

Statement of interest

Electronic Books and the Open Web Meeting

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My responsibility is the management of a standards development organization in the space of information management and documentation. I also am responsible as Secretary for the ISO Technical Subcommittee (9) on Identification and Description within ISO TC 46 – Information & Documentation.

Participant's Interest

NISO fosters the development and maintenance of standards that facilitate the creation, persistent management, and effective interchange of information so that it can be trusted for use in research and learning. To fulfill this mission, NISO engages libraries, publishers, information aggregators, and other organizations that support learning, research, and scholarship through the creation, organization, management, and curation of knowledge. NISO is a not-for-profit association accredited by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI).

My specific interests are:

- The identification (identifiers) and description (metadata) of digital content;
- The preservation of digital content;
- Discovery and distribution of digital content;
- XML Production of digital content;
- Accessibility (for the visually impaired) of digital content

Specifically, content production by publishers is a complex problem that is in need of significant work and development. While the development and implementation of EPUB3 has been successful so far, and represents a significant advancement in delivery of content, it is limited by the publisher's content development work. As it has often been described, EPUB3 is essentially a packaged website to convey content. However, as we have seen with the development of the web, the implementation of HTML creates some significant problems for accessibility for the print-disabled, for preservation and archiving purposes, as well as compatibility with other technology. If publication is to move rapidly into a digital environment, more attention needs to be focused on getting publishers to produce content that is more well-formed and conformant with more strenuous standards than simply posting their content in HTML5.

Since the development of SGML, a variety of publishers have struggled to find the best approach for content mark-up, balancing efficient production, semantic clarity, and flexibility. While not every production workflow need to be fully XML from start to finish, there should be at least production outputs that are more rigorous than posting HTML5 into an EPUB3 package for distribution. Some work has been advanced on this topic, notably the inclusion of ANSI/NISO Z39.98-2012, Authoring

and Interchange Framework for Adaptive XML Publishing Specification within EPUB3. However, more should be done in this space.

To address the balance between the NISO has standardized the Journal Article Tag Suite (JATS) based on the work of the National Library of Medicine (NLM) DTD work. Work has begun on a Book Interchange Tag Suite (BITS), which may go through a similar NISO standardization process. In addition, NIOS recently launched a project on the packaging of serial content, for the exchange of large-scale repository content.

Some have argued that a lightweight HTML and CSS focused publication process is sufficient for publishing at scale. Experience has shown this not to be the case and that there are significant potential problems with this approach. Among these problems are standardized discovery, bibliographic metadata creation and management, format migration, large-scale content transmission, and long-term preservation/archiving. The focus of this presentation, if accepted will be to draw attention to these critical issues and to highlight their value among a community not generally focused on them.

I look forward to this meeting and engaging with colleagues on these issues.