

Flexible Services

CrossMedia

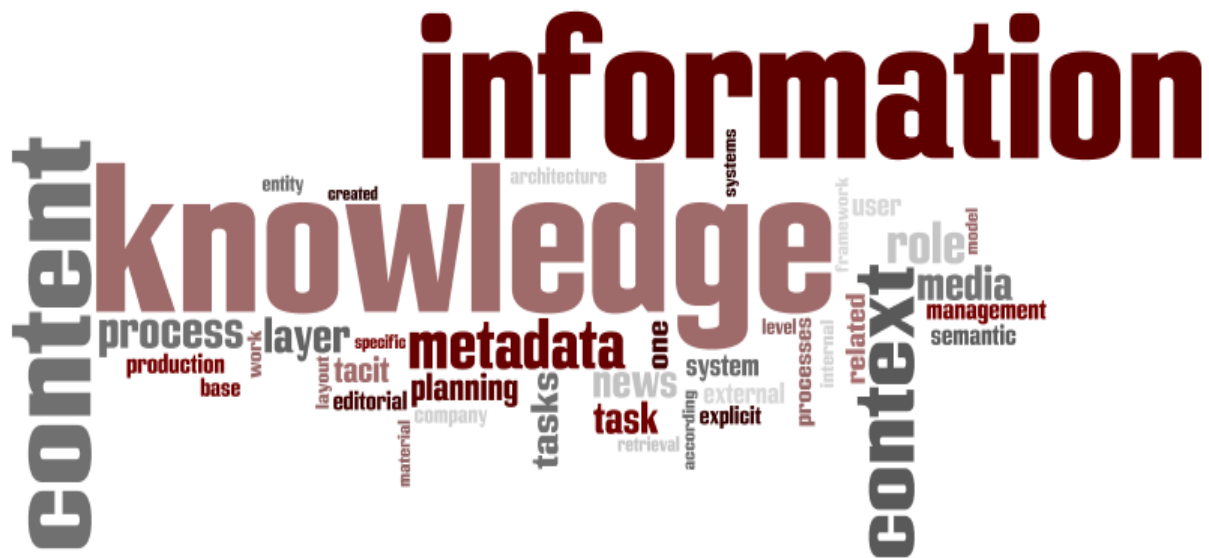
D1.7: Adaptation of Knowledge Architecture

Jan-Erik Andelin

KSF Media

Henri Kivinen (editor)

A! Aalto University School of Science and Technology



1 November 2010

Version 1.0

Document Identification

Document Name	CrossMedia D1.7 Adaptation of Knowledge Architecture
Project/WP Title	CrossMedia WP1 - Next Generation Editorial Systems
Document Type, Security	Public
Document Title	Adaptation of Knowledge Architecture
Planned delivery date	30 September 2010
Actual delivery date	1 November 2010
Editor	Henri Kivinen
Version	1.0
Date of Last Change	1 November 2010
File Name	CrossMedia D1.7 Adaptation of Knowledge Architecture.docx

Authors

Institution	Name	e-mail
KSF Media	Jan-Erik Andelin	jan-erik.andelin[at]ksfmedia.fi
AST	Henri Kivinen	henri.kivinen[at]tkk.fi

Revision History

Version	Date	Notes	Editor
0.1	26 Oct 2010	Initial Draft	Henri Kivinen
0.2	31 Oct 2010	Final contribution/KSF	Jan-Erik Andelin
1.0	1 Nov 2010	Final edit	Henri Kivinen

Executive Summary

by Henri Kivinen

Purpose of the knowledge architecture is to provide means for deeper understanding of the media production processes. The architecture describes the creation, sharing, and utilization of knowledge that is needed in producing and disseminating various media products. Thus, one can identify the critical “knowledge points” where the most value-adding decisions are made.

In this deliverable we study how the knowledge architecture can be adapted to fit an actual editorial processes and analyse the changes that was needed to fulfil this task. Adaptation was done in two separate cases with two companies, KSF Media and Sanoma Magazines Finland.

The KSF Media and their EvenemaX event calendar service provided an excellent case for testing the knowledge architecture. This deliverable covers how this adaptation was carried out, what changes was needed, and how the architecture was utilized with their work.

In addition, we also planned to adapt the processes of magazine editorial at Sanoma Magazines Finland, but this was changed to cover their generic magazine planning processes. This adaptation gave an interesting insight to how the architecture can be utilized in different ways. However, the adaptation itself is not included in this deliverable but is distributed internally to project partners.

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List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

CMS	content management system
KA	knowledge architecture
KSF	KSF Media, media house owned by Konstsamfundet rf.
PDF	Portable Document Format, ready-to-use print original
UGC	user-generated content

1. Case Evenemax

The EvenemaX case is an example of an initially open, generous and flimsy project needing a firmer structure once the operational idea evolves.

1.1. Background - The publisher

EvenemaX is an event calendar service, firmly linked to the publication of four newspapers in the KSF Media group, including their websites, in the urbanized south of Finland. Working in Swedish language in Finland, KSF Media acts in a minority context, where the newspapers Hufvudstadsbladet (HBL), Västra Nyland, Borgåbladet and Östra Nyland are today hard to publish profitably.

The ownership of the KSF Media's units has increasingly since the late 1980's been concentrated from local shareholders and owners to the Konstsamfundet non-profit association. The process was finalized by a full merger into the KSF Media Group in May 2010. Being a player in real estate and the consumer goods sector, Konstsamfundet generates the needed capital to secure the publication of its media units by an annual subsidy of 2.5 million Euros (2010).

Two factors have to be taken into consideration when sketching operational models for a media unit like EvenemaX.

First, the publication of the KSF Media newspapers is being done with a *non-profit, zero-deficit* target.

Second, the publication of media in Swedish language is considered to be a value in itself. This is being supported by economically strong funding bodies, colloquially called "The Funds"¹. Also by national law, the *public sector needs to provide the Swedish-speaking population with necessary services* in their own language. This includes public service media and general citizen information.

These factors contribute to operational models that are not only driven by revenue and profit models, but more complex models, where common commercial interests interlace with both private and public funding.

1 Svenska kulturfonden, Svenska litteratursällskapet, Konstsamfundet, Svenska folkskolans vänner, Sparbanksstiftelsen.

1.2. Background of the EvenemaX project

EvenemaX as a project was initiated in 2005 as an effort to boost local culture in the bilingual regions of Östnyland (Itä-Uusimaa) east of Helsinki.

Initially, Svenska kulturfonden as the dominating funding body for cultural and educational activities in Swedish in Finland, and Konstsamfundet, made some funding available for larger, multi-annual projects for the region.

Headed by the local Borgåbladet newspaper in Borgå (Porvoo), the EvenemaX project group was founded. And the EvenemaX service in the region in summer 2006. The original aim was to encourage small and medium-size event organizers to increase their efforts in presenting, advertising and marketing their events - besides making them known also through the local daily paper.

In addition to the local newspaper, the original project group 2006 to 2008 also included a local cultural venue, an information centre, a central organisation for youth and culture activities and three schools giving vocational education in marketing, tourism and graphic design². The activities were for 2½ years subsidized by three foundations supporting Swedish-language and bilingual events.

Initially, from 2006 to 2008, EvenemaX was situated at the local box office of the cultural venue Grand in the heart of Porvoo city, able to host art exhibitions and theatre and concert audiences of up to 300 persons.

The two most notable outcomes of the project were a graphic design help desk, which helped small event organizers to plan, book and buy newspaper ads, as well as produce posters and other graphical material about their events at a low price. There was an EvenemaX membership offered at an annual fee and some 60 local organisations joined to use the services.

More important, though, became the web listing service, which later kept the brand EvenemaX and which today is available as www.evenemax.fi. It provided a web calendar, as well as a web-to-print channel for two, later four, daily newspapers.

One early result of the EvenemaX project was the cooperation with the public administration. The public sector, on both local and regional level, saw the EvenemaX service complement, or even replacing existing event listing services maintained by the public sector. One clear advantage was that EvenemaX offered a bilingual service,

² Partners were Borgåbladet, Luckan Borgå (information center), Kulturhuset Grand (culture venue), Östra Nylands ungdomsförbund ÖNUF (youth associations), the vocational institutes Borgå handelsläroverk (trade and marketing), Borgå hantverks- och konstindustriskola (art, handicraft and graphic design), HAAGA-HELIA (tourism, event management and marketing).

which often becomes costly for a public player like a small municipality, especially when the specific requirement is to provide it on a consistent, daily basis.

When the initial project period expired in 2008, the initial EvenemaX project was split in two³.

EvenemaX, the web service, was taken over by KSF Media, who offered to continue funding it. The web calendar and its link to the local newspapers had gained popularity, especially in the small and medium-size communities around Helsinki. In *EvenemaX*, KSF Media also saw possibilities to secure its position as a central information provider in local communities. The event service added value and quality to the event listings published weekly in their newspapers and tickers on the websites disseminated real-time data. Event advertising on the web was seen as an opportunity. In August 2008, the *EvenemaX* desk moved to KSF Media's premises in Borgå (Porvoo).

The graphic design help desk was rebranded into *Grafiska Verkstan*. It is still being run in cooperation between some of the original project partners, still funded by Svenska kulturfonden.

The very diverse background of the initial project group left *EvenemaX* as a widely popular project with a colourful network, which largely had emerged *ad hoc*. For the future development of the project the Knowledge Architecture concept as developed by Kivinen-Immonen-Giesecke (2010) provided several suggestions for how to streamline and clean up the structures for the future.

1.3. Daily work at *EvenemaX*

The *EvenemaX* team consists of three, or seasonally four, persons

- Project Manager, KSF Media
- Responsible Manager, *EvenemaX*
- Editor(s), *EvenemaX*

The information flow consists of information submitted, with great variation, by a network of 280 collaborators. The collaborators are usually related to partner organisations, such as municipalities, NGO's and different actors in the field of events and culture. Collaborators usually get a brief training, or a detailed manual, in how to submit information into the database and they are allowed to do so without moderation.

The majority of information is, however, submitted by e-mail, by a web form on the website, or to some extent by phone to the calendar editors. The editors enter the event data into the database, often translating the information into either Finnish or

³ Actually in three; a media education project for young people under the *EvenemaX* umbrella was deemed as unsuccessful and was closed down.

Swedish. Proactive search for events possibly missing from the database is done occasionally, but not in as a part of the normal daily routine.

The data is being published weekly in print, in a total of 10 published calendars. The largest newspaper HBL publishes EvenemaX data daily, while the three local newspapers of the KSF Media group publish one EvenemaX calendar weekly. Also seasonally e.g. for the Summer or Christmas season, special extensive calendars are produced for the seasonal supplements published by the newspaper.

The export of data into print format is an automated process, where HBL uses a data feed off the data base, Västra Nyland receives a raw-edited entity of data and Borgåbladet and Östra Nyland publish an edited and fully finalized PDF layout.

1.4. Adaptation of the architecture

1.4.1. Problems and challenges to be addressed

One of the primary challenges in producing an event service is that it needs to be perceived as virtually all-inclusive. If a user detects that an event calendar contains only partial data its value in the user's eyes declines immediately; on the web the user is even likely never to return.

In the initial stages of the EvenemaX project, several rifts with partners occurred related to this matter. Early on, EvenemaX set the standard that the calendar could neither be user-driven only nor unmanned.

One of the problems in running the EvenemaX service was that the original project setup had left *a small staff with a vast and heterogeneous network*, continuously submitting information about a large number of events. At peak season nearly 2,000 events during peak-season summer months may be listed in the calendar.

At the initial stages of the EvenemaX project, the in-flow could not be limited. To make the calendar known and popular, a "funnel draught effect" had to be created and nearly all information had to be accepted. This was crucial to build the initial, critical mass of the calendar and to encourage users and partners to voluntarily submit information to the database. For the time being a prime driver to use the EvenemaX service is the relation to the printed paper and the visibility an event gets when printed there - a rather old-school phenomenon.

There were also challenges in how to make EvenemaX go from the project phase into being a permanent and integral part of KSF Media's handling of calendar data. This has to be done by any newsroom every day in all of KSF Media's news media units.

Related to that, there was also the challenge how to make EvenemaX as an internal rationalisation and quality-improvement project turn into a business. The tacit target of the KSF Media Group in general was that every unit should create revenue enough to cover its own costs, and later, to create profit.

1.4.2. Adaptation of knowledge architecture

As described by Kivinen et al. (2010) the Knowledge Architecture (KA) reflected the processes of a traditional media house. Typically, it included a relatively fixed in-flow from professional partners, as well as from reporters. The traditional newsroom also had a number of planning and managing structures that usually have proven to be both adequate and to work well under the pressure of news reporting.

EvenemaX again, ranged in the series of upstarts with a partially novel concept integrating new players with varying interest towards the service:

- An 83-year-old local historian in Espoo suddenly became a content provider for a media house, and with his computer he was happy to submit data from his amateur historians' association into the EvenemaX database over a web interface.
- A recently formed new, merged municipality in Västnyland (western Uusimaa) found it rational to switch their management of event data into a co-operation with EvenemaX.⁴ In doing so, the municipality, like others to follow, even overcame the formal problem that a public service body forwarded their citizens to a formally commercial website for event information.
- In a pilot project with EvenemaX, also the publicly-funded YLE saw no problems in linking their audience to a formally commercial site.

Considering the difference between EvenemaX as a startup and a traditional media house, the KA layers were adapted for EvenemaX.

In general, the adaptation of the KA had to include the fact that EvenemaX still was a standalone project within the KSF Media organisational structure. There were recipients "outside the box", i.e. newsrooms who published the sets of calendar data delivered from EvenemaX.

General adaptations

One general addition made throughout all six KA layers was related to *Sources* as category in the architecture. In a media unit like EvenemaX, with a high degree of user-generated content (UGC), the sources also got a more complex role. In some aspects sources were collaborators, who were certified to submit information straight into the database, in fact without any monitoring or moderating.

Another aspect was that sources also became partners, working together with EvenemaX in a win-win setup (e.g. a complex chain of events being neatly compiled,

⁴ As this report is being written, a local municipality clerk in the city of Raseborg (Raasepori) is being awarded with a prize for being Best EvenemaX Liaison 2010.

which helped the newspaper to give their readers a better service, and the event organizer in return a wide-spread visibility for his events).

The general adaptation also had to emphasize the “Skunk Works role” of the initial EvenemaX project. Initially it was an obscure, unknown project set up in a corner of KSF Media’s operations. Then, within a few years, it became an important supplier of a daily structure of the newspaper, at least once weekly. In the KA of EvenemaX the newsrooms have been described as external recipients, also feeding in requirements about data they wish to be delivered.

In all aspects of the KA architecture, the Archive quarter-field became increasingly important. The description of it was soon rephrased to *Accumulation* as it was found that a lot of “cream was skimmed off the milk” in the daily handling of event data into the databases of EvenemaX. This was early on identified as an important set of a valuable data to be part of a future revenue creating process.

This was also reflected off the architecture of the event database software used, provided by ESA Verkkomedia in Lahti with their Menokatu concept, developed during a period of nearly ten years.

Task layer

The Task layer could be simplified from the original KA architecture, usually because the EvenemaX team was smaller and a lot of feedback loops among the workers practically took place around one single work desk.

One of the most import tasks to be added to the Task layer in the EvenemaX case was related to the role of sources acting as collaborators. Contrary to the work process of traditional media houses, the interactions with collaborators become more important. In fact it now resembles similar process of media utilizing UGC or content generated via social media functions.

Although the EvenemaX editors to some extent select image materials for publication, the tasks related to Layout were effectively omitted from the adaptation.

Role layer

The Role layer applied the similar structure as the Task layer. In the transition process of transferring EvenemaX from its present project stage into a future integral part of KSF Media’s daily production, the role of two managers on board had to be differentiated. Those were the role of the Project Manager/KSF Media and the role of the “local” Responsible Manager/EvenemaX.

A great number of roles could be omitted from the default KA Role layer, simply because the EvenemaX structure was so small, comprising only four persons.

Information layer

The flow of the daily work was already in the Role layer differentiated into Primary and Secondary work flow. In the Information layer this became an increasingly important tool. In the process of identifying a value process for EvenemaX, this differentiation is necessary.

Every media house has its customer feedback loops and they are often both lively and vital. The UGC nature of EvenemaX, however, made it important to stress the quality aspect of the entire EvenemaX operation by its feedback from customers. In a startup process the customer/user behaviour is also being closely monitored by the EvenemaX workers to determine the relevant development paths to chose (e.g. by Google Analytics to respond to the audience's preferences and needs as precisely as possible).

Metadata layer

The metadata layer and a discussion about metadata in general were difficult to apply in EvenemaX. That was basically related to the fact that categorization of event data very often in discussions with media researchers was not yet considered applying metadata at all. Also in a small work team there was no significant need to apply process-related metadata.

In the metadata layer the categorization was nevertheless described. It also gave value to the "skimming" or accumulation process, where the compounding data in EvenemaX databases were seen to generate value in the ongoing EvenemaX work process.

System layer

The adaption of the System layer was differentiated in the different software systems used in the work process. At an early stage the System layer was also identified as one of the key tool sets to manage the complicated *ad hoc*-born network, which EvenemaX started out with.

The systems were categorized as (1) generic office software, (2) CMS software for news and ads, (3) event management software and (4) generic feed formats (such as XML).

Intuitively, the EvenemaX workers saw the greatest challenges for the EvenemaX process in managing many different systems for transfer of information. In the complex network the systems tended to regrediate to the easiest way out, or the smallest common denominator. That has become e-mail, with hundreds of e-mails still being decoded and the data being tapped in manually every day.

Knowledge layer

The Knowledge layer proved challenging to adapt. Working in a startup like EvenemaX, neither the managers nor the workers had implemented fixed approaches

to the daily work. Instead, while building up routines, the workers had to adapt to requirements from four different newspapers and newsrooms, all with slightly varying demands.

The distinction of tacit vs. explicit knowledge became useful. The publicistic policy of different newspapers is a classic example of tacit knowledge (albeit sometimes explicated into written policy, mainly for the purpose of use in court cases related to employment disputes). Still, the publicistic policy, on a very “gut-feeling” basis, determines what good news story is, and what is not, every day in the newsroom.

In the build-up process, the project workers of EvenemaX were caught in the problem of the “funnel draught”, described in chapter 2.4.1. They needed to collect as much event data as possible to create a critical volume for the EvenemaX event service. Doing so, they had to promise event data to be published in a daily newspaper, free of charge for the submitter. At the same time the EvenemaX workers had to issue the disclaimer to the customer that the newspaper, on any given day might, by a tacit knowledge, leave the event data concerned unpublished without any explanation.

Also in the relation to the partners/sources/users the EvenemaX workers need to explicate their criteria for quality. They continuously need to communicate the conditions on which a user can become, and remain, a trusted submitter with an unrestricted access to databases vital to the entire system. They also need to communicate to a submitter why some item has not been sufficiently entered into the database.

In the EvenemaX process, a considerable knowledge about the event scene in some areas in the south of Finland is continuously being built up. Also in a formalized, and even mechanized way, the team is “washing the gold” out of the event data stream by explicit knowledge building up in continuously updated databases of event organizers or event venues.

The Knowledge layer, properly used and adapted, has been found to be a valuable tool in smoothing up the work processes and in identifying revenue opportunities at spots where valuable knowledge can be made for sale.

2. Conclusions

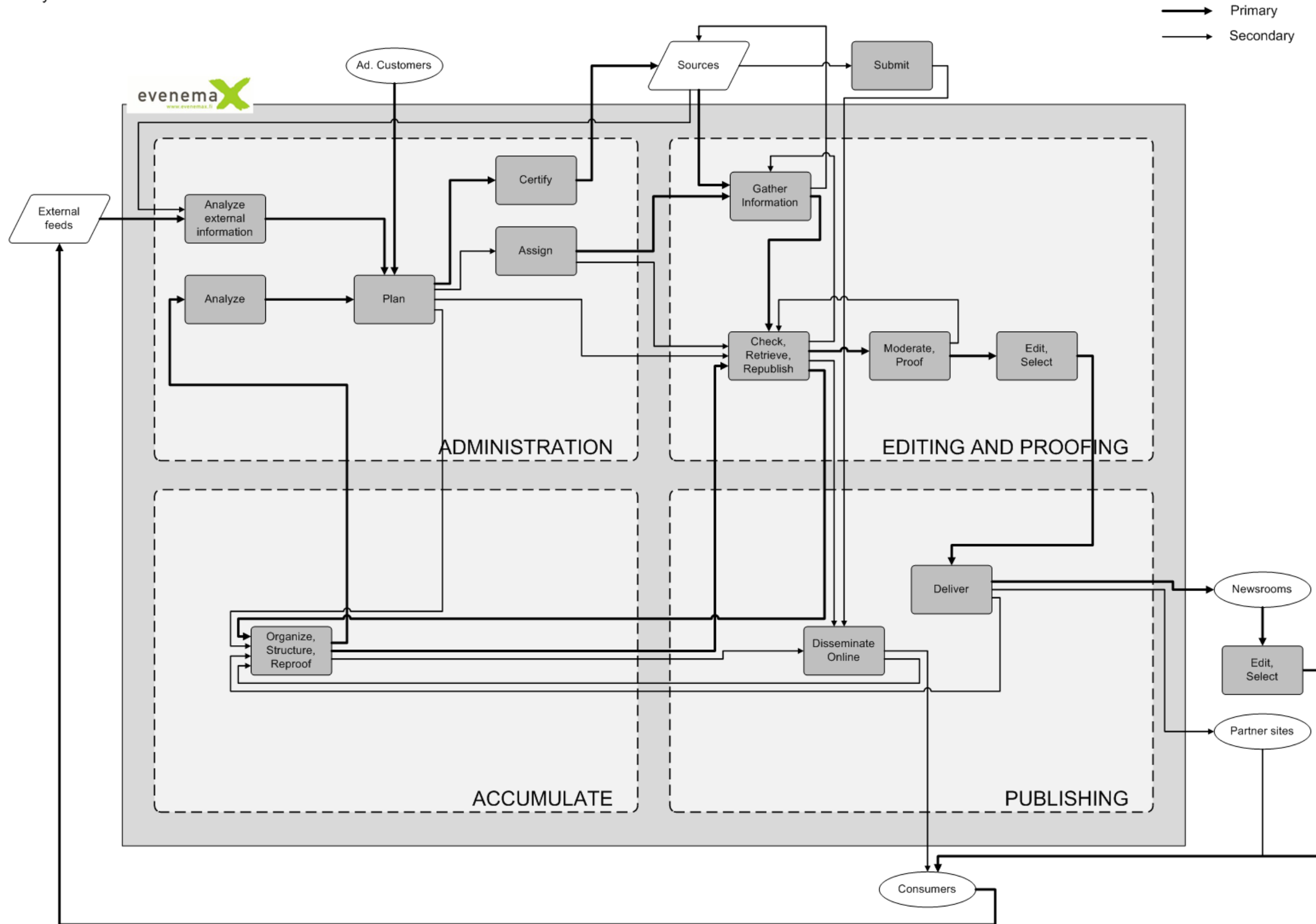
In the EvenemaX case, KSF Media found that the Knowledge Architecture provided a useful tool for describing processes leading up to a viable value process for the project. In Next Media project, the sequel to the FS Crossmedia project, many of the findings will be a solid foundation to build networks of events and event management.

KSF Media, being in consolidation phase of the whole media house, finds the KA tools for building streamlined and consistent internal information systems very helpful.

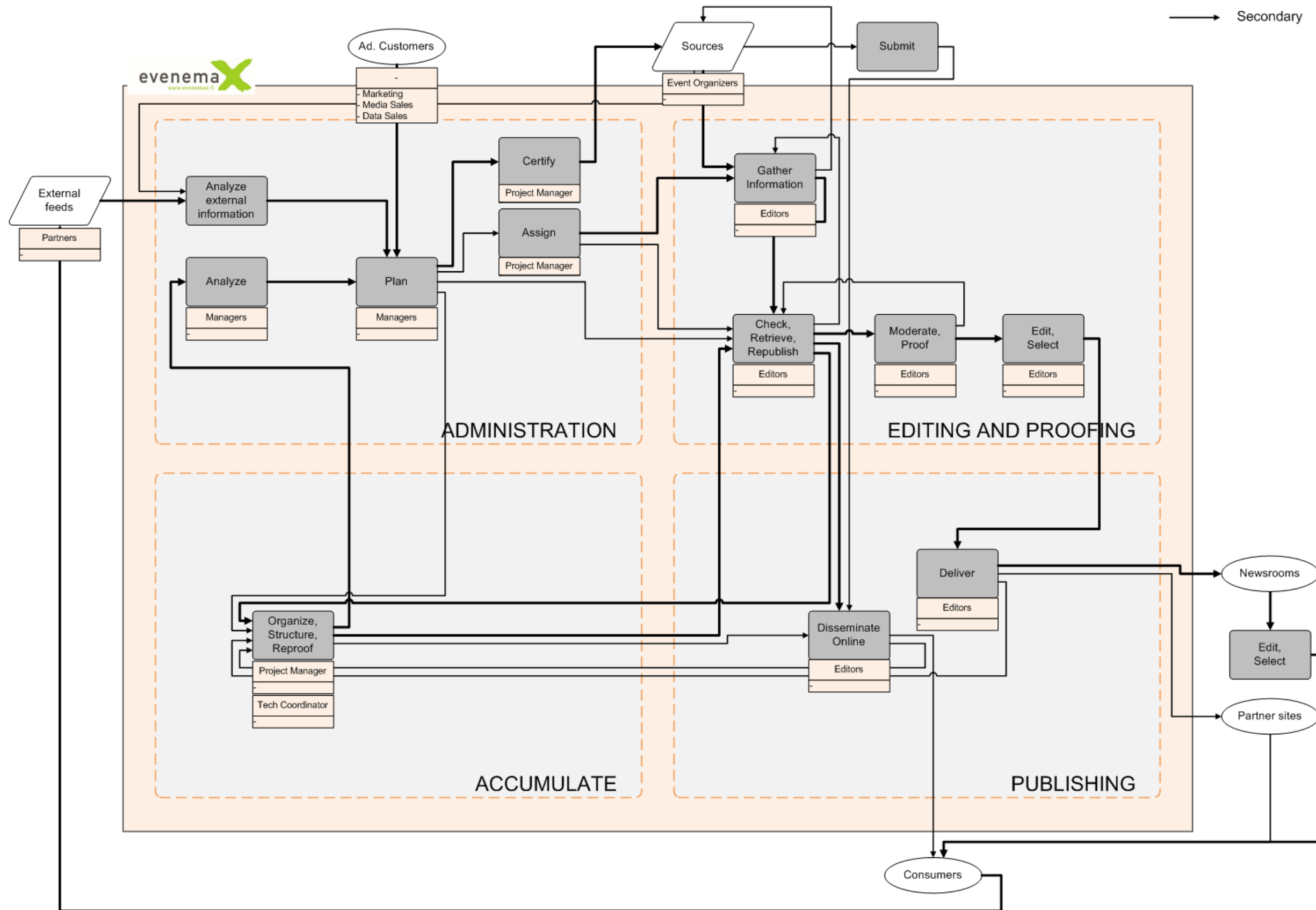
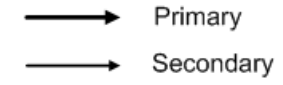
The changes in the media landscape and among its actors may need further development and refinement. This applies especially to describe the interdependency of social media actors and those maintaining platforms with an editorial or moderational ambition, either defined by commercial interests, or by law.

Appendix 1: Adaptation of the Evenemax event calendar service

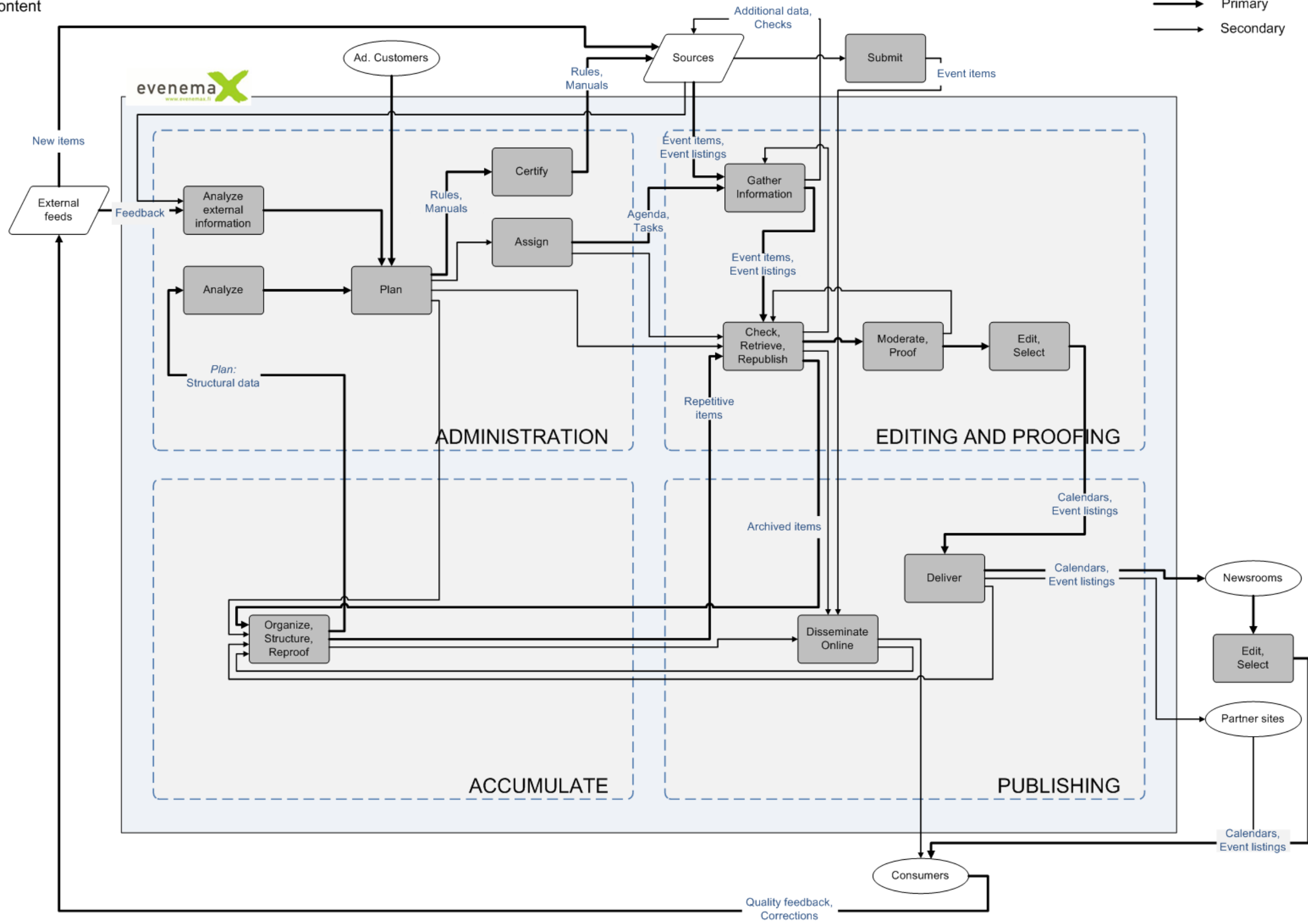
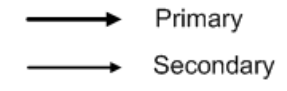
Task Layer



Role Layer



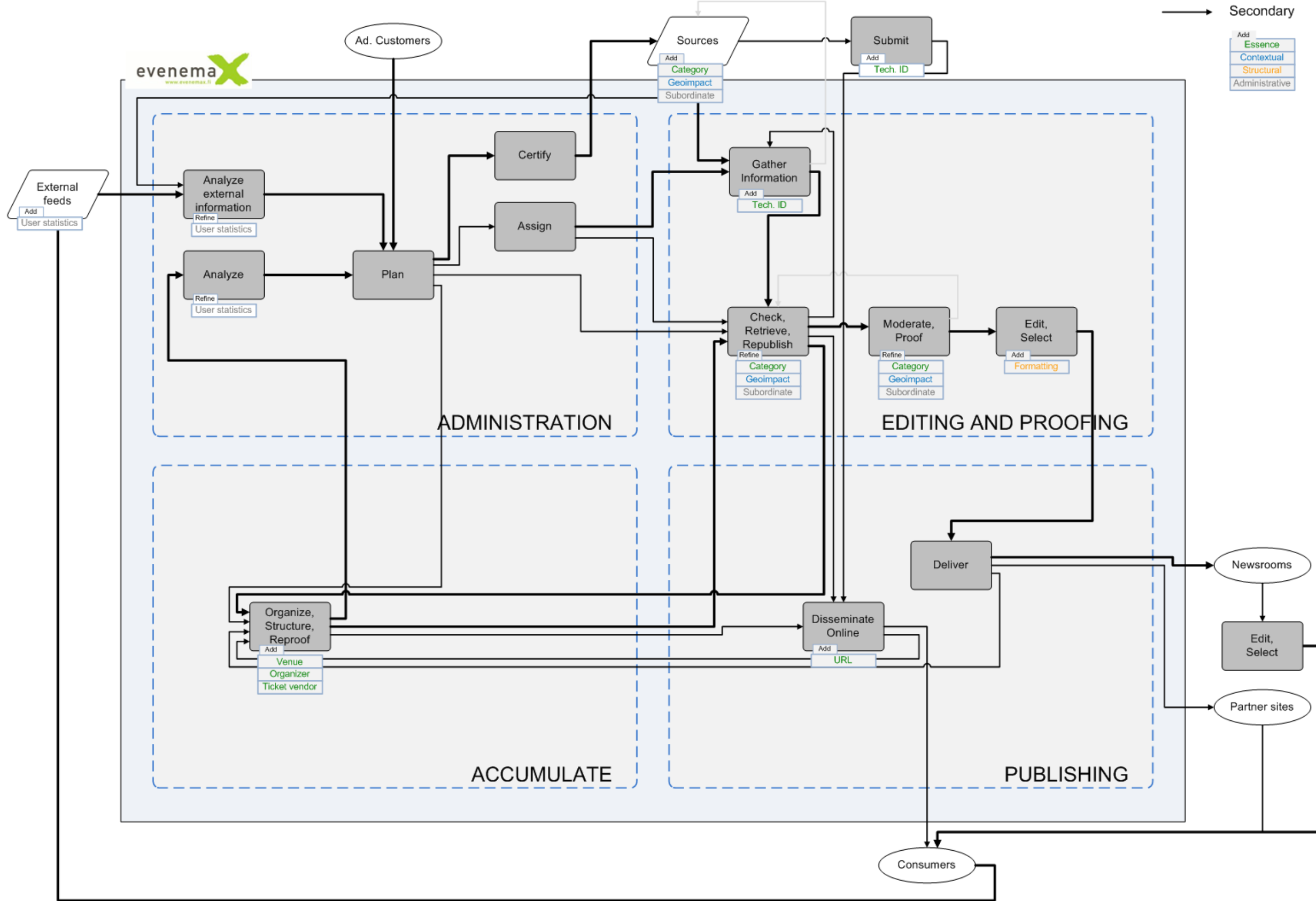
Information Layer:
Content



Information Layer:
Metadata

→ Primary
→ Secondary

Add
Essence
Contextual
Structural
Administrative



System Layer

