

IDF and cIDF ANNOUNCE AIM OF COLLABORATION

Washington - Geneva, July 11, 2001. The International DOI Foundation (IDF: UK, Switzerland, US) and the Content ID Forum (cIDf: Japan) announce their intention to undertake discussions with a view to seeking harmonization of their work on identifiers for content in the digital environment.

cIDf

"Content ID", a set of well-defined metadata including a unique code embedded in each digital content item, guarantees content uniqueness and stabilizes content value. It creates an environment for open-type equipment that encourages active usage such as the creation of derivative products.

The Content ID Forum was established by Professor Dr. Hiroshi Yasuda at the University of Tokyo for the purpose of providing a strong mechanism for copyright management. The Forum is strengthening digital content commerce over networks and has been promoting global standards for about one year in cooperation with other standardization bodies throughout the world.

[cIDf](#) is a non-profit organization, founded in 1999, currently with 168 member organizations; the majority of members are from Japan and some are from the US and Korea. The members range over various interests of organizations such as technology companies, content producers, and intermediaries. A couple of large scale verification experiments are planned to be conducted, financially supported by the extra-departmental bodies of the Japanese government.

DOI

The Digital Object Identifier (DOI[®]) is a system for identifying and exchanging intellectual property in the digital environment, being implemented and developed by the International DOI Foundation (IDF). DOIs are persistent identifiers assigned to content in the form of digital objects, accompanied by a set of interoperable well-structured metadata and a managed distributed resolution system. IDF is a paid membership organisation, founded in 1998, open to any interested party. Membership fees support development of DOI infrastructure until migration to a self-funding operating federation, being developed by IDF, is complete. The Foundation is currently supported by approximately 50 member organisations from a broad geographic spread (USA, Europe, and Asia) and range of interests such as technology companies, content producers, and intermediaries. Large scale applications of DOI such as [CrossRef](#) are now live and registration agencies are being established internationally.

DOI and cIDf have been independent development activities. Each is developing a specifications and infrastructure for content identification and metadata which it hopes will be widely adopted and enable e-commerce services and content/rights transactions. The two activities recognize

many areas of common approach and shared understanding, including:

- the importance of unique identification in enabling commerce, including that of copyrighted items;
- the importance of naming content rather than locations such as URL;
- the convergence of all media types (images, video, audio, text, etc.) in a managed digital network, requiring interoperable standards for identification description and rights;
- the essential role of structured principles such as "Indecs Project" (<http://www.indecs.org>), in providing the basis for such interoperable metadata and hence building services;
- the need to articulate rights information in an automated and easy to use manner;
- the need for associated resolution systems (e.g. [The Handle System](#) developed by CNRI) to associate identifiers with current metadata, which may articulate services;
- the need for consistent policy development including the development of commercially feasible self-financing operation of identifier systems

There are currently differences between the systems that reflect their different approaches. Amongst areas of difference are:

- cIDf has a special interest in embedding identifiers within digital objects, whereas DOI assigns identifiers which are bound to digital objects as pointers via the resolution system.
- DOIs are opaque strings, which may or may not incorporate other identifiers, whereas CIDs are structured strings embodying a specific naming convention.
- CID's initial application focus was on video and images. DOIs initial area of application was text. Each has applicability to other media.

There are currently many standards-based and consortia-based activities relevant to the development of an infrastructure for digital commerce of content. Neither IDF nor cIDf envisage adoption of only one single standard for all content in all circumstances. However the close similarity of approach of these two major initiatives, each of which takes a practical view supported by a range of organizations and take an implementable identifier mechanism as the starting point, suggests that convergence rather than divergence of the two systems would benefit the wider community of users.

Recognizing the need to build on commonalities and reconcile differences with a view to interoperability, IDF and cIDf have agreed to undertake discussions to:

- Analyze each systems aims and match to fundamental requirements for identification systems.
- Analyze possible interoperability and collaboration possibilities at the level of shared logical components: numbering, description, resolution, and policy including business implementation.
- Enter into non-disclosure agreements to facilitate the exchange of information.
- Develop application profiles for use of one identifier with the other system, to demonstrate and experiment with interoperation.
- Jointly investigate issues such as business models for infrastructure usage and cost recovery
- Study existing approaches for interoperable metadata principles.
- Exchange information on system development.
- Build on existing open collaborations such as participation in MPEG-21 "core experiments".

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To demonstrate the DOI System and its underlying **Handle System®** technology, DOIs are used to identify the IDF's papers and other published material. The underlined text linking to the documents contains DOIs embedded in URLs that are resolved using a proxy server. They work with any browser.

The small blue buttons --  -- accompanying those links represent DOIs. Navigating with DOIs requires that the **CNRI Handle System Resolver** web browser plug-in be installed on your computer.

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