

DIGITAL OBJECT IDENTIFIERS -- An Update on the DOI



Moderator: Sandra K. Paul, President, SKP Associates

UPDATE ON THE INTERNATIONAL DOI FOUNDATION

By Craig Van Dyck

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Technologies Committee

The DOI System is a mechanism for permanent identification of digital content (the Digital Object Identifier), plus a resolution system to accurately direct Internet traffic to the content, using the DOIs. The DOI System utilizes the handle technology of the Corporation for National Research Initiatives (CNRI), run by Dr. Robert Kahn. The International DOI Foundation was formed in October 1997, to be responsible for governance of the DOI System. The first Director of the Foundation has recently been hired: Dr. Norman Paskin, formerly of Elsevier Science. The Foundation is now accepting Charter Members and General Members. The first Board of Directors will be elected by Members in the coming months. A prime activity of the Foundation is to run working groups that identify, address, and make recommendations to the Board concerning matters that affect the DOI System, including its further development. The formation of the working groups is beginning now; at this time, participation is not limited to Foundation members. Some of the initial working groups are on metadata, policy, and applications. Another key activity of the Foundation is to gather disparate publisher and user groups, and their disparate viewpoints, and to incorporate them into the development of the System. The working groups will be the prime venue for this. A brochure concerning membership in the Foundation is available at the CNI DOI session.

UPDATE ON THE ROLE OF THE INTERNATIONAL ISBN AGENCIES AND THE DOI

By Albert Simmonds

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At the Frankfurt Book Fair it was announced that the Digital Object Identifier (DOI) system had been turned over to the not-for-profit International DOI Foundation. Originally an initiative of the Association of American Publishers (AAP), the DOI had, for some time, been developed jointly by the AAP, the International Association of Scientific, Technical and Medical Publishers (STM) and the International Publishers Association (IPA). Immediately after Frankfurt, the International Advisory Panel of ISBN Agencies (ISBN International), in conference with ISSN International, voted unanimously to negotiate with the Foundation to become Directory Manager of the System. Talks between the two groups began immediately and progressed even further after Dr. Norman Paskin was named Director of the Foundation. ISBN International is now working with the Corporation for National Research Initiatives (CNRI) to effect a transfer of the system management. (CNRI, on whose Handle technology the DOI System is run, has been acting manager of the system during the negotiation period.) Although the details of the new relationship between the Foundation and ISBN International have not been fully worked out, it is expected that ISBN will be formally named Directory Manager in the near future. This function is to include not only the traditional ISBN function of distribution of prefixes, but also management of the Directory in which each DOI record resides. Going forward, ISBN will work with the Foundation to develop all aspects of the system and with a wide range of standards groups that are currently and will continue to develop standards necessary for full implementation of the DOI. In addition, ISBN will work with the various commercial entities in the market, including secondary publishers, to integrate DOI into their business functions.

ROLE OF NISO VIS-A-VIS THE DOI

By Priscilla Caplan

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Organization Standards Development Committee

The National Information Standards Organization (NISO) sponsored a series of workshops to clarify issues relating to the DOI in late 1997 and early 1998. Informal task groups were established to consider scope (what a DOI can refer to), syntax

(how a DOI is represented), rights metadata, descriptive metadata, application services, and vendor implementations. An investigation into the compatibility of the DOI system with Internet URN architecture was also initiated. Of all of these topics, syntax was found to be most ready for and appropriate to a formal standards process. The NISO voting membership was asked to approve DOI syntax as a work item in late February. If approved, a formal NISO standards committee will be established. Other active investigations will move to the auspices of other groups best suited to manage them, including the DOI Foundation and EDItEUR.

UPDATE ON BOOK AND SERIAL IDENTIFIER STANDARDS

By Julia Blixrud

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Standards Committees for the Development of the SICI and "BICI"

Application systems for transmission of information about published materials are dependent on the existence of established standard identifiers for existing materials. ANSI/NISO Z39.56, Serial Item and Contribution Identifier (SICI) has already demonstrated its utility within the DOI project. Publishers were able to generate large numbers of identifiers easily and quickly. The SICI and its book counterpart standard in development ("BICI") are examples of how standards based on principles of extension of existing standards and designed with the goals of interoperability and simplicity can be applied in new and developing information applications. This session will describe the SICI structure and how it has been used in the DOI and provide an update on activities regarding the development of the "BICI".