

Minutes of the ONIX for Books International Steering Committee

13:30 – 15:00 Tuesday 16 April 2013, London Book Fair, Marlborough Room

Present

Luc Audrain	Hachette Livre	Giulia Marangoni	AIE
Graham Bell	EDItEUR	Tuula Pelkonen-Tiri	Kirjavalitys
Liv Berg	Den Norske Bokdatabasen	Jesús Peraita	DILVE
Mark Bide	EDItEUR	Christer Perslöv	Bokrondellen
Maria Börman	Bokrondellen	Simonetta Pillon	Informazioni Editoriali
Erik-Jan Bulthuis	CB	Frank Sallieu	Meta4Books
Francis Cave	EDItEUR	Henning Schoenenberger	Springer
Piera Costantini	Informazioni Editoriali	Heidi Segtnan	Den Norske Bokdatabasen
Laurent Dervieu	Electre	Len Vlahos	BISG
Simon Edwards	BIC	Charlotte Whitbread	BIC
Emad Eldeen Elakehal	Elkotob.com	Nicole van Wijhe	CB
Noah Genner (Chair)	BookNet Canada	Howard Willows	Nielsen
Uwe Janssen	KNV	Jon Windus	Nielsen
Anna Lionetti	AIE	Nick Woods	EDItEUR

Welcome and introductions

As Chair, Noah Genner opened the meeting and welcomed participants. Each delegate introduced themselves to the International Steering Committee. The Chair asked whether there were any changes to the agenda. There were no changes requested and the agenda was approved.

1. Minutes from ISC Meeting 10 October 2012, Frankfurt Book Fair

The minutes of the meeting were circulated following the Frankfurt Book Fair and again shortly before this meeting. The Chair asked if delegates were happy with the minutes of the previous meeting and whether there were any questions. The minutes of the previous meeting were then duly approved.

2. Report on current ONIX developments

2.1. *Written Report*

Graham Bell began by welcoming all participants, particularly new delegates to the meeting of the International Steering Committee. He drew delegates' attention to the separate activity report, but outlined some specific parts of the report:

2.2. *Release of codelists 19 and 20, proposals for codelists 21*

Graham spoke first about codelists issue 19. Release of issue 19 immediately followed the last meeting. Since then codelists issue 20 has also been released, and from this list Graham drew the Committee's attention to two updates contained within this issue:

Support for returns conditions - a list of returns conditions specific to the United States was already in existence. This has now been supplemented by a generic set of codes. These are for use where, but only where, the codes from the United States returns conditions – codelist 66 – do not apply.

Rental periods - these can now also be specified. They are mostly for use with e-books, though not exclusively. There are two ways of describing rental periods. The International Steering Committee would recommend recording unique identifiers for each product and rental period, but recognises that this approach isn't suitable for everyone and rental options for a single product and multiple periods can now be described <PriceConditions>.

Graham then noted that codelists issue 21, a small and straightforward update to the codelists, will be discussed during this meeting.

2.3. *ONIX Training Programme*

Graham has developed EDItEUR's training programme for ONIX significantly in recent months. The training was first delivered publicly with Book Industry Communication in the United Kingdom, and recent courses have been delivered on behalf of Book Industry Study Group, BookNet Canada and by Kirjalvalitys Oy. A total of 150 people have attended ONIX training courses in the last couple of months. Graham has been pleased with the success of the courses, which have proven to be valuable for EDItEUR. For example, they encourage the consistent application of ONIX, and increase the range of people with ONIX knowledge. In addition to these supported courses, Graham has also done training with a couple of other organisations 'in-house', where the organisation can supply enough delegates for a dedicated session. Len Vlahos noted that the training was very good and extremely useful. Graham thanked Len, and noted that EDItEUR is very happy to discuss future training opportunities with any of our national groups.

2.4. *Updates to ONIX 3.0 Implementation and Best Practice Guide*

In cases where the specification doesn't contain enough explanation or examples, or if EDItEUR receives questions about the specification from our mailing lists, then we make additions and clarifications in our *Best Practice Guidelines*. Although the guidelines are big, they contain lots of clear illustrations about the use of ONIX.

2.5. Updates to ONIX 3.0 Schema files

Graham advised the International Steering Committee that he has continued to make some minor updates to schemas – these changes have been made to the schema to ensure that it checks the specification more thoroughly. There may be further minor tightening of the schema in future.

2.6. Continuing development of Schematron

This is an area in which EDITEUR has undertaken a lot of work recently. Schematron is a more advanced check of an ONIX file and represents the next step beyond the schema (XSD or RNG). Graham has built on earlier work by Francis Cave. The Schematron can capture business rules (which could be implicit) that cannot be checked by the schema. Graham noted that the Schematron is for use with ONIX 3, but that others have taken pieces from it and adapted it for ONIX version 2.1: although EDITEUR doesn't intend to work on a Schematron for ONIX 2.1 in view of next year's sunset date, we are happy for other organisations to develop such work. The accompanying activity report lists some of the things that the Schematron checks (but the schema doesn't.) Nicole van Wijhe asked whether this could be used as a testing tool. In response Graham advised that it is actually quite quick: checking 3,000 records takes only 30 seconds, fast enough for production use provided one has enough memory. Noah noted that BookNet Canada processed 100,000 records in about an hour, and already uses the Schematron in production. There are currently around 200 rules, plus many more best practice rules. Our plan is to keep adding to the Schematron, and the ultimate aim is to effectively have two Schematrons: one for adherence to the rules of an ONIX message and a second for best practice. We are into several iterations of a test version but we aren't ready yet for a 'version 1.0'. Francis closed the discussion, asking whether version 1 will have a precise human readable version of what it checks, and Graham confirmed that version 1 will be documented, including a list of the checks performed.

2.7. Outline of ONIX for Books Acknowledgement message

Full details on this proposal are described in the specific paper distributed ahead of this meeting, but Graham briefly described the initial development of a potential ONIX for Books acknowledgement message. The present system, whereby a sender has no way of knowing whether a message has been actioned, is clearly workable, but not ideal. An acknowledgement message would allow the sender to know what action the recipient has taken.

2.8. Use of ONIX codelist terms in Linked Data

An introduction to Linked Data was provided at the Frankfurt meeting last October but progress since then hasn't been as fast as we'd have hoped. The intention is to create URIs for each entry in the codelists. Although Graham noted that this work has been done, we don't yet have a live website. The project is still ongoing.

2.9. *Priority for the coming months*

Graham noted that, from his activity report, the three things in particular we will work on for the future are: improvements to the Schematron, codelist revisions and the SKOS/ linked data work.

The priority for the next codelist revision was then discussed. There are publishers who are thinking about taking 'Open Access' models and arrangements from the serials sector and using them for monographs. The business model revolves around receiving money from authors or funding agencies. We will need to specify a zero price to enable description of such eventualities, and we may need to add a few codes to cover funders. The structure of <Contributor> fits for funders (although Len and Graham discussed whether it would be more appropriate to create in 'publisher role' instead; Francis mentioned that serials has the concept of a 'grant maker', whilst Emad Eldeen Elakehal noted that the role of dedicatee is common in Arabic world.) Any new codes will be included in the proposed revision for issue 22. Graham invited delegates to let EDITEUR know if open access monograph publishing is happening in their country. Open access publishing is happening in the Netherlands, and Henning Schoenenberger confirmed that it is happening in Germany too.

3. Proposals for ONIX for Books Codelists Issue 21

Graham circulated the codelists issue 21 to national groups at the end of February. As there were no questions, the International Steering Committee ratified the publication of issue 21.

Graham noted that there are some changes to list 139 - the 'list of sales outlets' - at the request of the French ONIX Group, which has changed since the last documentation was issued. These are simply further additions to list 139.

Henning began a discussion about an existing availability code, specifically that when Springer takes ebooks from the market, the only code that exists is 'out of print' but this is not appropriate for e-books. What does the International Steering Committee think? Graham acknowledged the point and asked: is the withdrawal of an ebook the same as a physical book being 'out of print'? Do we think that they are semantically different? Emad, Luc Audrain and Uwe Janssen all expressed a preference for a different code and Mark noted that 'out of commerce' is critical in law to make sure it is possible to identify *permanent* withdrawal from market. Len then suggested the deprecation of the 'out of print' code for physical products, to be replaced by a new term such as 'permanently withdrawn from market' (for example.) Jesús Peraita raised the issue that when a publisher declares a product as 'out of print' there are some consequences which mean that a publisher may be reluctant to do so even if in reality it is the case. Graham agreed, noting that publishers often use 'temporarily unavailable' instead.

Noah asked for the group's consensus for a proposal for a new code, which was obtained, and Graham agreed to will circulate a definition of this new code to the group. [It was subsequently incorporated into Issue 21 of the codelists.]

4. ONIX for Books Acknowledgement message

Graham circulated a paper on this topic, which grows out of decisions and comments during the last meeting and, more recently, discussions of a message structure on a closed mailing list. The acknowledgement message is intended to be lightweight and allows a message recipient to pass back limited information: who is sending the reply, who it is going to, what errors there are to the whole message, what record-level errors there are, etc. The recipient may also want to pass back hints about how the message could be improved – 'you should change the subject category to this to sell more copies!' For this message the beginnings of documentation in XSD, DTD RNG now all exist.

Graham asked for comments from the group, noting that the next stage after this will be piloting. Should the International Steering Committee first approve a version 0.9? Nicole asked for more examples than currently exist. Graham and Francis discussed the question of presentation if many options were available for the recipient to describe the message quality: a long message that repeats notification of the same errors every time they occur versus a shorter message. Noah confirmed that we would want the possibility of stating 'this error appears x number of times' – in other words we need a repeatable ID point. Graham and Nicole discussed the record status error code. This has not been built out yet, but would follow 'fatal' error or 'some errors - can process record but not certain fields'. (i.e. we could have 'ok for ISBN registration but not commercial'). Howard Willows asked for Nielsen to be added to the piloting; Len indicated he can think of two potential partners for BISG to pilot with; Luc and Laurent Dervieu also expressed interest in this pilot. Graham agreed that, although the mailing list would be kept closed to avoid anyone accidentally implementing this, he will add whoever wants to be on list on request.

Graham closed by advising that, once the structure is settled for a pilot, we would normally publish a 0.9 (pilot version) on the website. The International Steering Committee agreed to aim to finalise this by autumn/ winter 2013.

5. Outline for development of 3.0.2

Since Frankfurt Book Fair, some suggestions for changes have come in that may be substantive enough to trigger an ONIX 3.0.2: there changes are listed in the paper circulated with the agenda. Although none of the changes are particularly urgent, Graham asserted that perhaps we should consider a new release. He then discussed some of the changes in more detail:

He specifically referenced the possible inclusion of a 'no prefix' flag. As present the problem is that one is unable to tell, in the case of a record without a title prefix (such as A or The),

whether this is genuinely true or whether the sender's system just cannot differentiate between a record with a prefix and one without.

The next suggestion relates to the fact that ONIX 3.0 can associate contributors with a place such as Canada or British Columbia but not as precisely as the town. The proposal would be to allow such an option but as a text element.

Open Access arrangements were covered elsewhere.

Next came Price Condition Structure. In other words, 'You can purchase this product only if you have already purchased this product.' A real world example is the comments about the book, which you can't buy without purchasing the book itself.

Lastly, Graham spoke about a Price Identifier. This would fall in with the ebook rentals changes that have already been implemented.

Graham concluded that nobody is demanding these changes now. However, the five changes mentioned would be useful in ONIX. All changes would be optional and therefore there would be no backwards compatibility issues. The aim here is to release on the second anniversary of the release of ONIX 3.0.1 in January 2014. The International Steering Committee approved both the principle of a 3.0.2. release and the suggested timetable.

6. Any Other Business

Noah asked for updates from the national groups:

Len noted that in the United States adoption of ONIX 3 is picking up, but is still slower than we would have liked. They have been busy with their Best Practices document (for the US and Canada), which it is hoped will be approved shortly and released in the summer.

Uwe advised that in Germany MvB, the National Library and wholesalers are also working on a best practices document for ONIX 3.0 with the aim to publish at the 2013 Frankfurt Book Fair. Their ultimate aim is that all parties should accept ONIX 3.0 by the 2014 Frankfurt Book Fair (the sunset of ONIX 2.1 is the end of 2014.)

Luc noted that France is exploring the fact that ONIX records could be put into EPUB 3 files. There is great long-term use here, especially for libraries. Laurent confirmed that for France the change from ONIX 2.1 to 3 is expected to occur during the summer, and already there are increasing ONIX 3 distributions into Electre. They have also just finished a French translation of the codelists.

Graham updated the ISC regarding the Japan group (who were absent from the meeting.) Their FBIC publishing system was updated to ONIX 3 within the last month.

Piera Costantini advised that in Italy publishers are using ONIX 3 for ebooks, but still ONIX 2.1 for printed books. They are currently translating the codelists into Italian.

Nicole talked about the situation in the Netherlands: they are supporting both ONIX 2.1 and 3 but this is quite costly. They have therefore announced that ONIX 2.1 will be stopped in 2015 altogether, and they are actively encouraging publishers and booksellers to use ONIX 3.

Howard spoke about United Kingdom group activities. The group met recently, and decided that we should actively promote ONIX 3 implementation.

Emad talked about metadata and standards that can be used in the Arab world. They are beginning to actively promote ONIX 3 and they hope to encourage representations from other countries.

Noah advised that, although take-up of ONIX 3 is still slow in Canada, they are working closely with Kobo regarding certification for ebooks on 3.0.

7. Next Meeting

Nick advised that the next meeting will be held during the Frankfurt Book Fair on Wednesday 9 October 2013 in Room Alliance.