What does the Bill Reason "UI-ITEM" mean?

The short answer: UI means "Unreturned Item." Yes, the Bill Reason is redundant. These are items that were checkedout at least 18 months ago.

The rest of the story….
The lifecycle of a UI Item in the Winnefox Database: In the beginning, the Bibliographic Record is created and an Item is attached and given a Home Location. This item circulates to people far and wide. The Item has a Current Location of CHECKEDOUT, but then returns to its Home Location when it gets discharged. One day, a patron doesn't bring the Item back by the due date. The Item is still CHECKEDOUT, but the status shows as "Overdue" and (if your library isn't Fine Free yet) an "Estimated Bill" with a Reason of OVERDUE appears on the patron's record.
>   Day 3 Late—Patron get overdue email notice.
>   Day 4 Late—Patron w/o email gets phone notice (for those using UMS)
>   Day 15 Late—Patron gets another Email.
Through all this, the Item is still CHECKEDOUT and an Overdue Bill may be accruing on the patron's record. SMS notices might be happening. Some Libraries might call their patrons.

Then, on Day 30, everything changes. A report runs and the Item's Current Location gets changed and the patron gets billed. The Item is no longer CHECKEDOUT—the poor thing is now LOST-ASSUM!   The Item disappears from the patron's Checkout Tab, and a LOST bill for the amount of the item appears on the Bills tab. The Item has now entered Phase II.

>   Day 30 -- The patron gets an email or a paper bill charging them with the cost of the
>   Item.
>   Day 37—The patron gets another bill—this time on paper in the mailbox.
>   Some libraries run Long Overdue lists and call their patrons during this time.
>   For libraries that use UMS Debt Collection:
>>   Day 45—Patron gets referred to UMS *IF they **checkedout** at a library using UMS*
>>   (doesn't matter whose item)
>>   Day 46—UMS sends their first letter, and the fee is assess to the patron.
>>   Day 67, Day 81, Day 109—UMS continues to try and reach the patron.

Time passes. Months go by…then a year.   Nothing changes. This little LOST-ASSUM item has probably found its way into the deepest, darkest recesses of the trunk of the car the patron just sold.   The patron, who has joined the Peace Corps, met the love of her life in Rwanda and is not coming back.

Meanwhile, life goes on at the library. More Items get added. Items get Withdrawn (WD). Every 3-4 months comes the Time of Maintenance for the Winnefox Database: A time of cleansing so that patrons & staff don't have to wade through the detritus of materials that are long gone from the catalog. The Time of Maintenance includes: removing WD items (and the associated Bib records), removing long inactive patrons, removing long MISSING items, *and it*

includes processing those long LOST-ASSUM items. In order to remove patrons, Titles, or items, all checkouts, holds, bills must be removed first.

At last, it is time!
One of the Maintenance reports processes the LOST-ASSUM items:
1) It selects all items with a Current Location of LOST-ASSUM that were checkedout 18 months ago (or longer).
2) It changes the Item's Location to UI-LOST.
3) It removes the LOST Bill from the patron's record, and replaces it with a UI-ITEM bill. The bill is the price of the item, or $20.00 if there is no price in the item record.
4) It cuts *all* ties between the item and the patron, except…
5) It inserts a Note onto the patron record indicating the Title, Owning Lib, Item ID, and Date Due.

Another Maintenance report removes all the UI-LOST Items, and any Titles associated with them if that item was the last one. The list of Titles removed gets sent to OCLC so that other libraries around the country know we no longer own those titles.

All that is left of our little UI is that one line in the patron's Note field. Which is searchable!!

Finds:

Thus endeth the life of a UI Item!