

INTERPARTY – a framework for the unique identification of parties in e-commerce

Introduction

INTERPARTY is an accompanying measure under the European Commission Information Society Technologies Programme (IST) Action Line 2, "*New methods of work and electronic commerce*". The project duration is 12 months, starting on 1 April 2002.

INTERPARTY will design and specify a framework for the unique identification of parties (natural and corporate names) in the Intellectual Property e-commerce chain. This is essential to the effective trading of intellectual property relating to cultural and information goods. The identities of parties are used in a number of contexts within the IP e-commerce environment, including:

- discovery of resources
- discovery of rights ownership and representation
- negotiation of agreements
- compliance with and performance of agreements

Two main questions need to be answered when a content producer, bibliographic agency, licensing agency, library or any other kind of participant in the IP commerce chain is confronted with a new name which requires to be uniquely identified. These are: "*Does the name have a registered identifier? If not, how can one be registered?*"

Any naming system must therefore provide participating agencies with a means of online, on-demand, checking of identities of parties. INTERPARTY will propose an exploitation plan and governance structure for a system – the *Directory of Parties* - which addresses these needs.

Deliverables

INTERPARTY deliverables will include:

- Analysis of data models existing schemes
- Identifiers and party metadata model
- Report on privacy and security mechanisms
- Specification for working demonstrator
- Demonstrator (alpha system)
- Business model, exploitation plan and governance proposals

Project partners

The INTERPARTY Project partners are: EDItEUR (project co-ordinator), The British Library, The Royal Swedish Library, International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA), BookData, KOPIOSTO

US unfunded partners are: Library of Congress, Online Computer Library Centre (OCLC), International DOI Foundation (IDF), Corporation for National Research Initiatives (CNRI).

Background

Work on the issue of identification of parties for e-commerce in cultural content has been mainly conducted in two sectors: collecting societies – bodies concerned with the collection of royalties on behalf of authors, creators and performers; and libraries, who have sought through name authority control to derive a range of benefits in their acquisitions and cataloguing workflow, procurement activities and in the provision of services to users

INTERPARTY, on the other hand, is concerned to establish a model and working system which can be used by bodies involved at all stages of the e-content lifecycle. It is intended that through the wide adoption of the new *Directory of Parties* system, interoperability and ease-of-use will be increased and the establishment of the necessary framework for the operation of e-content trading throughout the supply chain thereby enhanced.

The *Directory of Parties* as proposed by INTERPARTY could be used to underpin rights transactions across a wide range of creative media sectors. It will improve the performance and efficiency of licensing societies, libraries and any other organisation which relies to a significant extent upon unambiguous identification of names in its workflow or business processes.

To achieve this, INTERPARTY will build on the work of <indec> within the MRCS/INFO2000 programme, which has been concerned with developing a schema for the interoperability of data to support electronic commerce in intellectual property in a global network environment.

How the Directory will operate

The *Directory of Parties* must be neutral in respect of its relationships with existing interests. The operation and governance of a centralised *Directory of Parties* of the type envisaged will need to be distributed (and thus delegated) which increases the need for appropriate governance mechanisms. Ultimately, the most significant question relates to who should be enabled to establish unique identities. This raises the question of authentication of identity.

Registration of identities with the *Directory of Parties* should be mediated by a range of agencies. INTERPARTY will help to establish who can be allowed to declare and maintain metadata about a party and in what circumstances. The *Directory of Parties* will require mechanisms for the identification and resolution of disputes. The representation of bibliographic agencies, licensing agencies, libraries and standards implementation bodies within the INTERPARTY consortium and the need for consensual governance which this raises will contribute to a stronger understanding of these requirements.

The demonstration of an appropriately secure environment and set of procedures will be an important element. The operation of the *Directory of Parties* must be sensitive and responsive to the potential hazards which the Directory creates for personal privacy and commercial confidentiality. The establishment of standards relating to data quality assurance, authenticity and access will be a high initial priority within INTERPARTY.

The *Directory of Parties* is not proposed as a replacement for existing schemes for the identification of participants in the intellectual property domain where these already exist (eg, national library name authority files or systems oriented towards the needs of rights licensing) but as a means of effecting their interoperation.

By supporting the establishment of a system which enables unique identification of those engaged in rights transactions within e-commerce, INTERPARTY will put in place a key element of the standards infrastructure for e-commerce in intellectual property

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