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About XrML

XrML - The Digital Rights Language for Trusted Content and Services

XrML - eXtensible rights Markup Language - is the Digital Rights Language of choice. XrML provides a universal method for securely specifying and managing rights and conditions associated with all kinds of resources including digital content as well as services.

XrML 2.0, announced on November 26, 2001, can be used in content-centric as well as service based business models. Rights and conditions can be securely assigned at varying levels of granularity to individuals as well as groups of individuals and the parties can be authenticated. In addition, the grants/licenses can be interpreted and enforced by the consumption application. XrML is designed to be used in either single tier or multi-tier channels of distribution with the downstream rights and conditions assigned at any level. In addition, the trust environment can also be specified in the language in order to maintain the integrity of the rights and conditions.

XrML 2.0 is extensible and fully compliant with XML namespaces using XML schema technology. XrML 2.0 extensions can be designed for specific industries or with the inclusion of other elements, such as resource-level metadata standards like ONIX and RDF. In addition, standards such as XSLT and XPath have been employed in XrML, and XML Signature and XML Encryption have been used for authentication and protection of the rights expressions. This extensibility makes the language scale with the complexity of business models captured. For more details on XrML, see "Technical Overview of XrML."

Based on years of research at Xerox Palo Alto Research Center (PARC), which invented the digital rights language concept, and backed by patented technology, XrML is currently governed by ContentGuard, Inc. XrML is the only Rights Language being used in commercially deployed solutions, including the DRM solutions from Microsoft.

ContentGuard has committed to give governance and control of XrML to the international standards community. This process has already begun. ContentGuard contributed XrML to MPEG-21, the OASIS Rights Language Technical Committee and the Open eBook Forum (OeBF). In each case they are using XrML as the base for their rights language specification. Furthest along is MPEG, where the process has reached Committee Draft. We have also recommended to other standards bodies to build on this work. ContentGuard will propose XrML to any standards organization seeking a Rights Language.

Because of this progress ContentGuard has frozen its release of XrML at Version 2.0. This is the final release ContentGuard expects to post to XrML.org. Working drafts of version 2.1, reflecting changes/upgrades to XrML version 2.0 Core, Standard extension (SX) and Content extension (CX - to become the MPEG extension) can be found on the MPEG web site. The Core and SX extension changes can also be found on the OASIS Rights Committee web site.

ContentGuard has recommended to the standards organizations that they agree on a process to maintain a single core and single SX extension set, and thereby improve interoperability and reduce redundancy. It is our expectation that this will be in place before any standards organizations release a final specification based on XrML.

ContentGuard will maintain and support version 2.0 until such time as it is replaced by a release from a standards body and is no longer needed by our customers.

In addition, the availability of the XrML 2.0 SDK from ContentGuard, Inc. allows developers to quickly and easily build XrML-based applications for commercial use in various hardware and software products. This tool will lower the cost of deployment and facilitate a higher degree of compliance with the standard.

Foundation technologies, such as XrML, will accelerate digital content distribution and Web Services initiatives by enabling interoperability between system components or services, and by enabling interoperability across business models used by the participants in the distribution value chain for digital goods or services. It also helps alleviate the concerns of being restricted to a technology platform, a business model, a media type, a format, a proprietary solution or a particular vendor.

We invite you to learn more about XrML - The Digital Rights Language and begin utilizing it in your trusted system development efforts today.

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