PUBLISHING COMMUNITY WEBINAR

Tzviya Siegman, Wiley

Cristina Mussinelli, Fondazione LIA

Wendy Reid, Rakuten Kobo

Avneesh Singh, DAISY Consortium

Mateus Teixiera, WW Norton

July 2020

PUBLISHING@W3C

https://www.w3.org/publishing/

Today's Talk

- What is Publishing @W3C?
- Overview of goals of revamped Publishing@W3C
- Overview of the recent survey, plans moving forward
- Accessibility in Publishing: Preparing for Worldwide Impact
- Global participation
- Q&A

WHAT IS PUBLISHING@W3C

Tzviya Siegman, Wiley
Co-Chair Publishing Steering Committee and Working Group,
Advisory Board Member

July 27/28 2020, Publishing Webinar

https://www.w3.org/publishing/

Publishing @ W3C: Who Are We?

- Publishing Working Group (closing in September)
  - Major accomplishments: Audiobooks specification, Publication Manifest

- EPUB 3 Working Group (starting in September)
  - Chairs: Dave Cramer, Hachette Book Group, Wendy Reid, Rakuten Kobo, Shinya Takami, Kadokawa / Bookwalker
  - Focus: system reading system conformance, test suite, errata, EPUB accessibility while maintaining backward compatibility

Publishing @ W3C: Who Are We?

- Publishing Business Group
  - Chairs: Liisa McCloy-Kelley, Penguin Random House, Cristina Mussinelli, Fondazione LIA, Daihei Shiohama MediaDo
  - Discuss business needs, use cases. Showcase platforms and other W3C materials.

- Publishing Community Group
  - Chairs: Mateus Teixeira, WW Norton, Jeff Xu, Rakuten
  - Incubate new ideas to send to Working Groups

- Publishing Steering Committee
  - oversight committee, all chairs, W3C staff

GOALS OF RENEWED PUBLISHING@W3C ACTIVITY

Cristina Mussinelli
Secretary General Fondazione LIA
Co-Chair W3C Publishing Business Group

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New commitments

- Securing a **strong future for EPUB** as critically important element of the international digital publishing world (EPUB 3 as a formal W3C Recommendation)
- **Exploring and incubate new ideas** for every sort of digital publication and more in general for the future of digital publishing
- Bringing **publishers' needs to the technical community** to promote the development of standard created taking in consideration concrete business opportunities and the perspective of the industry
- **Support the creation of the ecosystem** = EPUBCheck, authoring tools, reading solutions

How to achieve them

- Start from the **insight and the requirements of the publishing community** (ie. new features and improvements, higher reading system support, more testing., etc.)
- Involve the **different W3C groups**, each with a **different role and scope** but working in **coordinated way** to maximize the overall results
- Provide to the community an ongoing education, information and gather continuous feedbacks
- Work on **community expansion through communication and education activities** to ensure that people have a place to share and get information both globally and locally

The business value

- EPUB has been a tremendous success. It is mature, widely adopted around the world, and the foundation of a billion-dollar industry
- W3C will continue working to address the needs of **different publishing market segments** (trade, scholarly & education, kids, comics, magazines, etc.) and of the **corporate and documentation worlds** and to make digital content easier to create
- Commitment to **interoperability** (ie. authoring tools, reading solutions, different market segments) and **backwards compatib**ility
- **Accessibility** as a key element

EPUB SURVEY RESULTS

Wendy Reid
Publishing Working Group Chair

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Survey Overview

The EPUB Survey was run from February 5 to March 6, 2020. We compiled results from 256 respondents.

The goal of this survey was to better understand what the community was doing with EPUB 3, and what kind of improvements or use cases were needed in any future Publishing@W3C work.

To see the full results, you can view the full overview here:
https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/11KjkTzyuOeDLlCiAccQYSJ5J-vNHJ_s2U3r4ws1FPLA/edit?usp=sharing

Demographics and Audience

Of the 256 respondents:
40% were publishers (trade, education, corporate, etc.)
40% were "users" (readers, authors, ebook developers)
20% were other, including reading system developers, designers, conversion vendors, and testers

39% of respondents get their information on EPUB from blogs/twitter (#eprdctn)
25% look to W3C mailing lists or calls for information

EPUB Today

Highlights:
- 84% of publishers are using EPUB3 as their primary format
- 84% of publishers are testing their EPUB content with EPUBCheck/reading systems
- High usage of epub:type, internal EPUB metadata

Issues:
- Difficulty implementing high-design or complicated layouts
- Existing production tools do not output maintainable files
- Internationalization difficult to implement with spotty Unicode/font support, challenges with vertical writing modes
- Validation tool warnings are cryptic

EPUB Tomorrow

Highlights:
- Most requested new features: dual language support, full bleed images, and more support for interactivity
- Desire to see a reliable, web-stack compliant solution to replace EPUB CFI (addressability)
- Clarified support for Javascript

Issues:
- Desire to see support for modern CSS layout support to produce more complex content
- Untapped demand for comics/manga
- Lack of knowledge/support for mixed-format content (fixed layout and reflowable sections)

Reading Systems Feedback

Highlights:
- Majority of reading systems were eager to see and contribute to testing for EPUB3
- Reading system developers want to see clearer specifications and more information on implementation

Issues:
- Reading systems are viewed as the blocker to EPUB greatness
- Accessibility support and testing are challenging considering the fragmented landscape
- Reading systems are not good at communicating with stakeholders

Reader Feedback

Highlights:
- Majority of readers get their books from retailers
- The most-used device for reading is their phones followed by tablets and ereaders
- Most users use multiple reading systems
- Navigation, changing font sizes, search, enlarging images, and bookmarking were all identified as important features

Issues:
- Frustration with not truly owning books due to DRM restrictions
- EPUBs are generally poor quality – perception that they are a publisher afterthought (issues with bad typography, performance, broken layouts)

Accessibility

Highlights:
- More and more publishers/reading systems are implementing accessibility features or plan to in the near future
- Awareness of EPUB Accessibility is high

Issues:
- Implementation of accessibility is inconsistent and hard to test
- Confusion over what an EPUB must have to be accessible
- Fixed Layout content is considered completely inaccessible
- Resourcing is a challenge – knowledge required is specialized and hard to find
- Need for a consistent source of truth: documentation, tooling, validation

What are we doing with this feedback?

Translated this feedback into the charter of the proposed EPUB3 Working Group:

- Improve the EPUB3 specification to better communicate existing features for reading systems and ebook developers
- Add new features to EPUB3: Support for modern web standards (HTML5 and CSS3, Javascript)
- Improve EPUB3 documentation like the EPUB3 Accessibility Guidelines to help publishers produce Born Accessible content in accordance with WCAG and the EU Directive

What are we doing with this feedback?

Anything that requires more technical exploration was handed to the Publishing Community Group, who will work closely with the working group to promote any features ready for specification.

Outreach and information sharing is the responsibility of the Publishing Business Group.

Fundraising for improvements to EPUBCheck (now a W3C project) continues here: https://www.w3.org/publishing/epubcheck_fundraising

ACCESSIBILITY IN PUBLISHING
PREPARING FOR WORLDWIDE IMPACT

Avneesh Singh

COO, DAISY Consortium

Chair, Accessibility task forces

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Plan for EPUB 3 WG

- Work Items planned for EPUB accessibility specification:
    - Align with advancements in WCAG.
    - Explore possibility of adding accessibility requirements for fixed layout.
    - Align the specifications with the requirements of EU accessibility act.
    - Update the techniques for EPUB accessibility.
- Facilitate horizontal review of EPUB 3 WG and maintenance of modules like DPUB ARIA.
- Collaborate with publishing community group for new accessibility features.

Work items in Publishing CG

- Continue developing best practices and guidelines for accessibility.
- Guidance for publishers for identifying important accessibility metadata and using it.
- Guidance for retailers & distributers for interpreting accessibility metadata and displaying it in user friendly way.
- Harmonize accessibility metadata of different metadata formats.
- Work with the community and EPUB 3 WG for incubating new accessibility features & techniques.

Long term objectives for accessibility

Accessibility should remain high priority for all publishing groups in W3C.

Collaboration with Accessibility Guidelines WG for incorporating publishing specific requirements in WCAG to maximize the global impact.

PUBLISHING COMMUNITY GROUP
AND GLOBAL PARTICIPATION

Mateus Manço Teixeira
Product Manager, W. W. Norton
Co-chair, Publishing CG

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Publishing CG: At a glance

The Publishing Community Group is an incubator.

Our goals are to identify, document, and prototype
- ideas for improvement of EPUB, its ecosystems and dependencies
- innovations for the future of publishing on the Web

The CG is a bridge between publishing and technology communities.

We rally around **shared challenges** towards standardization proposals.

We **connect the dots** between business problems and the technical ideas to solve them.

Publishing CG "Funnel"

1. Individuals or groups share **ideas**.

2. The community **prioritizes** ideas with broad engagement, high value, and use cases.

3. Task forces refine priorities and **requirements**, connect with other communities.

4. Refined ideas with strong backing are collected into **proposals**.

5. Proposals "graduate" to formal **standardization** work in a working group.

Global Participation

Publishing is diverse—
demographically, technologically, and economically.

Solutions that work for one business may not work for all.
Features that seem inclusive to an audience may be inaccessible to others.
Technologies that are infallible in one language may be clunky globally.

For good standards work, broad community engagement is critical.

Join the CG—anyone can, and we need your voice.

THANK YOU!

Avneesh Singh
avneesh.sg@gmail.com

Tzviya Siegman
tsiegman@wiley.com

Cristina Mussinelli
cristina.mussinelli@fondazionelia.org

Wendy Reid
wendy.reid@rakuten.com

Mateus Teixiera
mteixeira@wwnorton.com

https://www.w3.org/publishing/

Resources

- EPUB 3 Working Group Charter https://www.w3.org/2020/06/proposed-epub-3-charter.html
- W3C Audiobooks https://www.w3.org/TR/audiobooks/
- W3C Publication Manifest https://www.w3.org/TR/pub-manifest/
- EPUB Accessibility 1.0 http://www.w3.org/Submission/epub-a11y/
- EU Accessibility Act https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:52015PC0615&from=EN
- EPUB Survey Results https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/11KjkTzyuOeDLlCiAccQYSJ5J-vNHJ_s2U3r4ws1FPLA/edit?usp=sharing