



IPTC Mirror

Spring Meeting 2006

First session at the Spring 2006 Meeting (held in Vancouver) was for the Committee of the Whole Council (CWC), which is a forum for discussion and presentation of matters affecting IPTC as an organisation.

Proceedings were opened by IPTC Chair Stéphane Guérillot (AFP) who extended a special welcome to delegates from new members Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) and Xinhua News Agency, who were taking part in their first IPTC Meeting.

CWC actions

He went on to explain that there were two items to be dealt with on the CWC: a revised version of the Rules of Order, which had been developed by Walter Baranger (New York Times); and the IPTC Intellectual Property policy, which had been taken care of by John Iobst (NAA).

Rules of Order

Rules of Order define how IPTC

meetings are run, and the new version is based on the previous one (issued in 1995), with revisions to deal with areas where procedural difficulties had been encountered, and to take account of changes in the way work is being carried out.

As part of the changes the new entity of a "Working Group" - as part of a Working Party - has been formally recognised. Such groups are finding increasing use and are designed to be as informal as possible - they do not have minutes or a formal agenda. They can also include people who are not members of IPTC (such as external experts) to help with specific work areas, along with additional representatives from members.

Rules Committee

Another important change was to establish a "Rules Committee" - this can meet rapidly and informally to deal with procedural issues, for example during a meeting.

In addition steps have been taken to clarify the membership conditions and voting arrangements for Committees and Working Parties.

The revised Rules of Order are available from the Members Only section of the IPTC web site (www.iptc.org/membersonly - registration is required to access these pages).

Intellectual Property

The intellectual property created by IPTC as part of the process of creating standards is a significant asset. Because of this the need for a formal policy to describe the ways this property is created and protected, and to set out the conditions in which it is made available to interested parties, has been recognised. For example, references to the IPTC Intellectual Property Policy will be included in various IPTC documents.

The property may take the form of standards specifications, supporting software, technical reports, web sites and other material. Work on producing a formal policy has been completed, and the policy was adopted by the Management Committee in January 2006.

Development of the policy took

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Committee of the Whole Council

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The IPTC Mirror has hyperlinks for **web addresses** and for **page references**

account of the Intellectual Property policies of other organisations, along with input from the IPTC Management Committee and members.

The draft policy was then checked by IPTC's lawyers (UK based as the licence agreements are governed by the law of the United Kingdom, which is where IPTC is formally based), with some revisions giving the final document.

Licence agreements

The Policy includes two main licence agreements, one for printed material and the other for software (the Specifications licence is given on [page 9](#) as an example).

Legal advice is that IPTC has to ensure that the IP terms are accepted before users will be able to download documents or standards and appropriate changes will be made to the IPTC web site to ensure this.

It was also pointed out that meetings, conference calls and on-line discussions will be undertaken under the terms of the IPTC IP Policy. Again appropriate steps will be taken to ensure that participants agree to the IP terms.

Members were advised that the IP policy is now in force, but explicit acceptance by existing IPTC members has been deferred to the AGM invitation package (circulated in May) for administrative reasons.

Standards

Opening the initial Standards Committee session (held prior to the Working Party meetings), Chair Henrik Stadler (TT) drew delegates' attention to the latest version of the Standards Roadmap which showed that the timeline is continuing to stretch out - see the panel right for revised key dates.

He explained that the main reason for this is that production of the new standards family is a very complex task, with most of the work being carried out by a limited group of contributors.

Involvement

The question that had to be asked was why there was no greater involvement by the membership? One reason that was suggested was that the large volume of emails on the discussion groups tended to make it difficult for new contributors to join in directly. A possible way of dealing with this would be to adopt a more structured presentation of the items under consideration, and

this will be looked into.

Second session of the Standards Committee (at the end of the meeting) included reports from the Working Parties, with consideration of series of motions from the Working Parties.

Approvals

Approval was given to the following:

- Launch of a second Experimental Phase by the News Architecture WP;
- SportsML 1.7 XML Schema and DTD files as an official IPTC standard (subject to the adjustment of

namespace references into standard IPTC URN format);

- Updates to the NewsletterType and Subject NewsCodes, deprecation of the FileFormat, Notation and LabelType NewsCodes;
- Approval of the NITF 3.3 XML Schema files (subject to the adjustment of namespace references into standard IPTC URN format).

Further details of these items, and other work carried out, are given in the individual Working Party reports on the following pages.

NAR Standards Development Key Dates

NewsML 2 Architecture

Experimental Phase 2

Start May 2006 - End August 2006

Conclusions and report mid September 2006

Updated specifications and XML Schema 17 October 2006

Approval 18 October 2006 (Autumn Meeting 2006)

General News Content

Requirements update May 2006

Draft specification mid July 2006

Draft XML Schema implementation mid August 2006

Experimental Phase 1

Start October 2005 - End December 2006

Conclusions and report mid January 2007

Updated specifications and XML Schema mid February 2007

Approval Spring Meeting 2007

EventsML

Draft specification July 2006

Draft XML Schema implementation August 2006

Experimental Phase 1

Start October 2005 - End December 2006

Conclusions and report mid January 2007

Updated specifications and XML Schema mid February 2007

Approval Spring Meeting 2007

SportsML (NAR compliant)

Draft XML Schema implementation mid August 2006

Experimental Phase 1

Start October 2005 - End December 2006

Conclusions and report mid January 2007

Updated specifications and XML Schema mid February 2007

Approval Spring Meeting 2007

NewsCodes (NAR Taxonomies)

Draft specifications early June 2006

Use in NAR Experimental Phase 2

Start July 2005 - End September 2006

Conclusions and report early October 2006

Update of specifications Autumn Meeting 2006

Unless otherwise stated all dates are for completion.

Namespaces

During discussions on the NITF 3.3 XML Schema it was pointed out that the namespace included at the top of the XML Schema should conform to official IPTC practice, but it was not clear what the practice should be. Similar considerations applied to the SportsML XML Schema, these being the first official Schemas to be released by the IPTC.

This question was considered by the Standards Committee with the main options being the use of a URN (Uniform Resource Name) or a http-URL (Uniform Resource Locator) - in effect a Web address.

The Managing Director provided an example of the IPTC URN namespace specified in RFC 3937 - **urn:iptc:std:NITF:3.3:xm1ns** and suggested that the syntax should be maintained if it was decided to use the http-URI approach, giving **http://iptc.org/std/NITF/3.3/xm1ns**. This resulted in further discussion on how versioning (of standards) would be dealt with.

News Architecture

Introducing his report on the activities of the NewsML 2 Architecture (NAR) Working Party, Chair Laurent Le Meur (AFP) took as his title "News Architecture - the last mile".

Rapid evolution had occurred since the Autumn 2005 Meeting with public release of the draft NAR Model and Technical Specifications and a XML Schema V0.6 and the first experimental phase. Efforts are now focusing on the common components, such as person, organisation, address and location.

Work continues to be carried out using the discussion group and weekly conference calls, details of which are posted to the internal discussion group. See panel (top right) for details of the main NAR discussion groups.

Initial Tests

The first Experimental Phase (EP#1) ended on the 15 February 2006 and Laurent explained that it had the following goals:

- Allow IPTC members to get a grip on the NAR;
- Test "real life" use cases against the NAR;
- Identify practical issues that had not been found by the Working Party;
- Help to finalise the NAR tech spec.

A summary of the reports re-

ceived is given in the panel below.

Points raised were being dealt with by the development group, with new versions of the Model, Technical Specification and a XML Schema V0.7 being produced.

Experimental Phase 2

It was intended to start a second Experimental Phase (EP#2) in which the NewsContent and NewsCodes Working Groups would develop draft NAR versions of their standards and provide feedback to help produce a final version of the NAR.

The plan is for EP#2 to run from the 8 May 2006 to 29 August 2006. This would be followed by updates to the NAR so a final version would be available for consideration at the

NAR discussion groups

Main discussion group for NewsML 2 Architecture development is:
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/iptc-news-architecture-dev>.

This group is for IPTC members only.

There is also a public discussion group - <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/newsml-2> - and it is intended to introduce new threads to this group on a sequential basis to make them easier to follow.

NAR Experimental Phase 1 Results

The first experimental phase (EP#1) for the NewsML 2 Architecture ran from December 2005 to mid-February 2006 and has the aim of testing real life cases against the NAR Model to help identify any issues.

Formal reports were received from AFP, Reuters and Kyodo News along with a C# implementation of NAR objects produced by Michael Steidl.

Agence France Presse

AFP tests (carried out by Laurent Le Meur and two software developers) checked the handling of news items using XML objects, storage of NewsML 2 in a database, the navigation between concepts (for example between a person and an organisation) and NewsML 1 to NewsML 2 transforms (using open-source software).

Overall the model was found to be clear and easy to implement although there were a number of issues. These included the use of multiple namespaces which were found complex to handle, the metadata/content differentiation in the TopicItem, the requirement for a fixed metadata order, and complexity of the News Metadata Framework (NMDF) - for use at a basic level.

Reuters

Investigations into how well NewsML 2 represents current Reuters' feeds were undertaken by Dave Compton. The representation is much more compact. For example it was pointed out that analysis showed a large number of codes were being used (30 to 300 in some items) with each code taking around 200 bytes in NewsML 1. With NewsML 2 the requirement comes down to 12 bytes, making it much more practical to store items as NewsML. In addition it was found easier to associate content hints (such as captions) with the content. However the use of multiple namespaces was questioned, and there were reservations about some properties.

Kyodo News

Trials by Kyodo News were carried out by Hiroshi Shinotsuka who explained that he encountered specific problems as this was the first Kyodo application using XML Schema rather than DTDs. As with the other tests there were difficulties in dealing with multiple namespaces. With conversion of NewsML 1 to NewsML 2 there were particular difficulties dealing with a large number (around 100) of content-related DTDs where the content had to be validated.

2006 Autumn Meeting.

During discussion it was pointed out that the timeline for EP#2 was very challenging, and that although the basic design would be stable, development of the NAR would be continuing. It was also probable that feedback from the standards working groups would result in changes to the NAR. A motion to the Standards Committee seeking approval for EP#2 was passed.

News Structure

In his role as Chair of the News Structure Working Group Laurent went on to explain that the NAR Model describes what is provided, while the Technical Specifications describe how the NAR works (in XML). These documents are complemented by a XML Schema, a glossary of the terms used, and a XML Stylebook.

The NAR is based on a set of items, which are all managed in the same way with the same set of metadata.

The three main ones are:

NewsItem - carrying news in any media type and any format;

Topic Item - dealing with the representation of concepts;

Packageltem - a group of all types of items (including NewsItems, TopicItems and other types of items).

In addition the NewsMessage can

be used for delivery of items (though other delivery mechanisms can be used if preferred).

Meeting goals

One of the main reasons for the time being taken to develop the NAR is tension between the goals of simplicity, usability and interoperability on the one hand, and the need for rigour and meeting the requirements of high-profile news providers on the other.

To help meet different needs there are two conformance levels - an easy to use "core profile" and a high level "power profile". The "core" level provides users with a good way to start using NewsML 2, as there is the option to upgrade to the "power level" - which is an extended version - if appropriate.

In conclusion, Laurent outlined the main features of the common management properties, along with the administrative and descriptive metadata and provided a number of examples.

Common Components

Development work is now focusing on the Common Components - along with the TopicItem - and a presentation by Michael Steidl (standing in for Working Group Chair Johan Lindgren) provided a status review.

Basic components are building

blocks which are not exposed to users, as opposed to the higher level aggregate components which can be used on their own or nested and reused in other aggregate components. For example, at the first level aggregate components include Address, Location and Partial Time/Date.

At the next level the Contact Information (ContactInfo) component makes use of the Address component, while at a still higher level Person and Organisation components use both ContactInfo and PartialDate.

Components cover both concepts and entities and have a basic set of properties - ConceptId, Concept(Sub)Type, Name, Description. So far as possible the structures of similar components (such as Person and Organisation) are aligned.

These Common Components cover a wide range of applications with individual applications being controlled by use of the Concept(Sub)Type. For example, this could be used to discriminating between given, family and formal names, though this will require the use of code schemes to ensure interoperability between users.

News Content

SportsML

Steady enhancement of SportsML continues, with Working Group Alan Karben (XML Team) presenting V1.7 for approval - in both DTD and XML Schema versions.

Changes included some minor improvements to the core along



Top left: The NewsItem carries news in any format with the appropriate sets of metadata.

Bottom left: Packageltem contains a set of other items - of any type, again with the appropriate metadata sets.

Bottom right: Provided for use as a delivery mechanism the NewsItem is optional.

These illustrations were produced by IPTC members Athens Technology Centre.



with a series of additions to the plug-ins for Baseball, Basketball, Ice Hockey, Soccer, Motor Racing, and American Football.

Typically these additions provide greater depth to the statistics and further coverage of specific sports actions. Some specific Schema improvements have been made, and checks carried out to ensure that it (and the DTD) fully validate - this included checks on a SportsML file that contained an embedded NITF file.

During discussions it was pointed out that the XML Schema is the most detailed representation as it includes the documentation. A motion asking the Standards Committee to approve the SportsML specifications - in both DTD and XML Schema versions - was passed.

Olympic coverage

The way SportsML was used to cover the 2006 Torino Winter Olympics was described. As with previous Olympic events XML Team processed the official Olympics "WNPA" feed for the Associated Press (AP).

This involved converting the WNPA feed through a "WnpaML" to SportsML and into a database. Database queries then generated new SportsML which was formatted into HTML web pages for integration into the websites of a large number of US newspapers. Core SportsML elements and attributes were able to handle most of the data, which



Long-standing Standards Committee Chair (and Associated Press representative) Steve Graham was a welcome guest at the Spring Meeting - he is shown here (left) with IPTC Chair Stéphane Guérillot (AFP).

mainly consisted of results.

The WNPA format used by the International Olympic Committee to deliver results is essentially a plain-text file with separators and has a number of problems. It was agreed to try and approach the IOC to see if they can be encouraged to provide an updated format (and to show them the advantages of SportsML)

IPTC Core (for XMP)

An overview of planned development of the IPTC Core for XMP was provided by IPTC Managing Director Michael Steidl. It is intended to keep the focus on photographs (though XMP can be used with all Adobe file formats) and add properties to provide a better description of the image content.

Examples include the addition of properties for people and organisations, extension of the Scene NewsCodes and the addition of a property for emotions (with a con-

trolled vocabulary). However, additions will be restricted with the aim of keeping the IPTC Core simple. There will also be a need for migration paths between the IPTC core and the NAR metadata structures.

Implementation

Implementation goals include the provision of simple user interfaces - including a way to update IPTC NewsCodes - and appropriate documentation, including translations. Initial phase is to establish requirements for the new version, with the aim starting work on the specification in late 2006 and implementation in 2007.

Contributions are sought from the photo departments of IPTC members and from members with a particular interest in photographs (this includes a number of new members), along with input from Adobe and Adobe partners.

EventsML

Activity on EventsML has been limited as efforts have been concentrated on NAR development, but a teleconference had been held before the Spring Meeting to start moving things forward.

At the meeting a presentation on the current status of EventsML was provided by Johan Lindgren (TT) - speaking via a Skype link - who explained that an important consideration was the way that EventsML will fit with the NAR. The EventsML requirements formed part of the input to the NAR, but the common components have evolved beyond the original suggestions (from the EventsML Group).

Common components that will be used include: Address; ContactInfo; Person; Location; Organisation; and PartialDateTime. Work on refining the way these components are used - and development of EventsML specific items - will be based on the NAR documentation

XMP Toolkit

Adobe Systems Incorporated have released the public beta of the Adobe® XMP (Extensible Metadata Platform) Toolkit V 4.0.

Based on open source technology, the new beta toolkit contains Adobe XMP libraries that provide third party software developers and industry partners with standards-based building blocks that can let desktop applications and back-end publishing systems use a common method for capturing, sharing and leveraging file information.

"Many system vendors rely upon standards developed and maintained by the International Press Telecommunications Council (IPTC) - including the IPTC Core which is based on Adobe XMP - to capture metadata across their workflows," said Stéphane Guérillot, Chair of the IPTC. "People have been asking about software tools that will allow them to read and write our metadata properties in XMP elements that are embedded in image files. The pre-release of the Adobe XMP Toolkit will make it easier for partners to be compliant when deploying our standard for use with Adobe software and partner solutions."

The XMP Toolkit Version 4.0 Pre-release is available for Windows (Visual Studio 2005) and Macintosh (Xcode 2.2) platforms as a free download from the Adobe Labs Web site, at <http://labs.adobe.com/xmp>.

and XML Schemas for NAR Experimental Phase 2.

Johan went on to provide an overview of what EventsML is (a way of exchanging information about events and the coverage of events), along with the EventItem (dealing with information about the event) and the AssignmentItem (which handles the coverage information).

General News Markup

Laurent Le Meur (AFP) outlined the status of the planned standard for general news markup. This is intended for the representation of general, journalistic, multimedia content - described as the representation of a point of view of an event at a given time. Content might include text, illustrations, audio clips, illustrated articles and multimedia presentations.

Name needed

The standard is still looking for a name, with various suggestions having been made. These include the use of NewsML 2 plus an appropriate suffix - NewsML 2:media or NewsML 2:news; finding a suitable xxxML that would be compatible with SportsML; or reclaiming the NewsML 2 name which is currently being used for the NAR family of standards. Use of media as a suffix seems appropriate with a definition of media being "a means of communicating information".

As noted in the PR Committee Report (page 7) the whole question of naming the new generation standards is under active consideration

The NAR item used for news markup is the NewsItem and all processors will have to support specific profiles (of metadata plus content). Some content features may be extended at the NAR power conformance level.

Text markup

It does not appear that any existing text markup fully covers the NAR requirements, and there are a number of proposals for handing text: be neutral to the form adopted; define a "core" NITF; use XHTML modules, with extensions as needed; and create a new "ArticleML"

Laurent went on to provide a number of examples showing how different content types could be handled, making the specific point that the examples were much simpler than the NewsML 1 counterparts. All types of media use the same header, which is followed by

AGM 2006

The IPTC XXXXI Annual General Meeting will be held in Vienna from **Monday 3 July to Thursday 6 July 2006**. Working sessions will occupy the first three days (Monday to Wednesday), with the formal AGM being held on the Thursday.

Booking forms for the AGM are available in the "Members Only" section of the IPTC Web site. Last date for reservations is 2 July.

Hosts for the AGM are APA (Austria Press Agency) and APA-IT Information Technology GmbH, who have continued the IPTC tradition of including a social programme to provide a break from the working sessions. Planned events are:

Sunday 2 July, evening cocktail reception at the conference hotel (Hotel Bristol).

Monday 3 July, evening visit to a Heuriger - a specialised Viennese way of enjoying wine which has developed as the vineyards are close to the city.

Tuesday 4 July, evening trip to the Schönbrunn Palace with guided tour of the Imperial rooms, a walk or carriage ride through the gardens and dinner in the Schönbrunn-Gloriette-Pavillon accompanied by the music of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart.

Post conference tour

In addition arrangements have been made for interested delegates to join a short post-conference tour - which provides an enjoyable way for them to relax after their efforts in the working sessions.

A number of options have been proposed - for more details contact the IPTC Managing Director (mdirector@iptc.org).

the different types of content. If required items can then be sent together as a package.

Next step in development of the standard is to draft a specification document and offer guidance on typical implementations. These could include: a photograph with multiple versions at different resolutions, and with metadata compatible with the IPTC Core for XMP; a vector graphic with a thumbnail; an audio clip with a logo; and an illustrated article.

NewsCodes

Consideration was given to a series of additional Subject Matter headings for the IPTC Subject NewsCodes.

As usual this resulted in some discussion, during which it was agreed to adopt: *inquest and inquiry* (under *crime, law and justice*); *rescue* (under *disaster and accident*); *patient* (under *health*); *adventure and beauty* (under *lifestyle and leisure*) and *darts* (under *sport*). Proposals

for new subject detail headings for *history and sale* (under *arts, culture and entertainment*), *tribunal* (under *crime, law and justice*) and *wedding* (under *lifestyle and leisure*) were not approved.

In addition delegates were informed that a series of Subject Detail codes had been approved by the fast-track jury.

Updates

A review of all the IPTC NewsCodes TopicSets was started at the Autumn 2005 Meeting, with the first set of results being presented at the Spring 2006 Meeting.

Following presentation and discussion a series of changes were agreed.

Some explanations have been tidied up and minor typographic errors corrected in the **Subject NewsCodes**. In addition some of the explanations have been edited to reduce their length (this was necessary because the way the NewsCodes are managed by Excel files imposes a maximum field length of

256 characters).

In the **NewsItemType NewsCodes**, a new entry was included for *Explanation*, the explanation for *Schema* was updated, and the entry for *NewsManagementMode* deprecated.

The **Format NewsCodes** were deprecated as a set, as it was considered impractical to record and manage the large number of formats in use. It was pointed out that the NewsML 1 "format" element requires a formal name (from a taxonomy) but that this requirement could be met by individual providers creating their own taxonomies (containing just the formats used by the provider).

Both the **Notation NewsCodes** and **LabelType NewsCodes** were deprecated, as there did not appear to be any users.

In addition it was agreed that the **ColourSpace NewsCodes** would not be changed.

Work on reviewing the other NewsCodes Sets is continuing.

NAR NewsCodes

Working Party Chair John Minting (UPI) reported that initial steps had been taken towards the development of a Subject Code system designed specifically for use with the NewsML 2 Architecture.

One proposal was to rework the current Subject NewsCodes taxonomy to produce a general purpose news agency taxonomy. This will probably retain the 17 main Subjects of the Subject NewsCodes, and have a further set of around 300 secondary headings, with a reasonably balanced distribution under the main headings.

This approach was generally welcomed, and a number of delegates have agreed to serve on a Working Group. It is also intended to seek input from outside bodies, while contributions from other members would be welcome.

NITF

A draft XML Schema for NITF 3.3 had been circulated for comment before the Meeting, and delegates were informed that a number of minor changes had been made to tidy up the distributed version. The revised version was proposed for formal adoption. Working Party Chair Alan Karben (XML Team) said that tests had shown that the draft NITF 3.3 XML Schema compiled properly and it had been tested thoroughly.

During discussion it was pointed

PR Committee

A preliminary session of the PR Committee was held at the start of the Spring Meeting to consider naming of the new standards family. The approach that has been adopted is to use the established (and trade marked) NewsML name with a version indicator - NewsML 2. Individual standards in the family are then identified by appropriate qualifiers - for example NewsML 2 Sports, or NewsML 2 Architecture.

However, some objections have been raised to this approach, with the principle objection being that NewsML 2 is very different to NewsML 1 (with the potential for causing confusion among users and potential users). The intention was that raising this matter at the start of the meeting would allow delegates time for reflection, and informal discussions, before the closing session.

Name options

Discussions during the second session of the PR Committee looked at some practical implications of using "NewsML 2" and considered alternative ways of making use of the trademarked "NewsML" name.

No final decision was made and delegates were told that there were three main options to be considered: to make a fresh start on finding a name for the family of news exchange standards; to stick to the decision of the Autumn Meeting to use NewsML 2; and to defer a decision and to get a marketing industry consultant involved.

The point was made that a final decision was required as a matter of some urgency by the 2006 AGM, and IPTC members were asked to send emails with their thoughts and proposals to the IPTC Managing Director (mdirector@iptc.org).

Presentations

Presentations are an important way of maintaining and developing IPTC's presents in the news industry and the first one for 2006 was at Nexpo (in Chicago during early April, just after the Spring Meeting). This provided representatives from IPTC with the opportunity to meet exhibitors and attendees and discuss developments in the IPTC family of news standards.

A similar effort is planned for IFRA Expo 2006 (to be held in Amsterdam in October 2006). A brochure providing an overview of the IPTC's work had been created during February and copies were available for distribution at Nexpo.

out that it was necessary to ensure that the NITF namespace - included at the top of the XML Schema - conformed to the IPTC practice. At the time the format to be adopted had not been settled on so it was decided to ask the Standards Committee to approve the NITF 3.3 XML Schema files for release subject to adjustment of the namespace references to the standard IPTC URN format (this is under consideration).

NITF future

Alan Karben also outlined his view of the future of the NITF, which he considered to be one of IPTC's biggest successes, with widespread use by global newswires (and their customers) and US newspaper companies. He believed that the NITF was still the best public stan-

dard for a XML structure to describe the structure and substance of a news article.

However, for current (and future) applications the NITF in its current form has some limitations, including: too many elements and attributes; multiple (and often cryptic) naming conventions; and a name "NITF" that lacks immediate appeal.

Options

One option would be to split the NITF to give core and power levels - at present the NITF has some 132 elements (and lots of attributes) and the core level could be restricted to around 82 elements. It is possible that such a core profile would provide a good markup for use with NAR based standards.

Microformat

Another approach (to describing news structure) would be to produce a "pared down" version of HTML using selected elements to offer the required functionality, with IPTC providing a HTML article Guideline. This technique produces a "microformat", and is becoming widely used.

A third option is to develop ArticleML. This would be a new "slim-and-trim" DTD and XML Schema - with just 33 elements. It would be the functional equivalent of the NITF core but would not have the limitations of the established nomenclature, and the NITF name. - this would be.

Risks of inaction

Alan went on to make the point that the risks of not doing anything included the possibility that someone else would produce a good lightweight article Schema (which would not be under IPTC control) or that HTML would continue unchallenged, despite its limitations for news-specific applications. Either of these could result in the NITF continuing as a very useful niche standard, but without having the supremacy that he considered it deserves.

In conclusion he said that he believed it was important to that IPTC should continue to support and promote the NITF as it is the best available text markup standard - until, and unless, the IPTC produces or supports some other solution.

NewsML 1

A proposal was made to develop a XML Schema for NewsML 1.

This proposal was based on work that had previously been carried out by Takahiro Fujiwara (East Co), who explained the thinking behind the proposal and described how it was intended to carry it forward.

Reasons given for developing a XML Schema include:

- A general trend towards the use of XML Schema - as shown by the adoption of XML Schema for both the NITF and SportsML during the meeting, and the use for XBRL (eXtensible Business Reporting Language);
- The way some XML middleware - such as BizTalk (a business process management server), Casator (a data binding framework for Java) and TopLink (Java object-relational persistence architecture);

Yahoo!, Google and the News Agencies

The director of Google News and the general manager of Yahoo! News will participate in a debate at the upcoming World Editors Forum on the impact of new competition from news aggregators and news agencies on traditional newsrooms.

Nathan Stoll of Google and Neil Budde of Yahoo! will be joined by Pierre Louette, CEO of Agence France-Presse, and Dean Wright, Senior Vice President and Managing Editor for Consumer Services at Reuters, in a session entitled, "Web Portals and News Agencies: New Threats to Newspapers?"

The session at the World Editors Forum, to be held from 4 to 7 June in Moscow, Russia, will examine whether newspapers can adjust their business models to compete in the on-line world, or whether news aggregators and news agencies are destined to dominate internet news.

Full conference details, including programme and registration details and a list of participants, can be found at <http://www.moscow2006.com>.

The Paris-based World Editors Forum is the organisation of the World Association of Newspapers (WAN) that represents senior news executives. WAN, the global organisation for the newspaper industry, represents 18,000 newspapers; its membership includes 73 national newspaper associations, newspapers and newspaper executives in 102 countries, nine news agencies and nine regional and world-wide press groups.

- Suitability of DataTypes for automatic generation of relational database columns (as for Oracle databases);
- The ability to apply validation for specific data types (such as date and time).

Delegates were informed that a number of experimental XML Schema for NewsML 1 have already been produced within IPTC, while both Business Wire and East Co have developed versions.

A team of IPTC delegates has been put together to generate and

test the proposed formal NewsML 1 XML Schema, and to produce appropriate documentation.

It was proposed that development would be limited to the latest version - NewsML 1.2 - and it is hoped that the NewsML 1 XML Schema will be ready for presentation (and approval) at the IPTC Autumn Meeting in October 2006.

Following the presentation there was general agreement that this would be a valuable development and it agreed that work should go ahead.

Web syndication

Delegates at the Spring Meeting enjoyed a stimulating presentation from Tim Bray with the theme "Syndication on the Web".

The presentation took a look at the very high growth rates that are occurring and the nature of the feeds involved. It went on to consider the background to RSS and its application, and then moved on to consider the history and application of Atom and its adoption as an IETF project to provide a publishing protocol

Tim Bray is the Director of Web Technologies at Sun Microsystems and a major contributor to XML and Atom web standards.



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