

Positioning Paper: A W3C Workshop on Electronic Books and the Open Web Platform

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Statement of Interest

Samsung Electronics has been delivering various kinds of CE devices such as smartphone, tablet PC, Note PC, TV, etc. to the market for many years as device manufacturer. The smarter CE devices become, the more many people's life style and experience is getting improved. In this era of smart IT, we think Digital Publication is one of the most important area to enhance users' reading experience and smart devices are one of a significant building block for better ebook services.

We think standard has an important role for reader's convenience in ebook services. However, there still exists a variety of ebook content format and different implementation of e-readers now. That causes interoperability problems so it becomes a barrier to expand digital publication market. Therefore, the effort of industry to standardize and build conformance program is very critical and we support W3C and IDPF's joint workshop to discuss issues and future plan in digital publication.

Participant's Interest

We are worried about market fragmentation in ebook industry. Here, fragmentation is continuing in various senses; various device types, contents formats, DRM technologies, different viewers, non-conformant viewer/contents, etc.

Currently, we have a lot of different types of devices in market; dedicated e-Ink devices and general purpose devices including tablet, smart phone, laptop PC, desktop PC, TV, and in extreme case, digital whiteboard with large screen, etc. Those kinds of devices have different capabilities including resolutions, screen size and I/O peripherals. Therefore, it is not easy to deliver common user experiences to customers having various types of devices with different capability. So it is the most important to offer services with seamless experience with multiple screen to users. Current works like fallback and adaptive layout functions in IDPF is a good start.

Second, conformance is also a big issue. Many publishers are now providing their ebook contents based on standards like EPUB2 and EPUB3, but there are still many cases that ebook

viewers cannot render publisher's intention accurately. That is because understanding about standards of publisher and distributor doesn't coincide precisely. Therefore, how to meet the level of conformance could be a good topic to discuss. In addition to that, certification program for ebook viewer (including S/W and H/W) might be considered for user convenience improvement.

Lastly, interoperable DRM is important topic to solve. Although many contents providers and publishers create ebook contents based on EPUB standards, those contents cannot be read if different DRM is adopted in devices and service providers. That is, while user wants to read purchased books in any his or her devices, user cannot read books unless device support DRM from service provider where user purchased books. This is severe problem to attract users to use ebook services. So we need to discuss how to solve interoperable DRM issue.

There are lots of effort and trial in standardization field to improve ebook services, and we think current web-based approach is good to reduce market fragmentation. However, there still remains inconvenience in ebook consumers as described above. Therefore, we hope such an issue to be discussed at this WS, and technical alignment between IDPF and W3C side in the long term could be beneficial for ebook market.