Chaos - EDItEUR

Brian Green
EDItEUR

Follow this and additional works at: http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/atg

Part of the Library and Information Science Commons

Recommended Citation
Green, Brian (1998) "Chaos - EDItEUR," Against the Grain: Vol. 10: Iss. 4, Article 35.
DOI: https://doi.org/10.7771/2380-176X.2974

This document has been made available through Purdue e-Pubs, a service of the Purdue University Libraries. Please contact epubs@purdue.edu for additional information.
S
ince EDITEUR was conceived at a meeting at the 1991 Frankfurt Book Fair as 'The European Book Sector EDI Group', it has expanded both geographically and in its activities, becoming known as 'The International Group for Electronic Commerce in the Book and Serials Sectors'.

EDITEUR has truly become an international group, with members from US, Canada, South Africa, Australia, Japan as well as all the European countries. It now covers books, serials and digital publications and is concerned with all aspects of the standards infrastructure for publishing.

Why EDITEUR had to be invented

The original raison d’être of the group was the realization that many European countries were working to establish or expand EDI in their national book trades, using a variety of different national or ad-hoc standards but all planning to move to UN/EDIFACT, the international EDI syntax developed under the auspices of the United Nations. EDIFACT, however, is not an 'off-the-shelf' standard. It is a defined syntax together with a complex and wide-ranging directory of data elements, segments, messages and code lists, which provides an enabling framework for EDI application designers to use to meet the needs of a particular trading community.

It would not only be wasteful for each community of users to design their own subset, it would result in a lack of interoperability that would hinder international communication.

So EDITEUR was created as an umbrella group to develop and maintain a book trade subset of EDIFACT on behalf of its members. Sponsored by the European publishers, booksellers and library associations and with funding from the European Commission's TEDIS (the Trade EDI Systems Program of the European Commission) program, EDITEUR rapidly produced its first manual of messages and implementation guides. Rather than start from scratch, EDITEUR made the decision to work with EAN, the International Article Numbering Association, to use their existing EANCOM subset of UN/EDIFACT, already widely used in the retail sector, as the basis of the EDITEUR book sector EDI messages. The EANCOM subset of UN/EDIFACT is one of the most stable of the "wide ranging directories of data elements, etc."

Expanding the brief

The serials community, that most international of sectors, asked EDITEUR to develop the messages for their use and, in collaboration with individual publishers, subscription agents, libraries and ICEDIS, (the International Committee for EDI in Serials), an implementation guide to the use of the messages for serials was developed.

Publication of the EDITEUR messages was welcomed internationally, with BISAC and SISAC immediately starting to review the messages with a view to adopting them. Indeed, the US library community were among the first users of the EDITEUR messages, with all the major integrated library systems vendors now implementing them in their acquisitions modules.

National book and serial sector EDI groups have been set up recently in Denmark, Italy, Finland, Germany and Sweden to join the longer established book industry communications in the UK and BISAC/SISAC in the US under the EDITEUR umbrella. They, like BISAC and SISAC, provide the national focus for promotion, dissemination, implementation and feedback, helping their members to reap the benefits of EDI.

Beyond EDI

In the last year or so, EDITEUR's activities have expanded well beyond EDI, with activities in the areas of product information, rights metadata and new standard identifiers.

BISAC and SISAC play a key role in these new EDITEUR projects, collaborating in a project to produce a data dictionary of product information and develop an EDIFACT message to transmit it, jointly hosting a rights and descriptive metadata workshop in New York and working on international identifiers for authors, publishers and imprints.

The area of identifiers and descriptive and rights metadata, enabling automated rights trading, is a particularly hot topic crossing traditional media barriers and involving the music, visual arts and film and video communities in joint standards activities.

In a networked multi-media world, traditional geographic and media barriers break down and EDITEUR will be there to coordinate activities on behalf of its member organizations and user communities.

Ron Chepesiuk is a contributing editor to Against the Grain and Editor in-Chief of International Leads, the international arm of ALA.

<http://www.against-the-grain.com>