EDItEUR

Minutes of the ONIX for Books: International Steering Committee

1400-1600 20th April 2010 London Book Fair

Present

Michael Holdsworth (Chair)
Graham Bell, HarperCollins
Mark Bide, EDItEUR
Francis Cave, EDItEUR
Laurent Dervieu, Electre
Tim Devenport, EDItEUR
Brian Green, International ISBN Agency

Stella Griffiths, EDItEUR
Peter Kilborn, BIC
David Martin, EDItEUR
Marinus Ploos van Amstel, Centraal Boekhuis
Patrick Steenvoorden, Centraal Boekhuis
Howard Willows, Nielsen

1. Minutes of the previous meeting (13 October, Frankfurt Book Fair) and matters arising

Owing to the restriction on flights into the UK which had resulted in a low attendance it was agreed that this would be an informal meeting and that **a telephone conference meeting would be arranged at a later date.**

Mark Bide introduced Graham Bell as EDItEUR's Chief Data Architect designate who would take up post from 1 June. Graham was welcomed to his first meeting by all the other delegates present. Michael Holdsworth announced that this would be his last meeting and that he would be resigning as chair of the ONIX for Books International Steering Committee. Mark Bide informed the meeting that the new Board of EDItEUR would appoint a new Chair in due course. It was also **noted** that it was 10 years since the first ONIX release had been published.

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 13 October 2009 at the Frankfurt Book Fair were informally approved. There were no matters arising from the minutes which would not arise elsewhere in the agenda.

2. ONIX for Books implementation

2.1 ONIX 3.0 implementation progress
Action: the reports would be summarised and circulated as a single document

2.2 Implementation support – how can EDItEUR best facilitate and support implementation?

David Martin explained EDItEUR sometimes received requests for examples of ONIX files but currently only made a simple, single record sample file available on its website. Providing a more extensive sample file was problematic owing to the variations in local practice and requirements; and it was impractical for the EDItEUR team to verify the accuracy of third-party sample files. Once the enhanced schema (see 4.3 below) was available for use, EDItEUR could consider providing an area on the website where sample files submitted by or through national groups would be made available. Before accepting them for posting online, EDItEUR would check that the files passed validation against the enhanced schema.
Action: To be followed up when the enhanced schema is tested and ready for use.

3. Potential new developments

3.1 International best practice guidelines
This item was held over for future discussion.

3.2 Simplifying ONIX for smaller participants – standard conversion tool?

EDItEUR had received a proposal about providing a means that could assist smaller participants to participate in ONIX, for example by providing mechanisms for converting metadata held in .xls spreadsheets into ONIX. BookNet Canada had already developed such a tool in conjunction with a standard spreadsheet template for use in their markets. One possibility would be for EDItEUR to develop a more generic toolkit enabling it to be more widely adopted. In addition, it was suggested that a suite of documentation to help new implementers get started with ONIX could also be developed. Francis Cave proposed preparing an abstract data model as this would be more accessible to those seeking to implement ONIX than the detailed XML schema.
Actions: EDItEUR to investigate feasibility of developing generic toolkit. EDItEUR to consider the viability of developing introductory documentation for new implementers as well as of a data model.

4. ONIX for Books developments

4.1 Release 3.0 report
4.2 Code lists Issue 11

It was **noted** that Code list issue 11 had been released. No requests had been received as yet that would prompt plans for code list issue 12.

4.3 Possible new requirements in ONIX 3.0

- Proposed extension to ONIX 3.0 for "digital releases" *(paper circulated in advance)*
  The paper which David Martin had prepared and circulated in advance of the meeting had generated considerable discussion. As background to the paper's proposals, he explained that there were concerns about the integrity of ONIX for Books if users tried to adapt the format in a non-standard way in order to cope with the situation where publishers used the same ISBN to identify all available formats of an e-book and in some cases to identify a "release file" that was not itself traded but which was the base file to which intermediaries added specific DRM to create individual products. Treating a product and a digital release as instances of the same type of entity meant creating a category error in ONIX. Reaction to the paper from some groups such as BIC and BISAC had in general been unsupportive. Although they would not block the proposals, there was as yet little or no support for the ISBN International Agency suggestion of a distinctive identifier for digital releases, and members had seen no immediate benefit in extensions to the ONIX format.

  There was some uncertainty as to the precise situation in individual countries and **national group representatives agreed to continue the discussion with publishers and other partners in the supply chain in their respective countries.** EDItEUR would postpone any work on developing extensions to the format to support the description of a digital release pending further discussion at the proposed telephone conference with all national groups. However, there was wide agreement that it remains critical to guard the integrity of ONIX messaging, and that everyone would work to discourage trading partners from adopting non-standard implementations as "work rounds" and would report these to EDItEUR as providing requirements for future development.

- **Enhanced schema for validation of ONIX business rules**
  Francis Cave informed the meeting that a beta test version of a Schematron expression of the ONIX 3.0 schema was now ready. More than simple schema validation (production of a "well-formed ONIX message"), Schematron was capable of checking ONIX files for consistency against business rules (for example not only that the ISBN identifier field was populated but also that the ISBN was valid). Francis Cave stated that the Schematron expression would be announced on the ONIX implementation list and in the next EDItEUR newsletter and invited national group members to volunteer to undertake testing of the beta version.
  Action: The national groups of UK and France volunteered to undertake testing. Netherlands expressed a strong interest, subject to checking with internal colleagues.

- **Extensions to Content Item functionality**
  It was **agreed** to postpone further work on this until such time as demand for it emerged. It had originally been requested by one particular ONIX user but that organisation had gone into administration in the meantime.

- **Coverage of printed music**
  It was **agreed** to postpone further work on this for the time being pending further concrete interest.

- **Standard file naming for supporting resources**
  This item was **not discussed** as Jesús Peraita was unable to attend the meeting

5. **Committee structure and terms of reference of committees** *(final versions)*
   5.1 **Terms of reference of International Steering Committee**
   5.2 **Terms of reference of national Committees**
   5.3 **Formation and terms of reference of proposed technical Committee**
   These were taken as approved and had now been published on the EDItEUR website (www.editeur.org). Terms of reference for the ONIX for Books International Steering Committee would be strengthened over the summer.
   Action: Mark Bide to revise

6. **Any other business**
   Mark Bide thanked Michael Holdsworth for his contribution to and chairmanship of the ONIX for Books International Steering Committee over the last ten years.

7. **Next meeting (Wednesday 6 October, 14:00 to 15:30, Frankfurt Book Fair, room to be confirmed)**