Request Fulfillment Overview

Front Office 9.5

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1.0   Introduction

The request fulfillment features of Front Office allow any request raised in Front Office to be orchestrated through the necessary activities required to complete the request in the most automated way possible. With support for external workflow systems, service designers can choose to use either internal or external workflow, or a mixture of the two, for any request type. Integral measurement of all fulfillment activities, whether internal or external, is achieved via the available SLA related activities.

The Front Office workflow engine has been specifically architected and built for configuration by users of a low technical skill set – understanding of the business process outcome is paramount rather than the technicalities of how it is achieved.

Within the point-and-click designer even the most complex set of activities can be rapidly configured. Take advantage of the Front Office inbox to queue tasks to work teams. Seamlessly route to existing fulfillment systems such as a Service Desk or drive automated tasks such as Active Directory account creation and software delivery.
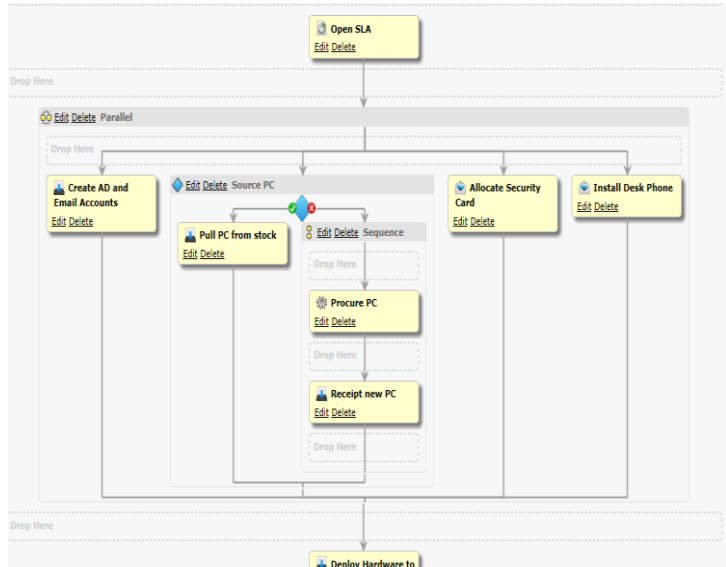
2.0 Designing Fulfillment Workflows

A process can be designed to incorporate both flow control and fulfillment activities, all configured via a 'drag and drop' designer.

2.1 'Sequence' Flow Control

A 'Sequence' activity executes all its children in order, one after the other, and waits for each activity to complete before starting the next one.

2.2 'Parallel' Flow Control

A 'Parallel' activity starts to execute all its children at the same time, but does not complete and move on to subsequent activities until all children are complete.

2.3 'If-Then-Else' Flow Control

An 'If' activity provides the ability to decide which of its possible two children is run dependent upon the set of conditions specified. If the conditions are met, any child in the 'Then' branch of the activity will be run, otherwise any child in the 'Else' branch of the activity will be run.

2.4 'While' Flow Control

A 'While' activity runs its children repeatedly while the request matches the condition specified. If the request does not match the condition when the activity starts, no children will run. If multiple conditions are added to the activity, you decide whether you want the result to be dependent upon any or all the conditions passing.

2.5 'Do While' Flow Control

A 'Do While' activity runs its children repeatedly while the request matches the condition specified. If the request does not match the condition when the activity starts, the children will be run once. If multiple conditions are added to the activity, you decide whether you want the result to be dependent upon any or all the conditions passing.

2.6 'Flowchart' Flow Control

A 'Flowchart' activity allows for more complex orchestration models to be embedded within a Front Office fulfillment process. Made up of standard action activity types, the flowchart activity removes the need for flow control activities and follows a traditional flowchart execution path.
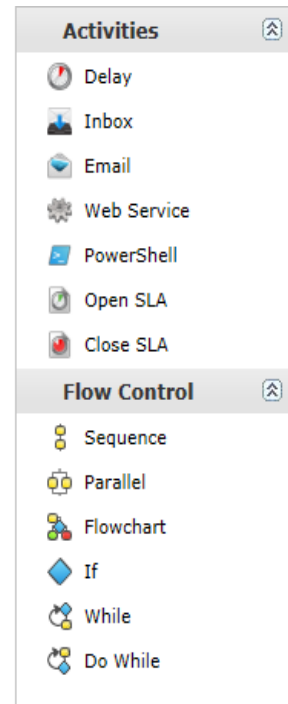
2.7   'Delay' Activity

A 'Delay' activity waits for the time specified before completing.

2.8   'Inbox' Activity

An 'Inbox' activity creates a Front Office Inbox Task requiring user action. When the activity executes the assigned user or group is notified by email and is required to complete the task using the Inbox. A cost and duration (in days, hours, and minutes) can also be specified for later analysis.

2.9   'Email' Activity

An 'Email' activity provides the ability to email one or more recipients information about a request. The subject and message fields support template properties and XSLTs that will be replaced at run time.

2.10 'Adapter' Activity

An 'Adapter' activity provides the bidirectional integration capability to supporting fulfillment systems.

All fulfillment adapters plug into this standard interface and a growing suite of Biomni provided adapters and accelerators are available. An SDK is also available to allow customers and third parties to quickly implement custom adapters for this interface. A cost and duration (in days, hours, and minutes) can also be specified for later analysis.

2.11 'PowerShell' Activity

The 'PowerShell' activity will allow a specified Windows PowerShell script to be executed directly from Front Office.

3.0 Measuring Fulfillment Activities

Measurement of any section of the fulfillment process can easily be made with the inclusion of SLA activities and there is no limit to the number that can be applied. SLAs define a desired period of time (specified in days, hours, or minutes) an activity, set of activities, or the whole fulfillment process must complete within. All time periods are active only during the configured 'business time' and time zone of Front Office; for example, Mon-Fri 8am-6pm excluding Sundays.
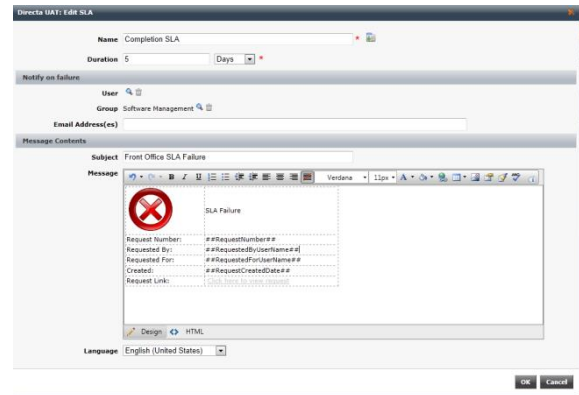
Notification emails are generated when SLAs overrun their allotted time (failure notifications) and optionally when predefined thresholds are breached (warning notifications). SLA statuses can be monitored quickly via red, amber, and green traffic light icons on the request, and dedicated reports offer additional cross request analysis of SLA performance.