supports cross-functional, cross-organizational, object-oriented software development. Each business object can be quickly tailored to an organization's specific requirement then implemented in a few weeks as a new information system.

Additional Development Benefits

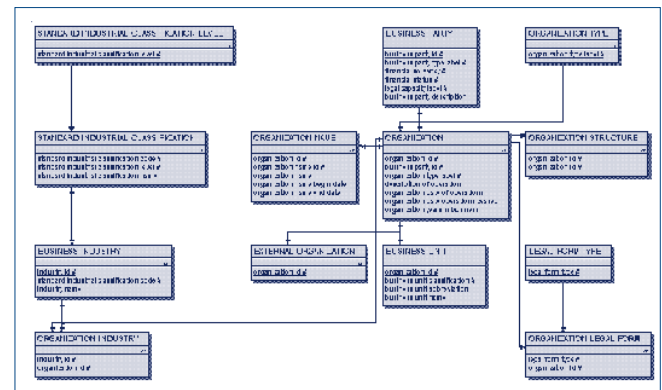
Visible Business Templates are fully compatible with Visible Advantage, and Visible Analyst, two powerful business management, database design, and application development tools, that companies can immediately translate the Business Templates into individual development efforts. Complete business objects or selected components can be assembled to build new systems, such as customer information systems, data warehouses, executive information systems, and decision support systems. This approach allows new systems to be assembled-to-order versus made-to-order. Organizations can derive object-oriented process model logic directly from data models. Multiple physical designs can be generated and maintained allowing organizations to cross-reference multiple systems in the same encyclopedia. Each physical design may use a different DBMS.

Key Benefits of Visible Business Templates

- ❖ Provides the basis for reengineering the enterprise.
- ❖ Reduces time and costs of building an Enterprise Information Architecture.
- ❖ Ensures that new systems will effectively meet business needs.
- ❖ Promotes the reuse of business objects across the enterprise.
- ❖ Standardizes data.
- ❖ Ensures information system interoperability.
- ❖ Improves data quality.



Business Object Dependency Diagram—The Visible Universal Model can contain more than fifty business subject areas or primary object classes encompassing over 600 entities with 1,000 attributes.



Data Model for "Organization" Object Class—A data model exists for each business object. A number of business processes are encapsulated around the data, so that each business object can stand alone permitting it has been developed as a reusable component in diverse applications.

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Visible Business Templates To:

- ❖ Cost-effectively develop a reusable, standardized enterprise information architecture.
- ❖ Change your staff's time and focus from continually redefining business functions to designing proprietary business systems that will give you a competitive advantage.
- ❖ Quickly jumpstart the development of quality data warehouses and EIS's.
- ❖ Gain the benefits of object-oriented analysis techniques without having to abandon established relational databases and RDBMS technology.
- ❖ Take advantage of years of modeling and data architecture experience without the time, expense, learning curve, and pitfalls of developing your architecture from scratch.
- ❖ Integrate or verify the quality of your independent data models.

Every company wants consistent information throughout the company so that it can develop high-quality decision support systems. But too many companies take the "silver bullet" approach to building corporate architectures and data warehouses. They dump all operational data into a new repository, then try to sift through to find what they're looking for. Or, they build a GUI interface into operational systems to extract corporate data. But the result is the same: they end up with good and bad data in one place and cannot easily find the information they really need. Other companies spend millions of dollars having consulting firms develop their corporate information architectures. The result might be more favorable - but the cost is very high. Visible's Business Templates help companies do the hard, up-front work of defining a workable Enterprise Information Architecture and the decision support systems that flow from it. The Business Templates provide a ready-made template of "universal" business data objects and processes that companies can customize to suit the information needs of their organizations. By not having to develop these objects themselves, organizations can shave months off the process of building an Enterprise Information Architecture. The Visible Business Templates also results in a much higher-quality data warehouse than methods that attempt to blend operational data without ensuring consistent enterprise data and process definitions. For organizations that have already developed one or more data models or perhaps have begun building an enterprise data architecture, the Visible Business Templates can serve as a quality benchmark against which existing models can be compared. Existing models can also be integrated with the Visible Business Templates to achieve data standardization and to ensure information system interoperability.

A Top-Down, Component-Based Approach

Consistent with Visible's principles of sound Enterprise Engineering, the Business Templates support a top-down approach. They help companies jump-start a workable enterprise information architecture by providing a fully normalized, high-quality model of all the common business objects and processes an organization could possibly need. The company then customizes this model, or template, to suit its particular terminology and business structure by defining data and processes at all corporate levels. This top-down approach helps companies transform data into useful, timely, accurate corporate information. The Business Templates assume that: (1) most businesses perform a common set of business functions, such as Marketing, Sales, Research, Production, and Purchasing; (2) each business function performs many of the same activities in the management of Contacts, Documents, Contracts, Inventory, Control, Budgeting, Accounting, Hiring, Training, etc.; (3) many of the activities act on

similar data, e.g. organizations, people, skills, products, services, facilities, locations, assets, liabilities, accounts, documents, etc. By promoting the reuse of the business objects across the various functions of the business system, the Business Templates provide the basic data and relationships that are often not stated during the system requirements gathering phase of major projects. This also ensures that the new system will meet the business needs.

Although the concept of component-based application development has been around for many years, earlier tools were only suitable for enterprise modeling and did not provide a mechanism for building entire systems from pre-built components or for defining reusable business objects early in the life cycle. Visible Business Templates attempt to fulfill the ideal of total model reuse through familiar objects and patterns. The key to this approach is to consider a model as constructed of reusable components, i.e., object classes. Every model contains common object classes and by raising the level of abstraction, the Universal Model provides a common template about object classes and the relationships within the