

Proposed enhancements to schema.org/Event version 3, 10/1/2013

As the search Events team at Google has worked on features using marked up data, several limitations of the existing spec have emerged. This is a proposal to enhance the schema.org spec to handle the top limitations we've seen.

v2, May 2013: It has been revised in light of public feedback on an earlier version of the proposal, see <http://www.w3.org/wiki/EventSchemaUpdate> for links.

v3, Oct 2013: Further revisions in response to additional public and internal feedback.

Summary of proposed changes

Goal	Spec modification
1. Support markup for canceled or rescheduled events	Add three new properties: eventStatus, previousStartDate, previousEndDate
2. Allow more event sites to mark up event categories	Add one new property: eventCategory. De-emphasize existing categorial subtypes of Event.
3. Document how to link to official pages	Use the "url" and "sameAs" properties (this is not a modification; these features already exist in schema.org)
4. Model sold-out or nearly sold-out events.	Add two new values, "Limited" and "SoldOut", to the schema.org/ItemAvailability enumeration

1. Canceled/rescheduled events

Add three new properties:

- **eventStatus (Text)**: this property is only required if the event is canceled or rescheduled. It however can be used for tentatively scheduled events and events that are scheduled with a definite time. The property can take five possible values: **canceled**, **rescheduled**, **postponed**, **tentative**, and **current**. Current is optional as it is the default. Notes:

- When an event is listed as canceled the whole event is considered canceled. This means that all the dates for that event are canceled. This is the behavior we observe today on sites today. They will create individual events if there is a canceled instance.
- Although this field superficially resembles the proposed schema.org/ActionStatus, it is used quite differently in practice and should not be conflated.
- **previousStartDate (Date)**: this property is used in conjunction with eventStatus for rescheduled or canceled events. This property contains the previously scheduled start date. For rescheduled events, the startDate property should be used for the newly scheduled start date. In the (rare) case of an event that has been postponed and rescheduled multiple times, this field may be repeated.
- **previousEndDate (Date)**: this property is used in conjunction with eventStatus for rescheduled or canceled events. This property contains the previously scheduled end date. For rescheduled events, the endDate property should be used for the currently scheduled end date, whereas for canceled events, the endDate property should be left blank.

How date fields should be filled in:

eventStatus	startDate / endDate	previousStartDate / previousEndDate	Notes
"current"	yes		eventStatus is optional in this case
"canceled"		yes	either field is fine for date info but previousStartDate / previousEndDate is more clear
"rescheduled"	new	old	
"postponed"		yes	either field is fine for date info but previous is more clear
"tentative"	yes		

Why the change?

This helps with normalization of events across sites and prevents systems from showing bad/stale data. This is a particularly nasty problem because even if many sites remove old events, some others on the web do not, so it is algorithmically hard to tell if the old event still exists.

2. Support for event categories as a property

Add one new property: **eventCategory (Text)**

The new property would permit sites to specify the event's category as part of `schema.org/Event`, as an alternative to using subtypes to indicate the category. This model is more appropriate and simpler, as event sites generally format events using one event template regardless of their category. Furthermore, an event may belong to multiple categories ("theater", "dance", "kid-friendly"); this is natural to model using a repeated text property. In practice, the current categorical subtypes of `schema.org/Event` (`BusinessEvent`, `ChildrensEvent`, `ComedyEvent`, `DanceEvent`, `EducationEvent`, `Festival`, `FoodEvent`, `LiteraryEvent`, `MusicEvent`, `SaleEvent`, `SocialEvent`, `SportsEvent`, `TheaterEvent`, and `VisualArtsEvent`) are little used and should be de-emphasized in favor of `eventCategory`.

3. How to link to official event pages

This is not a change to the existing spec, but simply a clarification of how to link to the url of the event's web page:

- Use the "schema.org/sameAs" property to link to the official page of the event, typically on another site.
- Use the "schema.org/url" property to link to the event details page on the same site containing the markup.

4. Modeling sold-out or nearly sold-out events

There is already a natural place to model an event's availability status: on the event's offers, using the **availability** property of `schema.org/Offer`. That property has an enumerated range of `schema.org/ItemAvailability`, which currently provides these possible values: { `Discontinued`, `InStock`, `InStoreOnly`, `OnlineOnly`, `OutOfStock`, `PreOrder` }. We propose adding two new values to that enumeration to better serve the events use case:

- `SoldOut`
- `Limited`

Both of these would have natural application to both event ticket and physical product availability.