Open Group Standard

Open Data Format (O-DF), an Open Group Internet of Things (IoT) Standard



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Contents

1	Introduction1		
	1.1 Objective	1	
	1.2 Overview	1	
	1.3 Conformance	2	
	1.4 Normative References	2	
	1.5 Terminology	3	
	1.6 Future Directions	3	
2	O-DF Objects	4	
3	RESTful Use of the O-DF	8	
4	Inheritance Mechanism for Domain-Specific Data Models	10	
A	O-DF XSD Schema (Normative)	11	
В	Example O-DF Structures	14	
C	JSON Mapping and Examples	16	

List of Figures

Figure 1: Illustration of O-DF Element Hierarchy	2
Figure 2: Object Element	5
Figure 3: InfoItem Element	6
Figure 4: Value Element	6
Figure 5: <i>qlmID</i> Type	7
List of Examples	
Example 1: O-DF Structure	7
Example 2: Issuing an HTTP GET Request	8
Example 3: Response using the O-DF	8
Example 4: Result for a URL-Based Data Discovery Request using O-DF	
Semantics	8
Example 5: Object->Object->InfoItem->Value(s)	14
Example 6: Metadata about Refrigerator Power Consumption InfoItem	14
Example 7: Measurement Values for Refrigerator Power Consumption	15

Preface

The Open Group

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This Document

This document specifies the Open Data Format (O-DF), an Open Group Internet of Things (IoT) Standard. It has been developed and approved by The Open Group.

This document is structured as follows:

- Chapter 1 provides an introduction to the standard and describes conformance requirements, normative references, and terminology
- Chapter 2 describes the O-DF elements and attributes and how they are expected to be used
- Chapter 3 describes how the O-DF can be used directly in RESTful services
- Chapter 4 explains how to create domain-specific data models that are extensions of the O-DF
- Appendix A contains the XML Schema file
- Appendix B contains some example O-DF structures
- Appendix C shows a possible JSON mapping

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PMI

This O-DF specification is to a great extent based on the earlier PROMISE Messaging Interface (PMI), developed during the PROMISE EU FP7 project.

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Referenced Documents

Normative References

Normative references for this standard are defined in Section 1.4.

Informative References

The following documents are referenced in this standard:

- An Introduction to Quantum Lifecycle Management (QLM): Maximizing Business Value through Whole-of-Life Lifecycle Management, White Paper (W12A), November 2012, published by The Open Group; refer to: www.opengroup.org/bookstore/catalog/w12a.htm
- Open Group Internet of Things (IoT) Standard: Open Messaging Interface (O-MI), (C14B), October 2014, published by The Open Group; refer to: www.opengroup.org/bookstore/catalog/c14b.htm

1 Introduction

1.1 Objective

The Open Group Internet of Things (IoT) Standards have been developed to fill an interoperability gap identified in the context of the IoT, as explained in the White Paper: An Introduction to Quantum Lifecycle Management (QLM).

A great number of useful standards exist on the level of communications within a local network, within a specific domain, or for a limited purpose such as remote management of computers. However, at the moment of writing this specification, we have not been able to identify an appropriate standard that would address the higher-level requirements of the IoT. Such requirements are notably the need for any data sources (devices, machines, server-based systems, etc.) to be able to publish their available data and provide access to it in an easy and secure way, which includes the possibility to filter the data provided depending on the requester's identity, the context, etc.

The O-DF can be used for publishing the available data using ordinary URL (Uniform Resource Locator) addresses. O-DF structures can also be used for requesting and sending published data between systems, notably when used together with the O-MI standard.

In the IoT, information about a product or a "Thing" is often distributed over many different devices, systems, and organizations. The O-DF is intended to represent information about things in a standardized way that can be understood and *exchanged* in a universal way by all information systems that need to manage such IoT-related data. A data format structure typically does not contain complete information about a particular thing. Information about the same thing may be contained in several different data format structures. Object identifiers make it possible to link the data about a single thing that may be located in different information systems. An object identifier may be the only information that a data format structure contains about a particular thing.

The visibility and the access to data may depend on the object identifier used, as well as on the identity of the requesting party, as well as on the context of the request. This is why the object identifier data structure is of particular importance in any universal IoT standard.

1.2 Overview

The O-DF is specified using XML Schema. It defines a simple and extensible ontology that allows the creation of information structures that are similar to those of objects and properties in object-oriented programming. It is thereby generic enough for the representation of any object and information that is needed for information exchange in domains such as the IoT, lifecycle information management, etc.

An O-DF structure is a hierarchy with an *Objects* element as its top element, as illustrated in Figure 1. The *Objects* element can contain any number of *Object* sub-elements. *Object* elements are identified by at least one *id* sub-element. An *Object* may also have an optional *description*

sub-element. *Object* elements usually have properties, which are sub-elements called *Infoltem*, as well as *Object* sub-elements. The resulting *Object* tree can contain any number of levels. Chapter 2 provides detailed, normative descriptions of these elements.

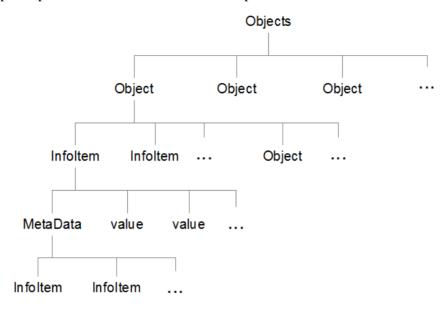


Figure 1: Illustration of O-DF Element Hierarchy

The O-DF is intended to be used for expressing information about "any" identifiable object (products, services, humans, ...). How the information is communicated is not a part of this standard. The communication media might be a file sent as an email attachment, on a USB stick, or any other kind of media. O-DF content can also be sent using REST-based services, SOAP, Java Message Service (JMS), the O-MI, and other kinds of messaging protocols. The O-DF can be used as a query and response format in such messaging; for instance, the O-MI specifies that a "read" request with an O-DF structure should be responded to with the next level in the hierarchy shown in Figure 1. As an example, a request with only an "Objects" element should return an O-DF response with the list of Object elements available, including at least the compulsory attributes and sub-elements (notably at least one id element).

1.3 Conformance

This standard specifies conformance requirements for the O-DF and its specification and use. Chapters 2, 3, and 4 and Appendix A are normative. Appendices B and C are informative.

1.4 Normative References

The following standards contain provisions which, through references in this standard, constitute provisions of the O-DF standard. At the time of publication, the editions indicated were valid. All standards are subject to revision, and parties to agreements based on this standard are encouraged to investigate the possibility of applying the most recent editions of the standards listed below. Members of IEC and ISO maintain registers of currently valid International Standards.

• XML Schema Part 2: Datatypes Second Edition, Ed. Biron & Malhotra; refer to: www.w3.org/TR/xmlschema-2.

1.5 Terminology

For the purposes of this standard, the following terminology definitions apply. When used in this way, these terms will always be shown in ALL CAPS; when these words appear in ordinary typeface they are intended to have their ordinary English meaning.

Can Describes a permissible optional feature or behavior available to the user or application. The feature or behavior is mandatory for an implementation that conforms to this document. An application can rely on the existence of the feature or behavior.

May Describes a feature or behavior that is optional for an implementation that conforms to this document. An application should not rely on the existence of the feature or behavior. An application that relies on such a feature or behavior cannot be assured to be portable across conforming implementations. To avoid ambiguity, the opposite of "may" is expressed as "need not", instead of "may not".

Must Describes a feature or behavior that is mandatory for an application or user. An implementation that conforms to this document shall support this feature or behavior.

Shall Describes a feature or behavior that is mandatory for an implementation that conforms to this document. An application can rely on the existence of the feature or behavior.

Should For an implementation that conforms to this document, describes a feature or behavior that is recommended but not mandatory. An application should not rely on the existence of the feature or behavior. An application that relies on such a feature or behavior cannot be assured to be portable across conforming implementations. For an application, describes a feature or behavior that is recommended programming practice for optimum portability.

Will Same meaning as "shall"; "shall" is the preferred term.

1.6 Future Directions

The Open Group IoT Standards will continue to be maintained by the QLM Work Group of The Open Group Platform 3.0TM Forum. They may be revised to correct errors or to incorporate changes based on implementation experience.

2 O-DF Objects

The XML Schema "odf.xsd" provides a formal specification for the O-DF. The schema contains annotations for Attributes and Child Elements that are identical to the ones in this standard. If there is any conflicting information between the schema file and this standard, then the information in the schema file is to be used.

The following units or formats SHALL be used in the O-DF to express the listed quantities. The *xs* namespace is defined in XML Schema Part 2: Datatypes Second Edition.

Table 1: O-DF Units and Formats

Value	Unit/Format
Date	Use xs:Date
Time	Use xs:dateTime
Duration	Use xs:duration However, it is defined in the schema where xs:duration should be used. For other durations, such as Time-To-Live (TTL), xs:double may be used and then the unit is seconds.
Other Values	SI units used by default.

As shown in Figure 1, all O-DF structures SHALL have *Objects* as their root element. An *Objects* element SHALL only have *Object* sub-elements. The most important attribute of an *Object* is *type*, which specifies what kind of object it is. An attribute MAY be used for specifying the object class. If an object class taxonomy is used, then it SHALL be indicated with the type attribute as a URL that points to the definition of the type; e.g., such as http://www.somewhere.com/taxonomy#theType. Example 1 shows a simple example of an O-DF structure.

Every *Object* SHALL have at least one sub-element called *id* that identifies the *Object*. An Object MAY have additional *id* elements. Such an identifier is known as an *object identifier*. An *object identifier* SHOULD be globally unique or at least unique for the specific application, domain, or network of the organizations involved. An optional *description* sub-element MAY also be included for providing a description of the *Object*, usually intended for human users.

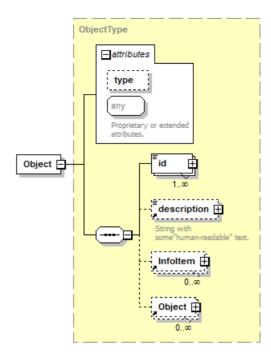


Figure 2: Object Element

The *Object*'s properties are included with an arbitrary number of *InfoItem* elements. *Object* elements MAY also include an arbitrary number of *Object* sub-elements (see Figure 2). The reason for calling properties "InfoItem", rather than using the name "Property" or some similar concept that is familiar from object-oriented programming, is that in the IoT an *InfoItem* can also be an event of some kind rather than just a simple value. The *name* attribute SHALL be used for defining the name of the *InfoItem*. Additional names – that is, synonyms or alternative names in different systems – MAY be provided as *name* sub-elements. As for *Object*, an attribute MAY also be used for specifying what the *InfoItem* represents.

Infoltem elements MAY contain optional sub-elements, as shown in Figure 3:

- name: additional names for the same InfoItem
 This feature may be used, for instance, if the same InfoItem is known under different names in different organizations or software.
- *description*: text that explains what the *InfoItem* represents, mainly intended for human users
- *MetaData*: sub-element that provides metadata information about the *InfoItem*, such as value type, units, and other similar information
- *value*: arbitrary number of values for the *InfoItem*, possibly with timestamps (Figure 4)

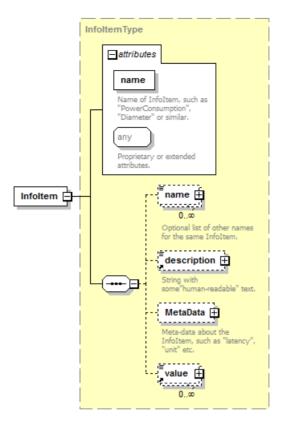


Figure 3: InfoItem Element

Even though it is possible to include *description*, *MetaData*, and *value* element(s) simultaneously for an *InfoItem*, it is usually not practical to do so. Metadata is typically requested only once when encountering a previously unknown *InfoItem*. The *MetaData* element MAY contain an arbitrary number of *InfoItem* elements. *MetaData* sub-elements are of *InfoItem* type because they are syntactically similar to *Object InfoItem* sub-elements, even though *MetaData InfoItems* are conceptually different from *Object InfoItems*. The *description* element could also be considered as metadata. However, it has been left as a separate element mainly due to earlier experience that has shown the utility of including a simple-to-use "free-form" text element for user interface and debugging purposes.

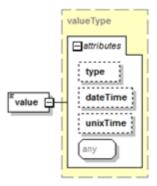


Figure 4: Value Element

Example 1 shows an O-DF structure that transmits two electrical power consumption measurements with timestamps for a refrigerator instance.

Example 1: O-DF Structure

In object-oriented programming, objects are aware of each other by object containment hierarchies as illustrated in Figure 1 and by reference or pointers. In the O-DF partial object descriptions in different structures are linked using the *Object id* sub-element (Figure 2). In the IoT the *id* does not refer to a specific memory location but to an IoT object whose information may be spread over several information systems and organizations. Different methods and systems have been proposed for the discovery of such distributed information. The simplest mechanism is to include a URL in the *id* itself. Other methods are still being developed for solving this issue. However, those are not in the scope of this standard.

Object identifiers and *InfoItem* names are specified using the *qlmID* type (Figure 5). The attributes of *qlmID* make it possible to express what standard or coding scheme the *id/name* uses, on what kind of media it is written (e.g., RFID tag, barcode, stamped, ...), and the beginning and end of validity of the identifier. Other information CAN be conveyed using attributes that are not defined in this standard. Especially for objects, the possibility to use more than one *id* is a common real-life requirement because the same "Thing" can often carry several different identifiers. For instance, a postal package may end up with several company-specific tracking numbers, an SSCC code, and other identifiers before reaching its destination.

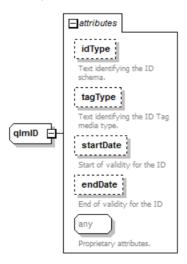


Figure 5: qlmID Type

3 RESTful Use of the O-DF

Due to the hierarchical nature of O-DF structures, they CAN be used for performing RESTful, URL-based information discovery and queries. An example of how this can be done using the UNIX "wget" utility is shown in Example 2, with a corresponding example response in Example 3. The response SHALL contain all compulsory attributes and sub-elements. It MAY also include other attributes and sub-elements.

Example 2: Issuing an HTTP GET Request

```
wget http://dialog.hut.fi/qlm/Objects/
```

Example 2 illustrates issuing an HTTP GET Request to the URL "http://dialog.hut.fi/qlm/" for querying the available information about the data source "Objects".

Example 3: Response using the O-DF

Example 3 shows an example response using the O-DF to request an Objects list, within the "Smart Home" domain.

The elements of the retrieved O-DF structure in Example 3 can be used for drilling further down into the object hierarchy where, for instance, the following URL:

```
http://dialog.hut.fi/qlm/Objects/Refrigerator123/
```

would return the list of *InfoItem* sub-elements and possible sub-objects of the object "Refrigerator123" as shown in Example 4.

Example 4: Result for a URL-Based Data Discovery Request using O-DF Semantics

¹ The URL "http://dialog.hut.fi/qlm/" is provided as an example of a valid URL of an O-MI node. The reader should not assume that a valid O-MI node would be continuously available at that address, nor that it would return the content shown in this standard.

Further drilling down in the O-DF structure (Example 2) can be done in similar ways, as for example:

- <URL>/Objects/Refrigerator123/id/ returns all the ids of Refrigerator123
- <URL>/Objects/Refrigerator123/PowerConsumption/returns the current power consumption value structure
- <URL>/Objects/Refrigerator123/PowerConsumption/value/returns the "raw" power consumption value
- <URL>/qlm/Objects/Refrigerator123/PowerConsumption/MetaData/returns the *MetaData* structure that corresponds to Refrigerator123's PowerConsumption
- <URL>/qlm/Objects/Refrigerator123/PowerConsumption/name/ returns the PowerConsumption element including all its *name* sub-elements
- etc.

More complex queries such as querying for values of several *Objects* and *InfoItems* in one go, or querying for historical values, requires the use of other kinds of querying mechanisms, such as those specified in the O-MI.

4 Inheritance Mechanism for Domain-Specific Data Models

At the time of publication, a domain-specific data model extension exists only for product and product lifecycle-related information. That data model is specified in a separate XML Schema file. Such domain-specific schema SHALL include the O-DF schema by the following line:

```
"<xs:include schemaLocation="odf.xsd"/>".
```

The following lines define that a new type called *omiPhysicalProduct* is an extension of *Object* and can be used in the same way as *Object*:

This signifies that *omiPhysicalProduct* elements can be used interchangeably with *Object* elements and that they inherit all the attributes and sub-elements of *Object*. Other attributes and sub-elements can then be defined for the *PhysicalProduct* type, which are particular for that domain. Similar extensions can be created for all other data types defined in the root data model schema.

The same extension mechanism SHALL be used for all other O-DF-compliant specifications. It is currently foreseen that such specifications will be defined at least for the healthcare domain.

A O-DF XSD Schema (Normative)

```
<?xml version="1.0" encoding="UTF-8"?>
<xs:schema xmlns:xs="http://www.w3.org/2001/XMLSchema"</pre>
xmlns="http://www.opengroup.org/xsd/odf/1.0/"
targetNamespace="http://www.opengroup.org/xsd/odf/1.0/"
elementFormDefault="qualified" attributeFormDefault="unqualified"
version="1.0">
    <xs:element name="Objects" type="ObjectsType">
        <xs:annotation>
            <xs:documentation>Data Model Root Element/xs:documentation>
        </xs:annotation>
    </xs:element>
    <xs:complexType name="ObjectsType">
        <xs:sequence>
            <xs:element name="Object" type="ObjectType" minOccurs="0"</pre>
maxOccurs="unbounded"/>
        </xs:sequence>
        <xs:attribute name="version" type="xs:string" use="optional">
            <xs:annotation>
                 <xs:documentation>Schema version used.</xs:documentation>
            </xs:annotation>
        </xs:attribute>
    </xs:complexType>
    <xs:complexType name="ObjectType">
        <xs:sequence>
            <xs:element name="id" type="QlmIDType" minOccurs="1"</pre>
maxOccurs="unbounded"/>
            <xs:element name="description" type="DescriptionType" minOccurs="0"</pre>
maxOccurs="unbounded"/>
            <xs:element name="InfoItem" type="InfoItemType" minOccurs="0"</pre>
maxOccurs="unbounded"/>
            <xs:element name="Object" type="ObjectType" minOccurs="0"</pre>
maxOccurs="unbounded"/>
        </xs:sequence>
        <xs:attribute name="type" type="xs:string" use="optional"/>
        <xs:anyAttribute processContents="lax">
            <xs:annotation>
                <xs:documentation>Proprietary or extended
attributes.</xs:documentation>
            </xs:annotation>
        </xs:anvAttribute>
    </xs:complexType>
    <xs:complexType name="InfoItemType">
        <xs:sequence>
            <xs:element name="name" type="QlmIDType" minOccurs="0"</pre>
maxOccurs="unbounded">
                <xs:annotation>
                    <xs:documentation>Optional list of other names for the same
InfoItem.</xs:documentation>
                </xs:annotation>
            </xs:element>
            <xs:element name="description" type="DescriptionType" minOccurs="0"</pre>
maxOccurs="unbounded"/>
            <xs:element name="MetaData" type="MetaDataType" minOccurs="0"</pre>
maxOccurs="unbounded">
                <xs:annotation>
```

```
<xs:documentation>Meta-data about the InfoItem, such as
"latency", "unit" etc.</xs:documentation>
                </xs:annotation>
            </xs:element>
            <xs:element name="value" type="ValueType" minOccurs="0"</pre>
maxOccurs="unbounded"/>
        </xs:sequence>
        <xs:attribute name="name" type="xs:string" use="required">
            <xs:annotation>
                <xs:documentation>Name of InfoItem, such as "PowerConsumption",
"Diameter" or similar.</xs:documentation>
            </xs:annotation>
        </xs:attribute>
        <xs:anyAttribute processContents="lax">
            <xs:annotation>
                <xs:documentation>Proprietary or extended
attributes.</xs:documentation>
            </xs:annotation>
        </xs:anvAttribute>
    </xs:complexType>
    <xs:complexType name="MetaDataType">
        <xs:sequence>
            <xs:element name="InfoItem" type="InfoItemType" minOccurs="0"</pre>
maxOccurs="unbounded"/>
        </xs:sequence>
    </xs:complexType>
    <xs:complexType name="DescriptionType">
        <xs:annotation>
            <xs:documentation>String with some"human-readable"
text.</xs:documentation>
        </xs:annotation>
        <xs:simpleContent>
            <xs:extension base="xs:string">
                <xs:attribute name="lang" type="xs:string" use="optional">
                    <xs:annotation>
                        <xs:documentation>Language of "description"
text.</xs:documentation>
                    </xs:annotation>
                </xs:attribute>
                <xs:anyAttribute processContents="lax">
                    <xs:annotation>
                        <xs:documentation>Proprietary or extended
attributes.</xs:documentation>
                    </xs:annotation>
                </xs:anyAttribute>
            </xs:extension>
        </xs:simpleContent>
   </xs:complexType>
    <xs:complexType name="QlmIDType">
        <xs:simpleContent>
            <xs:extension base="xs:string">
                <xs:attribute name="idType" type="xs:string" use="optional">
                    <xs:annotation>
                        <xs:documentation>Text identifying the ID
schema.</xs:documentation>
                    </xs:annotation>
                </xs:attribute>
                <xs:attribute name="tagType" type="xs:string" use="optional">
                    <xs:annotation>
                        <xs:documentation>Text identifying the ID Tag media
type. </xs:documentation>
                    </xs:annotation>
                </xs:attribute>
```

```
<xs:attribute name="startDate" type="xs:dateTime"</pre>
use="optional">
                    <xs:annotation>
                        <xs:documentation>Start of validity for the
ID</xs:documentation>
                    </xs:annotation>
                </xs:attribute>
                <xs:attribute name="endDate" type="xs:dateTime" use="optional">
                    <xs:annotation>
                        <xs:documentation>End of validity for the
ID</xs:documentation>
                    </xs:annotation>
                </xs:attribute>
                <xs:anyAttribute processContents="lax">
                    <xs:annotation>
                        <xs:documentation>Proprietary
attributes.</xs:documentation>
                    </xs:annotation>
                </xs:anyAttribute>
            </xs:extension>
        </xs:simpleContent>
    </xs:complexType>
    <xs:complexType name="ValueType">
        <xs:simpleContent>
            <xs:extension base="xs:string">
                <xs:attribute name="type" use="optional" default="xs:string">
                    <xs:simpleType>
                        <xs:restriction base="xs:string"/>
                    </xs:simpleType>
                </xs:attribute>
                <xs:attribute name="dateTime" type="xs:dateTime"</pre>
use="optional"/>
                <xs:attribute name="unixTime" type="xs:long" use="optional"/>
                <xs:anyAttribute processContents="lax"/>
            </xs:extension>
        </xs:simpleContent>
    </xs:complexType>
</xs:schema>
```

B Example O-DF Structures

This appendix shows example messages for some basic cases. More examples are normally available at the website(s) where this specification is published.

Example 5: Object->Object->InfoItem->Value(s)

```
<?xml version="1.0" encoding="UTF-8"?>
<!-- Example of Object->Object->InfoItem->value(s). -->
<Objects xmlns:xsi="http://www.w3.org/2001/XMLSchema-instance"</pre>
xsi:noNamespaceSchemaLocation="odf.xsd">
    <Object type="someType">
        <id>UniqueTargetID 1</id>
        <InfoItem name="InfoItem1">
            <value>Value1</value>
            <value>Value2</value>
            <value>Value3
        </TnfoTtem>
        <InfoItem name="InfoItem2">
            <value>Value
        </InfoItem>
        <Object type="someType">
            <id>SubTarget1</id>
            <InfoItem name="SubInfoItem1">
            </InfoItem>
            <Object type="someType">
                <id>SubSubTarget1</id>
                <InfoItem name="SubSubTarget1InfoItem1">
                    <value>22.5</value>
                </InfoItem>
            </Object>
        </Object>
        <Object type="someType">
            <id>SubTarget2</id>
            <InfoItem name="SubTarget2InfoItem1">
                <value>34.6
            </InfoItem>
        </Object>
    </Object>
</Objects>
```

Example 6: Metadata about Refrigerator Power Consumption InfoItem

Example 7: Measurement Values for Refrigerator Power Consumption

```
<?xml version="1.0" encoding="UTF-8"?>
<!-- Example of a simple "odf" structure for a refrigerator. -->
<Objects xmlns:xsi="http://www.w3.org/2001/XMLSchema-instance"</pre>
xsi:noNamespaceSchemaLocation="odf.xsd">
   <Object type="Refrigerator Assembly Product">
       <id>SmartFridge22334411</id>
       <InfoItem name="Consumed Electrical Power Measure">
           <description>Power consumption values with timestamp.
           <value dateTime="2001-10-26T15:33:21">15.5
           <value dateTime="2001-10-26T15:33:50">15.7
           <value dateTime="2001-10-26T15:34:15">1.3
           <value dateTime="2001-10-26T15:34:35">1.5</value>
           <value dateTime="2001-10-26T15:34:52">15.3
       </InfoItem>
   </Object>
</Objects>
```

C JSON Mapping and Examples

Many XML generation and manipulation tools can convert XML messages into JavaScript Object Notation (JSON), and *vice versa*. There are also many frameworks that can do the needed conversions in "real-time". This example shows Example 7 converted into JSON.

```
"XML": {
        "version": 1.0,
        "encoding": "UTF-8"
    "Comment": " Example of a simple "odf" structure for a refrigerator. ",
    "Objects": {
        "xmlns:xsi": "http://www.w3.org/2001/XMLSchema-instance",
        "xsi:noNamespaceSchemaLocation": "odf.xsd",
        "Object": {
            "type": "Refrigerator Assembly Product",
            "id": "SmartFridge22334411",
            "InfoItem": {
                "name": "Consumed Electrical Power Measure",
                "description": "Power consumption values with timestamp.",
                "value": [
                    {
                        "dateTime": "2001-10-26T15:33:21",
                        "Text": 15.5
                        "dateTime": "2001-10-26T15:33:50",
                        "Text": 15.7
                    }, {
    "dateTime": "2001-10-26T15:34:15",
                        "Text": 1.3
                        "dateTime": "2001-10-26T15:34:35",
                        "Text": 1.5
                        "dateTime": "2001-10-26T15:34:52",
                        "Text": 15.3
                    }
                ]
           }
      }
   }
}
```

Abbreviations

HTTP Hypertext Transfer Protocol

IoT Internet of Things

JMS Java Message Service

JSON JavaScript Object Notation

O-DF Open Data Format

PMI PROMISE Messaging Interface

QLM Quantum Lifecycle Management

REST REpresentational State Transfer

RFID Radio-Frequency Identification

SOAP Simple Object Access Protocol

SSCC Serial Shipping Container Code

URL Uniform Resource Locator

WSDL Web Services Description Language

XML EXtensible Markup Language

Open Data Format (O-DF)