

Ways to paradigm change in communication and documentation with PathWeaver®

Silo mentality & isolated individual pieces of documentation are no longer up to the increasing demands they face: They prevent transparency and bring about additional risks and costs.

Quick, effective communication and documentation in and between different company areas are becoming decisive requirements for success among banks and insurance companies. However, the once standard practice is no longer able to deal with the increasing demands and requires fundamental change.

Above all, this affects the numerous individual pieces of documentation with their own focal points and languages for each corporate area and each IT system. The meaning (semantics) in particular of specialist terminology and data fields is, for the most part, neither clear nor defined enough.

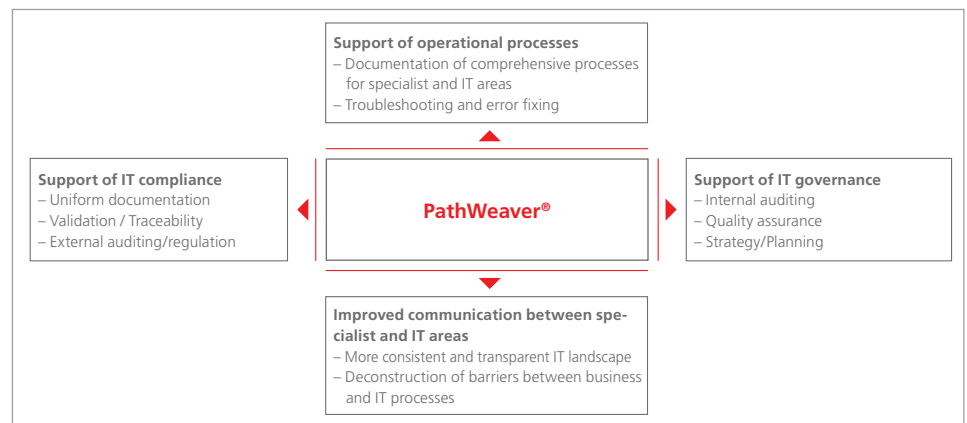
The consequence: Market, specialist and IT areas often don't understand each other and inconsistencies, discrepancies, additional risks and costs are the result. Furthermore, it is often difficult to find out what method was used to determine specific output quantities and which processes, systems and data exert influence. However, increasing compliance requirements like Basel II Pillar 2, MaRisk, MiFID or SOX demand that data flows and processes need to be transparent and traceable for regulation, revision, auditing purposes and for users themselves.

Here, the following questions are decisive:

- Who knows what about systems and interfaces?
- Where is the knowledge located, how is it saved and transferred?
- Is there an end-to-end point of view? Is it accessible to both the IT and specialist divisions to an equal extent?
- How are communication and conceptualization with migrations, integrations, expansions, etc. organized? How efficient is this?

PathWeaver® provides the area and system-wide documentation and communication

The ifb group's PathWeaver® provides a concept and a piece of software that minimizes this problem. With PathWeaver® the communication and documentation of banks and insurance companies can be designed and controlled in a uniform way. All data flows can be described, displayed and analyzed consistently, clearly and transparently. In the process, the communication problems between market, specialist and IT areas lessen and stay reduced.



PathWeaver® improves communication between specialist and IT divisions and supports the operative processes as well as IT compliance and IT governance



The concept and the software for paradigm change

PathWeaver® was developed on the back of the ifb group's 15 years of experience in working on projects at the interfaces between market, specialist and IT areas. It enables the central, uniform and comprehensive documentation and communication of:

- Data models, that is, data fields/structures and their semantics,
- Transformations, e.g. transition/processing of data fields,
- Process steps of business and IT processes.

The PathWeaver® concept is technically supported by the software solution of the same name. It manages the information gathered by using data models, functions and processes in a relational database. Here, implementation worlds can be separated from each other by using a client concept.

Clearly structured process and auditing acceptability

The systematic description of relevant objects and their relations comes via a graphical user interface. They specify the individual steps of the documentation and the correspondingly required details. This way, data fields and the functions that build from them minimize, identify, describe (as regards content) and, again, eliminate the effort required in a time-saving manner. The content of functionality encapsulated within a function (e.g. mapping/deviation) is described; its interface parameters are explicitly stored.

There is an easy-to-use process modeling tool with drag & drop functionality available for documenting the processes. The software provides the option of itemizing processes in units. Here, both the involved functions and the role of the corresponding process unit in the flow of the entire process are documented. In the interest of clarity of complex procedures these types of process units can also be parenthesized into sub-processes.

PathWeaver® also offers the option of adding corresponding user-specific information to objects and their relations, which can then be assigned at object level.

During this, PathWeaver® always guarantees auditing acceptability: A history can be kept of all adjustments to the documented objects so that earlier versions can be viewed at any time.

Thanks to its XML import functionality, PathWeaver® is also in a position to import mass data.

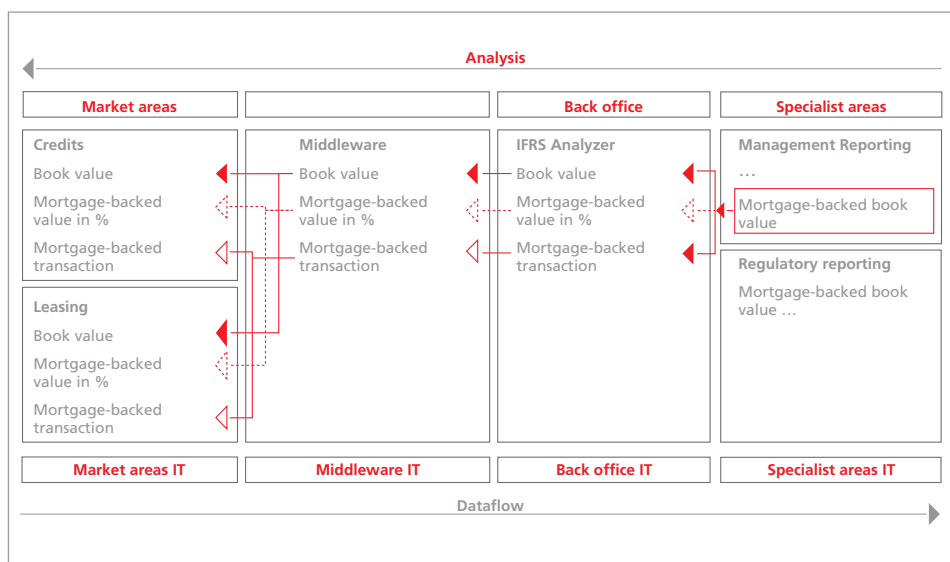


Data flow analysis and process visualization

Retracing key figures...

PathWeaver® solves the central problem of complex structures as described at the beginning: This software enables the clear understanding of how individual key figures are determined and which processes, systems and data are relevant to the calculation.

After completion of the documentation, backward error analyses with PathWeaver® can explain how the data flows proceed in relation to a certain target field. The question “Which data fields in which legacy systems exert influence over a specific key figure?” is answered precisely. PathWeaver® executes backward error analyses recursively so that all the predecessors of all the predecessors can also be determined, the result of which is then displayed as a result tree in an Excel sheet.



With the “Backward Analysis” in PathWeaver® it becomes traceable which processes, systems and data exert influence over certain results fields (here using the example of the “Mortgage-backed book value” result field).

... and visualizing processes

Business and IT processes of banks and insurance companies can be mapped with PathWeaver® in the form of sequence diagrams. All functions are shown in their chronological order. For clear presentation purposes, both a semi-graphical display via TreeViews and a function for the export to Microsoft Visio can be used.

PathWeaver® provides process visualization which can be adjusted to match the informational needs of different user groups. Data flows can be viewed in an overall view from beginning to end. Illustrations of individual data models and process steps can be created at freely selectable levels of granularity.

**We're happy
to support you!**

Why it's worth it to have area and system-wide documentation

The benefits of using area and system-wide documentation are obvious: All company systems can be distinctly mapped out with their data fields and functions. Interfaces and data flows between the systems are displayed in a clear way. With this as a basis it is possible to transparently and completely describe processes from A to Z. The documentation is available to all areas. This process model systematically excludes the possibility of vagueness in any area.

The framework conditions for system integrations, expansions and migrations are also improved considerably. At the same time, the identification and elimination of sources of error becomes noticeably easier. This sustainably improves both process and data quality. In the compliance area there are important benefits to be made from the validation of IT processes and their transparent presentation to auditors and regulatory bodies. PathWeaver® supports IT governance by providing an improved informational basis for internal auditing and quality assurance as well as for strategy and planning.

PathWeaver® anticipates the paradigm change in IT architecture and organizational structure

PathWeaver® also promotes rethinking the IT architecture and the organizational structure. The keywords for the future are: method consistency, integration and transparency. With its central, uniform IT documentation, PathWeaver® prepares the paradigm change in the direction of service-oriented architectures in banks and insurance companies.

In addition to this, a paradigm change in relation to the organizational structure is also emerging. Transparency as well as methodical and semantic integration will only significantly improve once the structures change. Instead of having a silo mentality, management mechanisms should be created which systematically implement new methods of communication and documentation on a widespread basis.

ifb group

Ifb was founded in 1989 in Germany and currently employs over 450 employees all over the world. As a competence center for risk management and financial management we enjoy an excellent reputation. We advise credit institutions, insurance companies as well as companies in the industrial, trade and services sectors when it comes to questions of an economic nature and develop software for result-oriented management and reporting. As a partner for well-known software companies we deal with the implementation and project tasks for SAP Banking Solutions and the entire spectrum of business intelligence. Over 1,600 customers rely on the solutions provided by the ifb group.

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