XIML

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XIML (eXtensible Interface Markup Language) is an XML-based markup language which aims to provide a standard way of representing interaction data - data pertaining to the user interface. XIML allows for the representation and manipulation of such data, which defines and relates all the relevant elements of a user interface.

XIML aims to provide comprehensive lifecycle support - in other words, the same XIML file could be used during the design of the user interface, as well as at runtime and during the evaluation phases. Tools used for GUI (Graphical User Interface) design could output XIML files, which will be used by the application at runtime. The same XIML files could then be used for usability engineering.

Designing a language such as XIML is also complicated by the fact that it needs to be able to represent both abstract, and concrete elements of a user interface. One of the abstract elements consists of the context in which the respective interaction takes place, and the particular task that is accomplished. Concrete elements are much easier to envision, consisting of the various controls or widgets which are to be displayed by the application.

XIML allows for the definition of relations between the various elements which can be represented. For example, XIML could be used to state that "Type A objects will be displayed with element E", where E is a presentational element, while A is a domain-component.