

Project Document Cover Sheet

FINAL REPORT

Project

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Electronic expression of Licensing Terms: XML Expression of a Publisher / Library License

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Executive Summary

This proposed project was designed as a follow-on to another JISC PALS2 metadata project, *Electronic expression of Licensing Terms: XML Expression of a Publisher / Library License*. The initial project delivered an analysis of the Wiley InterScience Enhanced Access License for Academic Users, an equivalent *ONIX Publications License (ONIX-PL)* representation in the form of an XML message together with definitions of all the terms and appropriate tables of values and an extended version of the *ONIX for Licensing Terms* data dictionary.

The aims of the current project were to promote the benefits of electronic expression of licensing terms to both libraries and publishers, examine the difficulties that not-for profit and smaller publishers, including learned societies, might have in generating an XML version of their library licenses and show how tools and services could be developed to support them.

The need to develop such tools became increasingly clear during the initial project as the complexity of the ONIX-PL message, if it is to be able to express any publisher/library license, emerged. This was emphasised in interviews and discussion with publishers and libraries.

The first work package and deliverable of the project was the drafting and distribution of a promotional piece in the format of the ALPSP "Advice Note" notice, attached as [appendix 1](#), posted on the ALPSP website and circulated to ALPSP, PA and PLS members. The "advice note" included a call for publishers interested in participating in the discussions to contact ALPSP or BIC. This promotional activity was repeated at presentations at the London Book Fair and UK Serials Group annual conference.

As a result, five publishers, offering a useful cross-section of academic publishing, were selected for interview regarding the benefits to them of implementing ONIX-PL and the specification of tools to facilitate the expression of their licenses into the ONIX-PL format:

Cambridge University Press
Oxford University Press
Rockefeller University Press
Royal Society of Chemistry
Royal Society of Medicine Press

The larger publishers were included since it had emerged from discussion at presentations that even the largest publishers would require tools to enable them to produce the XML licenses.

An initial outline draft of functional requirements, attached as [appendix 2](#), was produced as input to the publishers' individual interviews. Notes of the interviews with these publishers are attached as [appendix 3](#).

Since an important part of the project was an assessment of potential benefits and issues for libraries, a workshop session on the subject was held at Loughborough University on 22 May. By agreement with Loughborough University, the workshop attendance was widened to include representatives from Nottingham, de Montfort and Leicester Universities.

The workshop was extremely valuable and raised some interesting issues. It also became clear in the workshop that libraries could benefit significantly from the license editing tools as they would wish to map paper licenses into the ONIX-PL format for ingestion into their own Electronic Resource Management systems. They would also like to map their own licensing policies to allow for machine comparison of terms. A report of the workshop is attached as [appendix 4](#).

A well-attended seminar on Standards for the Electronic Expression of Licensing Terms was held in London on 5 July with a balanced mix of around 60 publishers and libraries. The program and attendance list are attached as [appendix 5](#) and the Powerpoint presentations as [appendix 6](#). The discussion at the seminar fed into the final draft of the *Functional requirements and design specification for an ONIX-PL license expression drafting system*, attached as [appendix 7](#).

The specification is for a system that would allow both licensors and licensees to create ONIX-PL expressions of their licenses and to revise drafts in the negotiation process. The system is based on the use of a library of “public” templates which can be modified using clause sets to create new “private templates” that will be precise expressions of a user’s license. A major requirement that emerged from the interviews with publishers and discussion with libraries was for the system to distinguish between the levels of authority required for license development, preparation and approval. In each case, the system will be required to present appropriate functionality to the user according to their role and authority status.

It is proposed that web browsers be used to provide a user-friendly graphical user interface and that two views of the license expression should be supported. These would be a form view for creating the license expression and a page view for review, comparison with original licenses and printout.

Public templates, the latest version of the ONIX_PL schema and the ONIX for Licensing Terms Dictionary will be held remotely, probably on the EDItEUR website so Internet access will be required, although working copies may be cached locally.

It is hoped that prototype tools will be rapidly developed, and joint funding has been requested from JISC, the Publishers Licensing Society and EDItEUR for their development.

Background

As the number of the digital resources in library collections grows, libraries have increasing difficulty complying with the widely differing license terms applied to resources by their creators and publishers. The ability to express these terms in a standard XML format, link them to digital resources and communicate them to users has become a pressing need with benefits to both publishers and libraries, including:

- Increased visibility of usage rights
- Instant answers to questions on terms (e.g. Can I make 20 copies of this article?)
- Easier analysis of licenses and their terms
- Savings in administrative time dealing with the above issues
- Increased interoperability between publisher, intermediary and library systems
- Improved compliance with licenses

EDItEUR, BIC’s international counterpart, is developing a family of standards for the communication of licensing terms, *ONIX for Licensing Terms*, based on a single data dictionary and facilitating the communication of licensing terms in various different business situations. As a first step, building on the work of the Digital Libraries Federation’s Electronic Resource Management Initiative (ERMI) and the joint EDItEUR / NISO work on ONIX for Serials, an *ONIX Publications License* format is being developed to provide a standard XML message for the communication of licensing terms for electronic resources between a publisher and a user institution (e.g. an academic institution or consortium) in either direction, either directly or through a subscription agent. The format will allow a license to be expressed electronically as a standard XML document that can be loaded into an electronic resources management system maintained by the receiving institution.

Another JISC PALS2 metadata project, *Electronic expression of Licensing Terms: XML Expression of a Publisher / Library License*, delivered an analysis of the Wiley InterScience Enhanced Access License for Academic Users, an equivalent *ONIX Publications License (ONIX-PL)* representation in the form of an XML message together with definitions of all the terms and appropriate tables of values and an extended version of the *ONIX for Licensing Terms* data dictionary. The need for tools and services to enable ONIX-PL license expression to be drafted was identified as an essential next step and this current project was designed to provide functional requirements for such a tool.

Aims and Objectives

The aim of the project were to promote the benefits of electronic expression of licensing terms, examine the difficulties that publishers, including learned societies, might have in generating an XML version of their library licenses and show how tools and services could be developed to support them.

At the user end, the project will consider some of the potential uses of the ONIX for Licensing Terms messages in a receiving academic institution and will examine how the XML licensing messages can help users by enabling library systems to provide clearer and more immediate information about usage rights for specific digital resources.

Objectives were:

- To increase awareness in both publishers and libraries of benefits of electronic expression of licensing terms
- To improve understanding of the issues faced by smaller and not-for-profit publishers in generating ONIX for Licensing Terms XML versions of them
- To specify the tools and services required to facilitate XML expression of licenses
- To evaluate of the benefits of electronic expression of licensing terms to academic libraries
- To report on how the XML message can best be used to provide these benefits using stand-alone or integrated library systems

Methodology

The approach taken was a combination of interview and workshop sessions to assess the benefits of ONIX-PL and help define the functionality required by tools to support the drafting of ONIX-PL license expressions.

In addition a briefing paper was produced, presentations held at appropriate events and a workshop arranged to present the work and elicit feedback.

Implementation

Since the project brief was to assess and promote the benefits of standard electronic expression of publisher /library licenses and produce a specification for a drafting tool, implementation will follow as the next step. It is hoped that funding can be found to produce prototype tools that will allow licenses to be expressed in ONIX-PL format and exchanged between publishers and libraries. Several major library systems vendors have expressed interest in engaging in such piloting.

Outputs and Results

The project deliverables include:

- article on the potential benefits of ONIX for Licensing Terms aimed at smaller and medium publishers for publication as an ALPSP "Advice Note" and elsewhere
- report on interviews with publishers
- functional requirements and design specification for an ONIX-PL license expression drafting system
- report on results of workshop on library uses and interfaces evaluating the benefits of electronic expression of licensing terms to academic libraries
- seminar on results and wider implications for the expression of licensing terms

Outcomes

The project outcomes include:

- greater publisher and library awareness of the benefits of ONIX for Licensing terms to the whole supply chain for electronic resources
- clearer understanding of the potential barriers for publishers in providing machine readable XML-based licenses for libraries
- specification of a tool to enable both licensees and licensors to draft ONIX-PL licenses and better organise their license management systems
- greater understanding of the various library applications that machine readable licenses can enable
- funding offered by the US Digital Libraries Federation to map original ERMI terms to ONIX for Licensing Terms dictionary

Conclusions

The project has significantly increased awareness and interest in ONIX for Licensing Terms and the ONIX Publications License format among both publishers and libraries and their systems vendors. There is now no doubt of the value of a standard format for expressing and communicating licensing terms.

Interviews and workshop and seminar discussion have provided valuable input on the possible uses of the ONIX-PL message and influenced the functional specification for a drafting tool.

The functional requirements and design specification for an ONIX-PL license expression drafting system has been produced and will enable development of a prototype if funding can be found.

Implications

International support and involvement in the ONIX for Licensing Terms Publisher License format, demonstrated by the NISO/DLF, EDItEUR, PLS working party monitoring the work, provides a strong platform for its adoption as a standard in this area. However, the complexity of the format makes it difficult for publishers and libraries to use without drafting and ingesting software tools. On the library side, library management systems are developing electronic resource management (ERM) systems to deal with ingestion but there remains the problem of drafting the electronic license expressions.

Unless the tool described in this project can be produced, it is most unlikely that publishers will be able to produce electronic expressions of their licenses, leaving it to libraries to engage in the considerable manual work required to map paper licenses into their ERM systems.

Recommendations (optional)

We recommend the following further work:

- Further funding should be found to support development of the drafting system specified in this project
- Major international library systems vendors should be offered a technical workshop on the implementation of ONIX-PL within their ERM systems
- Funding should be sought to map major model licenses, such as the JISC model licenses and the DLF/CLIR license.

References

EDItEUR web site, for ONIX for LicensingTerms information and the latest version of ONIX-PL
http://www.editeur.org/onix_licensing.html

Electronic Resource Management: Report of the DLF ERM Initiative
<http://www.diglib.org/pubs/dlfermi0408/>

NISO/DLF/EDItEUR/PLS: Joint License Expression Working Group
http://www.niso.org/committees/License_Expression/LicenseEx_comm.html

Appendices

1. ALPSP “Advice Note”
[060315ALPSPadvicenote.doc](#)
2. Licensing editing tools initial outline
[License_editing_tool_v0.9.1_functional_requirements.doc](#)
3. Interviews with publishers
[060806 JISC2_publisher_interviews.doc](#)
4. Loughborough library workshop report
[workshop_report_v4.doc](#)
5. Standards for the Electronic Expression of Licensing Terms: programme and attendance
[060705 Seminar programme_delegates.doc](#)
6. Standards for the Electronic Expression of Licensing Terms: Powerpoint Presentations
[060705_OLTpresentations.zip](#)
7. Functional Requirements and design specification for an ONIX-PL license expression drafting system
[ONIX-PL License drafting system specification v1.0.doc](#)