Schema.org

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Table of Contents

1. Motivation and history
2. Basic information
3. Structure of Schema.org
4. Real-world examples
5. Limitations and criticism of Schema.org
6. Conclusion
7. Sources

1 Motivation and history

- End of 2010s: **Augmentation of search** with structured data
- First focus on 10 verticals (e. g. recipes, events)
- Led to a **proliferation of formats** across search engines and prevented scaling
- In 2011 **joint initiative** by Bing, Google, and Yahoo (and later Yandex)
- **Goal**: *Single* schema across all topics; *single* vocabulary for webmasters
- **Result**: Schema.org

2 Basic information and usage

- Schema.org is a **vocabulary**, not an ontology
- Designed for **annotation of webpage content**
- Enables rich markup of search results
- Also used in emails, e. g. for reservations in restaurants
- Used by **embedding** Microdata or JSON-LD code in **HTML**
- JSON-LD syntax more popular
- In 2022 **38 % of PLDs** used Schema.org annotations
- Up from 3 % in 2013

3 Structure of Schema.org

3.1 Items and (data) types

- **Items** are things in the **real world**, we wish to describe
- Three hierarchies of types (classes)
  - s:Thing and its subtypes; e. g. s:Event
  - s:DataType and its subtypes; e. g. s:Date
  - s:Enumeration and its subtypes; e. g. s:DayOfWeek
- Types **inherit properties** from one or multiple supertypes
- 811 types, 14 data types, 89 enumerations, 495 enum members

3.2 Structure of the *s:Thing*-hierarchy

Not a tree structure!

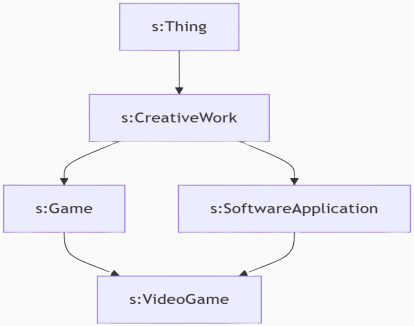


Figure 1: Hierarchy of s:VideoGame

3.2 Structure of the *s:Thing*-hierarchy (cont.)

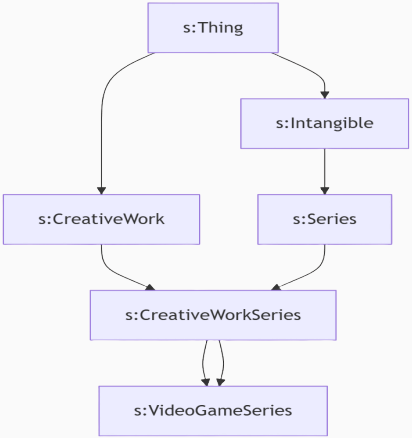


Figure 2: Hierarchy of s:VideoGameSeries

3.3 Properties

- Container for the attributes of an item
- Link two types:
  1. Type and data type
  2. Type and another type
- Have domain and range definitions
- 1484 properties

3.4 Domain and range of properties

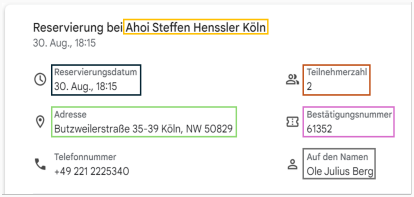
- **Domain**: Types the property can be used on
- **Range**: Expected types of property values
- Subtypes can **extend range**
- Domain and range are **disjunctive**

3.5 Example of the properties of a type

- s:FoodEstablishmentReservation
- s:Thing > s:Intangible > s:Reservation > s:FoodEstablishmentReservation
- Properties:
  - s:startTime | range: *s:Time* or *s:DateTime* | from s:FoodEstablishmentReservation
  - s:underName | range: s:Person or s:Organization | from s:Reservation
  - s:name | range: *s:Text* | from s:Thing
  - . . . many more. . . (in total $27 = 12 + 12 + 3$)

4 Real-world examples

Screenshot from the Gmail web app



Extract from the HTML embedded in the confirmation email

Figure 3: Schema.org usage in an email confirmation of a reservation

4 Real-world examples

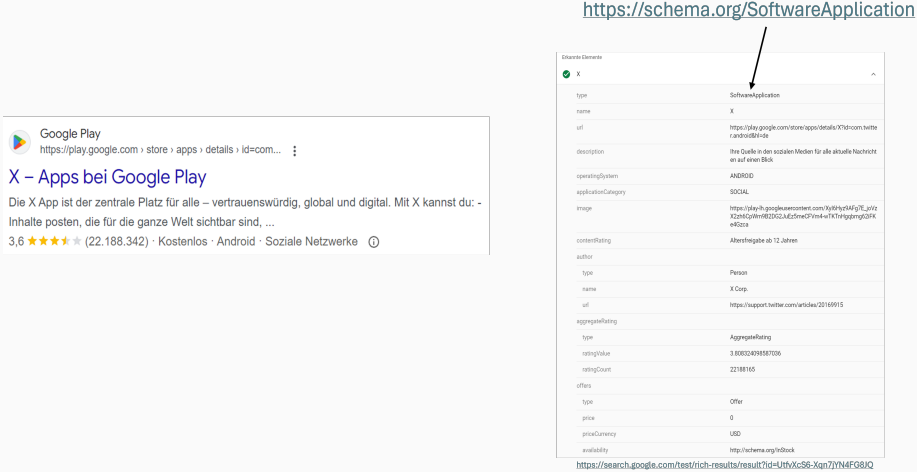


Figure 4: Schema.org usage in rich snippets

5 Limitations and criticism

- **Explicit** design for **webpage content**
- **Limited transferability** to other domains
- Addressed by hosted and external **extensions**
- Adoption has **plateaued**
- Some criticism of missing local ranges

6 Conclusion

Thank you for attending my presentation!

Do you think that Schema.org still has **unused potential**? Or are the extensions all we can expect?

7 Sources I

- R. V. Guha, D. Brickley, und S. Macbeth, “Schema.org: evolution of structured data on the web”, Commun. ACM, Bd. 59, Nr. 2, S. 44–51, Jan. 2016, doi: 10.1145/2844544.
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