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Citation for published version (APA):
Aalst, van der, W. M. P., Dongen, van, B. F., Günther, C. W., Mans, R. S., Alves De Medeiros, A. K., Rozinat, A., Song, M. S., Verbeek, H. M. W., & Weijters, A. J. M. M. (2007). *ProM and the challenges of process mining*. Abstract from Dutch-Belgian Database Day 2007 (DBDBD 2007), November 29, 2007, Eindhoven, The Netherlands, Eindhoven, Netherlands.

Document status and date:
Published: 01/01/2007

Document Version:
Publisher's PDF, also known as Version of Record (includes final page, issue and volume numbers)

Please check the document version of this publication:

• A submitted manuscript is the version of the article upon submission and before peer-review. There can be important differences between the submitted version and the official published version of record. People interested in the research are advised to contact the author for the final version of the publication, or visit the DOI to the publisher's website.
• The final author version and the galley proof are versions of the publication after peer review.
• The final published version features the final layout of the paper including the volume, issue and page numbers.

Link to publication

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Download date: 17. Nov. 2023

ProM and the Challenges of Process Mining

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Within organizations there has been a shift from *data* orientation to *process* orientation. By process we mean the way an organization arranges there work and recourses, for instance the order in which tasks are performed and which group of people are allowed to perform specific tasks. Sometimes, organizations have very explicit process descriptions of the way the work is organized and this description is supported by a process aware information system like, for instance, a workflow management system (WFM). But even if there are explicit descriptions of the way the work should be done, the practical way of working can differ considerably from the prescribed way of working. Other times, there is no, or only a very immature process description available. However, in many situations it is possible to gather information about the processes as they take place. For instance, in many hospitals, information about the different treatments of a patient are registered (date, time, treatment, medical staff) for, reasons like financial administration. This kind of information in combination with appropriate mining techniques can also be used to get more insight in the health care process. We use the term *process mining* for the method of distilling process knowledge from a set of real executions.

Event logs are used as the starting point for mining. We distinguish three different mining perspectives: (1) the process perspective, (2) the organizational perspective and (3) the case perspective. The *process perspective* focuses on the control-flow, i.e., the ordering of activities. The goal of mining this perspective is to find a good characterization of all possible paths, expressed in terms of, for instance, a Petri net. The *organizational perspective* focuses on the originator field, i.e., which performers are involved in performing the activities and how they are related. The goal is to either structure the organization by classifying people in terms of roles and organizational units or to show relations between individual performers. The *case perspective* focuses on properties of cases. Cases can be characterized by their path in the process or by the originators working on a case. However, cases can also be characterized by the values of the corresponding data elements.

To address the three perspectives and the logical and performance issues a set of plug-ins has been developed for the ProM framework [1]. ProM is open source and uses a plug-able architecture, e.g., people can add new process mining techniques by adding plug-ins without spending any efforts on the loading and filtering of event logs and the visualization of the resulting models. Notwithstanding that ProM 4.2 provides six different types of plug-ins, and in total more than 200 plug-ins. This makes ProM a practical and versatile tool for process analysis and discovering. In the presentation we will illustrate the basic concepts behind ProM and focus on the many scientific process mining challenges that are still remaining.

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