

*The significance and importance of standards and community*

# XML.org Expands as Online Resource for XML in Industry

**C**hange seems to be the steady-state condition in the XML world. Ideas, initiatives, and standards continue to spin off at an accelerated rate within an ever-expanding XML user community. The topic has made its way into every corporate corner – from the lunchroom to the boardroom.

Anyone who has been trying to keep up with XML's rapid growth and its spiraling impact in the marketplace knows what a challenge it is to harness this fluid, dynamic information flow and stay abreast of the crucial news and trends directly affecting technologists, developers, and businesspeople.

At XML.org we're working to keep ahead of the curve. We've enhanced our mission and focus, and we've made improvements to our Web interface. As a quick tour of our site will demonstrate, we've responded to the increasing needs of a broadening spectrum of users.

The result is a new-looking, full-featured Web site – one that's well positioned to serve as the premier online resource on XML in industry. Visitors will find an array of new, user-focused tools and information that will enable them to leverage and contribute to the growing body of XML knowledge and expertise. As one of the XML industry's flagship Web sites, we're committed to being the Web focal point and business-content portal for current and potential users of XML. As you'll see in the paragraphs that follow, there's something for everybody at the new XML.org.

## AUTHOR BIO

Leo Kraunelis, general manager of XML.org and director of business development for OASIS, has more than 17 years of experience in sales, marketing, business development, and management. Previously he cofounded a Web software and services firm, as well as one of the largest employee benefits brokerage and administration firms in New England.

## First, Some Recent History

XML.org was formed in June 1999 by OASIS, a nonprofit, international consortium that creates interoperable industry specifications based on public standards such as XML and SGML. The original charter of XML.org was to minimize overlap and duplication in XML languages and standard initiatives by providing public access to XML information, specifications,

and schemas in a centralized repository.

As is often the case with a growing community of users with divergent goals and objectives, the need to formulate and adopt open XML standards quickly became apparent. OASIS has since taken the lead in helping to unite the XML community – and it looks to XML.org as the vehicle for cultivating a collaborative online environment that brings together XML technologists, developers, and businesspeople while proactively facilitating the adoption of open XML standards.

OASIS and XML.org are unified in their strategic focus and more committed than ever to carrying out their role as enablers of open XML standards. Our keys to mission success include:

- Creating an online meeting place
- Providing an open XML registry for XML Schemas, specifications, and DTDs
- Offering valuable XML resources such as timely news and white papers
- Promoting teamwork and collaboration within vertical industry sectors
- Utilizing technology solutions to support various unification initiatives

XML.org is now at the forefront of the open standards movement. We've set our sights on elevating market awareness about our role and the crucial importance of our mission.

## XML Standards and Community

For those relatively new to XML, it's probably best to put the topic in context. Simply defined, XML is a standard markup language. By *markup language* we mean a tagging mechanism to store and

manipulate structured information. By *standard* we mean XML is an official World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) recommendation. Much of the interest in XML is derived from its status as a standard.

The strength of XML lies in its simplicity. Because it's not limited to any one application or vendor, XML is seen increasingly as an enabling technology with an extensive range of potential applications. Much of the interest around XML comes from application integration in industry and from the exchange of information between trading partners. These broad categories, combined with the simplicity of XML and the depth and breadth of its potential uses, often make understanding the value of XML downright confusing.

In the midst of this confusion, however, one fact remains clear: to enable effective interaction and communication in a community, a common and open language must be precisely defined. Thus the value of implementing XML standards in communities is paramount to accelerate XML's universal use. Community standards are relevant because they greatly simplify the deployment of XML-based solutions and are testimonials to industry's growing interest in XML.

## XML.org's Expanding Role

June 2001 marked the start of a major expansion campaign for XML.org as we extended our clearinghouse for information on the use of XML in industry. Now, in addition to providing a comprehensive, noncommercial body of XML initiatives, schema, and specification listings, XML.org will support online collaboration and information exchange categorized for specific vertical industries. Our sphere of influence has extended to the

specialized needs and applications of business users and developers.

To stay in sync with these new dimensions in our charter, we've completed a total face-lift of XML.org. The features and benefits to visitors are substantial:

- Reorganized and expanded content areas
- Improved site functionality
- Enhanced user interface and collaboration features
- Revamped technology and infrastructure that makes it easier for visitors to contribute content

Following are some of the improvements and additions that have been made to the site, along with a brief walkthrough of the value-add they bring to the community.

### Registry

This early mainstay of the site is now more relevant and robust to users. As a cross-industry, vendor-neutral registry and repository, it allows individuals, organizations, and corporations to register their XML vocabularies, specifications, DTDs, and schema in a central location. Users can then search and retrieve this information for use in inter- or intraorganizational document exchange.

UN/CEFACT and OASIS have granted XML.org permission to archive the approved ebXML (electronic business XML) specs in the XML.org Registry. (The specs will continue to be posted on [www.web-XML.org](http://www.web-XML.org) as well.) XML.org is helping to promote the accomplishments of ebXML by making the specs more widely available to the public for download.

With more enhancements in store for the XML.org Registry, we plan to adopt the specifications developed by the OASIS ebXML Registry and Repository Technical Committee for interoperable registries and repositories for XML-related entities. In so doing, we expect this service to grow dramatically.

### Marketplace

The Marketplace offers vendors and providers of XML services and solutions a place to connect with those who have a particular or unique requirement for these services. To bring prospective users and suppliers together in a more focused way, the Marketplace has been organized by industry and category. (Take a look. You might find your next XML solution there.) In addition, as a result of a recent partnership with PerfectXML, other enhancements will appear in this section.

### Standards Guide

XML-based initiatives and standards

are springing up by the dozens every week. We're currently tracking over 400 of them in the Standards Guide, an XML.org exclusive offering from ZapThink. Each report is featured in detail, along with a clear overview of its goals, date of inception, even an XML sample. The content has been organized by category and industry so you can see at a glance how a standard compares with others in its category.

### XML Cover Pages

The Standards Guide acts in conjunction with the XML Cover Pages (<http://xml.coverpages.org>). An extensive public resource hosted by OASIS, the site features a searchable reference collection of more than 7,000 documents on the application of markup language standards. The XML Cover Pages are a comprehensive online reference work for XML and SGML, reflecting an exhaustive effort to catalog what's going on in the (meta) markup language universe.

How do you benefit from a visit to the XML Cover Pages? For starters, you have immediate access to a reliable, permanently useful Web-accessible reference collection supporting the SGML/XML family of (meta) markup language standards and their application. The underlying objective is to promote and enable the use of open, interoperable, standards-based solutions that protect digital information and enhance the integrity of communication.

The Web site also provides reference material on enabling technologies compatible with descriptive markup language standards and applications: object modeling, semantic nets, ontologies, authority lists, document production systems, and conceptual modeling.

### XML Calendar of Events

To keep visitors current with the XML world, XML.org's Calendar of Events is now updated constantly, showcasing various activities that are centered on XML. You can find out about the major trade shows, seminars, training classes, regional user group meetings, and other events relevant to the XML community. The Calendar serves real-time needs because users can submit listings to be included and viewed by everyone.

### Daily News Feeds

If you can't make it to the Web site with any regularity, XML.org's daily news feed keeps you apprised of industry updates and business developments. Between the Calendar, the news feeds, and the online newsletter, you won't miss anything that's news to the XML community.

### In-Depth Knowledge Base

The Web site also features a Resource section with key white papers, educational documents, and tutorials to help those who are new to XML learn more about the initiatives and technologies available. If you need a broader understanding of the subject and its implications, XML.org features an XML Expert Panel that presents some of the most notable experts in the field. Many of these experts are available for industry events as well as on-site training and speaking engagements.

### Online Collaboration and Information Exchange

The very nature of XML – its extensibility – has resulted in much confusion for implementers and users seeking to apply the standard to their specific industries. XML.org now offers a noncommercial resource where visitors can cut through the overlap and confusion and view content categorized for specific needs.

XML.org builds industry communities through specialized e-mail discussion forums such as XML Dev, Internet message boards, calendars, newsletters, repositories for schemas, and marketplace information and links to other XML resources. XML.org also works in conjunction with a broad range of industry and trade associations to make their activities accessible to the public.

The site now serves as an online XML content aggregator, registry, repository, and portal, created by and for the XML community at large.

### Industry Support for XML.org

XML.org is a foundational step for companies to align their business processes and improve interactions with partners and customers. It is funded solely by corporate sponsors – companies like IBM, Sun Microsystems, SAP, Oracle, Altova, Documentum, and SoftQuad Software. By helping XML.org achieve its mission, sponsors help themselves: sponsorship opportunities, ranging from \$2,000 to \$100,000, offer companies and their associated personnel a featured position with other corporate partners, business leaders, technologists, and developers within the larger XML community.

### Site Traffic

XML.org has been attracting extensive traffic from XML technologists, developers, and businesspeople alike. On average, 357,000 page views are viewed by 116,000 visitors each month. That's 11,500 page views from over 3,800 visitors per day!