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## **Analytics, Business Rules, and Process Mining**

This month, our Spotlight focuses on BPTrends past publications relating to tools and techniques which support decision making in organizations. A few years ago, many understood Analytics, Business Rules and Process Mining as independent activities. Today, however, most organizations understand these tools and techniques as components of a comprehensive approach to managing the assets of an organization to create value for customers and other stakeholders. We refer to this approach as Business Process Management.

A process describes how work gets done and how value is produced. Some activities involve converting raw materials into products and other activities involve making decisions regarding the delivery of services. Both are required for processes to generate value.

Analytics refers to the use of data and data mining algorithms to identify patterns and suggest actions. Broadly speaking, Analytics tools are used to support decisions. They require a major investment so the team must determine whether or not the data needed to drive an analytics system is available, and, if it is, if the investment in an analytics decision support tool is the best way to improve the process in focus.



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Business Rules is one way of formalizing information that can assist in decision making. Business Rules can take many different forms. Some are incorporated in decision tables or checklists, some derive from business policies and serve as requirements or constraints and still others are derived from the experience of experts. In all cases, whether automated in software or used by employees, Business Rules support decisions.

Process Mining relies on some of the same techniques as Analytics, but is specifically focused on looking for patterns in processes. Obviously, information about the processes to be examined must be available in an accessible database, and assuming you have ERP or similar software that documents events as they occur, you can use this approach to see where bottlenecks occur in your existing processes.

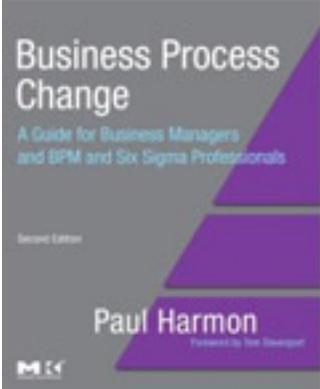
Systematic process work began with Taylor in 1900 when he began studying work procedures in an effort to identify the best way to accomplish a specific task. For years process practitioners were primarily concerned with the physical tasks in a manufacturing environment. Increasingly, however, we have moved beyond dealing with the obvious physical tasks and are looking for new gains in efficiency by improving the quality of the decisions that occur within the processes.

BPTrends has consistently worked to provide our members and readers with information on all aspects of Analytics, Business Rules and Data Mining in all their various forms. Below is a list of some of those publications.

[Process Mining: Ana Aeroportos de Portugal](#) Alberto Manuel - February 07, 2012  
 Ana Aeroportos is responsible for



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managing the entire airport infrastructure in Portugal. They sought to improve their “Change Order” process by making it leaner and reducing the time required for process improvement. Alberto Manuel, a BPM consultant, describes how Ana Aeroportos used Process Mining to successfully achieve their goals.

[Extreme Competition: Consider Big Data the Most Important Thing for Business since the Internet](#) Peter Fingar -

December 06, 2011

No stranger to reporting on innovative ideas in business, this month Peter Fingar explores the meaning of and the implications for business of Big Data. He believes that Big Data is all about delivering new insights to decision makers. Historically, Data Analytics software has relied on representative samplings to render results. That approach is changing with the emergence of new Big Data Analytics engines. Interested? Read the whole story in his Column.

[How to Reduce Waste with Process Mining](#)

Anne Rozinat - July 05, 2011

“Hidden process steps” go undetected in a manual analysis of a business process improvement project and ultimately contribute to costly inefficiencies during the effort. Anne Rozinat proposes Process Mining as an effective and efficient means to discover the hidden waste in a business process. Read this well-illustrated and informative Article to learn how to use Process Mining in your process improvement project.

[BPM and Compliance Management, Part 2](#)

Neeli Basanth Kumar - July 05, 2011

In Part 2 of his Article on BPM and compliance management, Neeli Basanth Kumar compares Business Rules vis-à-vis compliance controls and ways in which compliance controls can be evolved into Business Rules. Read his Article for

practical advice on how that end can be successfully achieved.

[Business Rules Solutions: Introducing Question Charts for Analyzing Operational Business Decisions](#) Column by Ron Ross - July 05, 2011

In his Column this month, Ron Ross introduces Q-Charts™, a simple diagramming technique for capturing the inherent structure of decisions and their dependencies. This innovative new tool assists in communicating with business people, capturing Business Rules, developing business-friendly decision tables, and creating smarter processes.

[Process Mining: Discovery, Conformance & Enhancement of Business Process by Wil van der Aalst](#) Book review by Anne Rozinat - July 05, 2011

Wil van der Aalst has written a comprehensive overview of the state of the art in the field of Process Mining, and, according to our reviewer, is a must-read for anyone interested in the subject.

[Business Rules Solutions: Why Rulebook Management?](#) Column by Ron Ross - February 01, 2011

Perhaps you've asked the same question that Ron Ross poses in his Column this month. Ron contends that, contrary to what you may think, the problem that rulebook management addresses is a relatively simple one, as is the solution. A major step in understanding rulebook management is to grasp the distinction between software requirements and Business Rules. Ron provides a well-articulated clarification of the differences as well as five best practices in rulebook management. Read his Column to gain a better perspective on this critical topic.

[The Decision Model: A Business Logic Framework Linking Business and Technology](#) by Barbara von Halle and

[Larry Goldberg](#) Book review by Paul

Harmon - December 07, 2010

As the gradual merger of business process analysis and Business Rules analysis continues, both process people and rules people benefit from a well-thought out process structure that defines where Business Rules are used. In his review, Paul suggests that practitioners in both groups will find this book an important step in providing new techniques they will want to employ in the upcoming decade.

[It's Time: Ditch Your Rules](#) Larry Goldberg

- January 05, 2010

Now that they have your attention, Larry Goldberg and Barbara von Halle want to explain what they mean. They contend that Business Rules without context and structure are fairly meaningless. How to provide context and structure to your organization's Business Rules is their focus, and they argue convincingly that the Decision Model is the means to accomplish this goal. Read their Article to see if you agree.

[Don't Panic: Business Processes and Business Rules Need Not be Complex](#)

David Pedersen - September 08, 2009

Simplify! Simplify! say Larry Goldberg and David Pedersen, and in this Article they show the way. Citing several examples from their own experience in coaching process improvement teams, the authors demonstrate that by separating your process and business logic into appropriate, and separate models, you will likely discover that your processes are simpler than you think. To understand why, read the Article.

[Knowledge Reuse and Agile Processes:](#)

[Catalysts for Innovation, Amit Mitra and](#)

[Amar Gupta](#) Book review by Paul Harmon -

June 03, 2008

Mitra and Gupta have now published the

third volume in their magisterial series that seeks to define and explain organizations in terms of their knowledge structures and Business Rules. Paul Harmon reviews the book and discusses it in relation to the other books in the trilogy.

[Spotlight on Business Intelligence and Analytics](#) Paul Harmon - March 18, 2008

This Spotlight will look at why BI and Analytics are important to managers and business process practitioners and point to some of the Articles BPTrends has previously published on the topic.

[The Silver Bullet of Business Rules Management Systems](#) Art Tortolero -

November 06, 2007

Art Tortolero is a strong advocate for the use of Business Rules management systems and, in this Article, he provides reasons why he perceives this approach is creating a “sea change” in how corporations will build and maintain their core business systems.

[Competing on Analytics by Tom Davenport and Jeanne Harris](#) Book review

by Paul Harmon - July 03, 2007

Tom Davenport and Jeanne Harris have written an important book that looks at Analytics and discusses how some smart companies are making more money owning information about an asset, than owning the asset itself. Every business executive will want to read this book. If your company isn't investing in Analytics, then you owe it to yourself to consider what's involved, and determine whether or not you should be.

[Business Rule Concepts by Ronald Ross](#)

Book review by Mark Myers - November 01, 2005

Mark Myers, an enterprise architect at the Northern California Power Agency, reviews the latest release of Ron Ross's

widely read introduction to Business Rules, Business Rules Concepts, and argues that it's a must-read book for anyone interested in how to increase business agility.

[Business Rules: Are System Requirements Business Rules?](#) Column by Stan Hendryx - November 01, 2005

Stan Hendryx reports on the latest success of the OMG's ongoing effort to standardize the use of Business Rules and then considers how it has led to other questions about the nature of Business Rules and business models.

[The 2005 Business Rules Awareness Survey](#) Kristen Seer - October 04, 2005

This summer, the European Business Rules Conference joined with the Business Rules Forum to conduct a survey of 184 managers and practitioners who were involved in Business Rules development within their respective organizations. This short summary by Kristen Seer provides a nice glimpse into how the Business Rules professionals think the rules market is developing.

[Business Rules and Information Systems by Tony Morgan](#) Book review by Diego Passadore - June 07, 2005

Diego Passadore, the CEO of AgilNet, reviews Tony Morgan's popular book on Business.

[Are All BPM Solutions the Same?](#) Alan Trefler - April 06, 2004

Alan Trefler, the Founder, Chairman and CEO of Pegasystems, argues that existing vendors will have a large role to play in creating BPM systems and suggests the special role that Business Rules will play in these systems.

[Business Rules: A User's Perspective of the OMG Business Rules Proposal](#) Column by Stan Hendryx - March 01, 2005

The OMG met in Burlingame, CA in February and considered the developing Business Rules Metamodel. Stan Hendryx is co-chair of the task force and reflects, here, on the latest proposal for an OMG Business Rules standard.

NOTE: Over the years, Ron Ross and Stan Hendryx have each written a series of great Columns on Business Rules. Search on their names in the Search Box on the Homepage at [www.bptrends.com](http://www.bptrends.com).

Til Next Time,

Paul Harmon

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