

```
<staff>
  <therapist>Lisa Davenport</therapist>
  <therapist>Steve Matthews</therapist>
  <secretary>Kelly Townsend</secretary>
</staff>
</company>
```

This representation is far more easily processable by machines. In particular, it is useful for exchanging information on the web, which is one of the most prominent application areas of XML technology.

However, XML still remains at the syntactic level, as it describes the *structure* of information, but not its *meaning*. The basic language of the Semantic Web is RDF, which is a language for making statements about pieces of information. In our example, such statements include:

Company A offer physiotherapy.

The name of A is "Agilitas Physiotherapy".

Lisa Davenport is a therapist.

Lisa Davenport works for A.

...

To a human reader, the difference between the XML representation and a list of RDF statements may appear minimal, but they are quite different in nature: XML describes structure while RDF makes statements about pieces of information.⁸

The term *metadata* refers to such information: data about data. Metadata captures part of the *meaning* of data, thus the term *semantic* in Semantic Web.

⁸A human reader assigns meaning to the XML representation based on the chosen tag names, but this is not so for machine processors.