

A framework for standards for
communicating about digital rights

Mark Bide, Executive Director, EDItEUR

Agenda

- ▶ BIC's "Digital Rights Agenda" – what is it?
- ▶ How does this agenda fit into the wider perspective?
- ▶ How should we develop standards to meet the requirements that are being developed?
- ▶ What are the critical strategic issues to be faced in developing standards at the moment?

BIC's Digital Rights Agenda

BIC's "digital rights" agenda

- ▶ Outcome of deliberations of BIC's Operational Board earlier in 2010
- ▶ Looking forward to BIC's wider engagement in the digital agenda
- ▶ Developed to identify areas of core strategic activity in which BIC is not currently engaged on behalf of its stakeholders
 - ▶ Pointing towards a future where rights management will become increasingly important

Themes from Operational Board brainstorm

1. Communication of – and respect for – rights (including, but not limited to territorial sales rights) in the context of ebook distribution
2. Machine-to machine communication about rights, permissions and royalties
3. Associating rights/permissions information with content on the network
4. Digital rights management, technical protection measures and “Social DRM”
5. Convergence and divergence

Challenges of tackling a “digital rights” agenda (1)

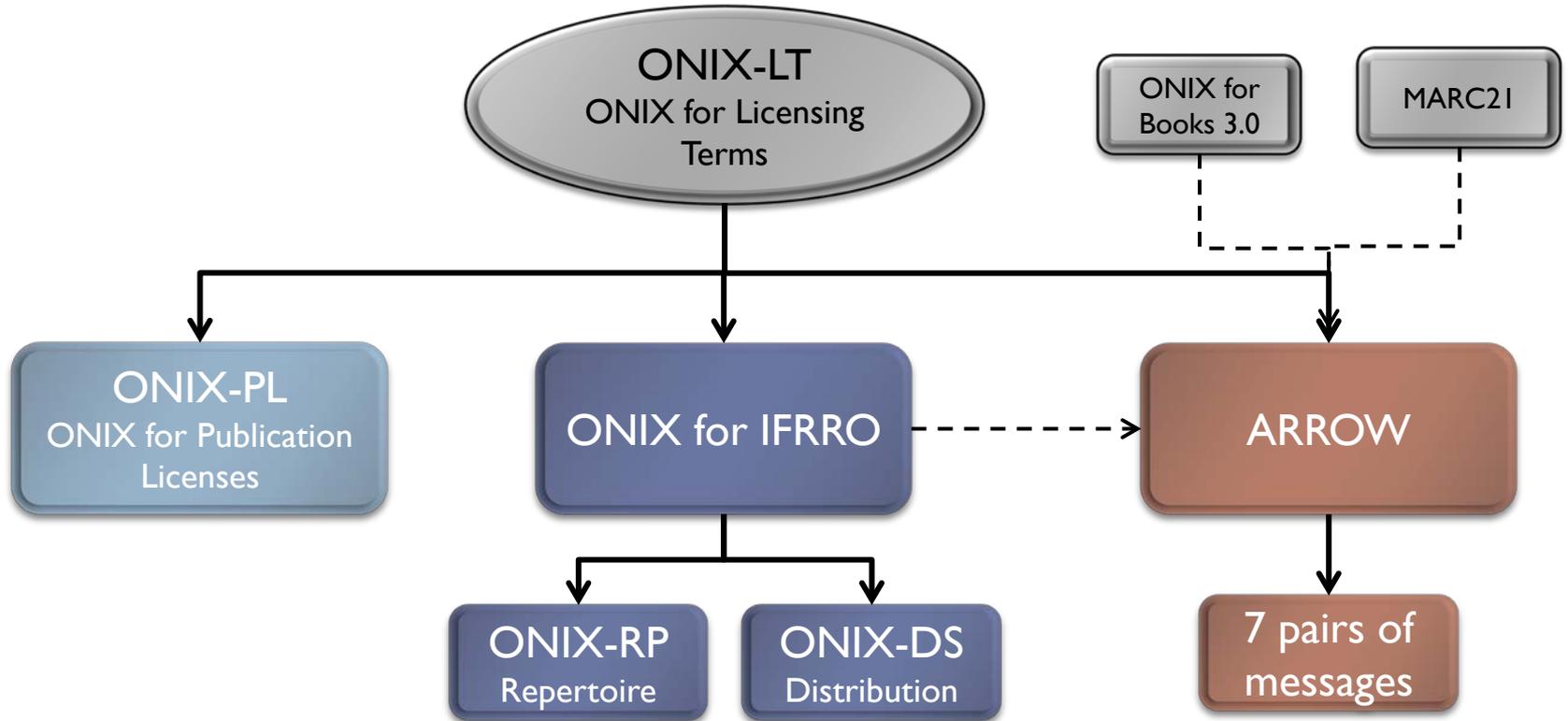
- ▶ Every online transaction is a rights transaction
 - ▶ So... “digital **rights**” difficult to distinguish from digital as a whole
- ▶ Rights are a continuum from author to reader
 - ▶ So... “**digital** rights” difficult to distinguish from the rights as a whole
- ▶ **Solution:** Tackle pragmatically – this is clearly a transitional issue as rights management moves to the centre
- ▶ Rights are a global issue, not a national one
 - ▶ So...difficult to manage in a nationally based organisation
- ▶ **Solution:** Collaboration – with BISG, EDItEUR and with other EDItEUR members around the world

Challenges of tackling a “digital rights” agenda (2)

- ▶ **Book Industry Communication** – but no definition of an ebook
 - ▶ So...how does BIC constrain its area of activity?
- ▶ **Solution:** Tackle pragmatically – but keep under review – book *industry* may be easier to define
- ▶ Digital is bringing divergence and convergence
 - ▶ Divergence within book publishing, convergence with other media
 - ▶ So...how does BIC meet the requirements of all its stakeholders?
- ▶ **Solution:** no single project likely to be of interest to everyone – diversity the key
- ▶ This is not the typical “BIC” community and requirements cross internal organisational boundaries
- ▶ **Solution:** BIC needs to develop new relationships within its members

The wider perspective

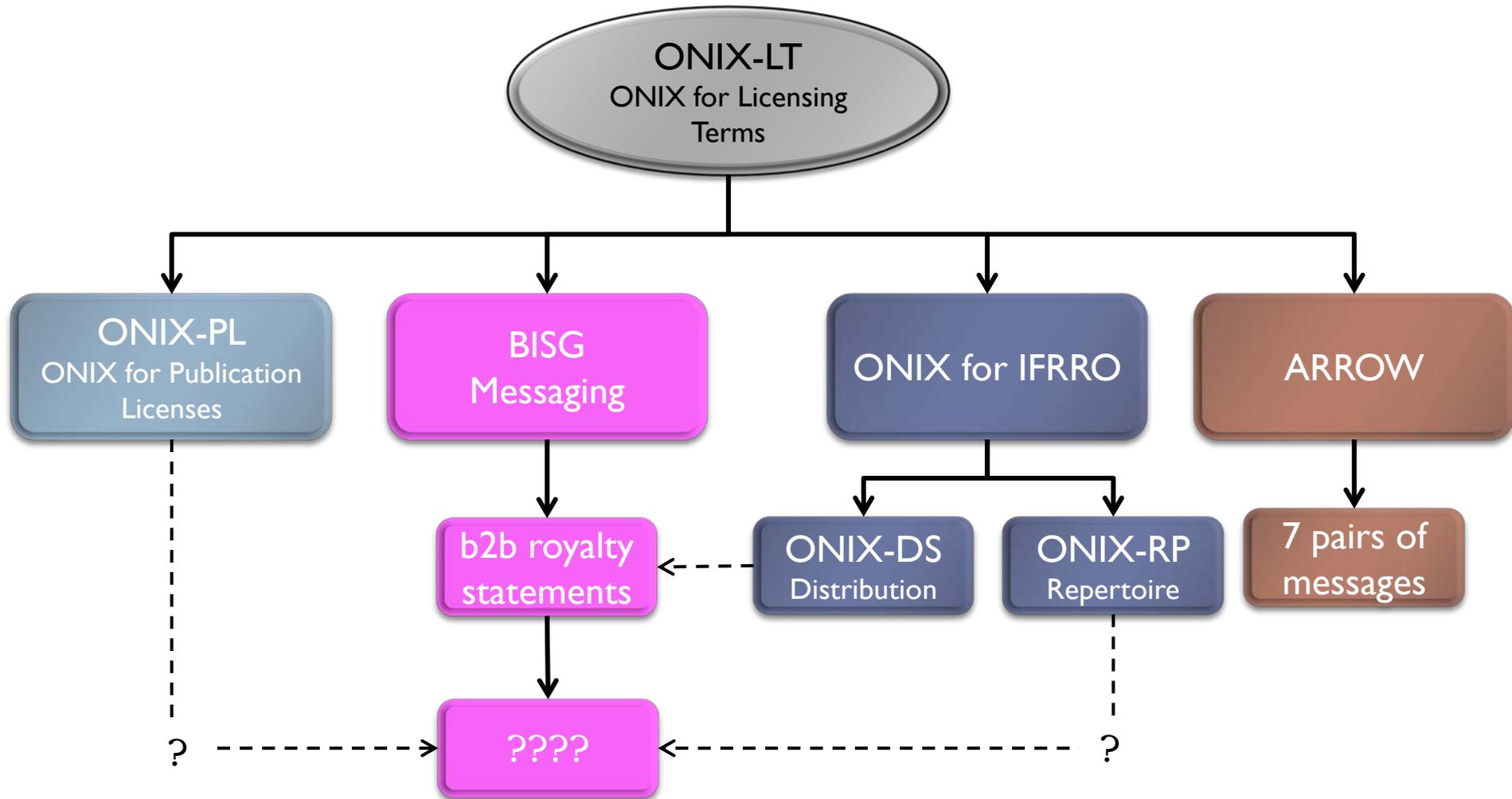
Existing EDItEUR activity



BISG Activity

- ▶ **Revival of the BISG Rights Committee**
 - ▶ Began work earlier this year
 - ▶ Triggered [inter alia] by implications of communication with the Book Rights Registry
- ▶ **Two strands of work**
 - ▶ **Communication Working Group**
 - ▶ Daunting task: essentially a comprehensive rights and permissions data dictionary
 - ▶ **Message Beta Testing Group**
 - ▶ Identifying Use Cases for message development and testing
- ▶ **BISG has related work in progress**
 - ▶ On metadata and identifiers
 - ▶ On content format standards

Existing EDItEUR activity



Towards 21st Century Rights Management: messaging standards

- ▶ ONIX-PL: www.editeur.org – a standard for the communication of publishers licenses to libraries, to make complex information human readable
- ▶ Creative Commons: <http://creativecommons.org> – standard licences most appropriate for noncommercial content [?] machine and human readable – and related approaches such as the UK’s “Open Government Licence”
- ▶ ACAP: www.the-acap.org – a standard machine to machine communication of permissions, developed mainly in support of the news sector
- ▶ PLUS Coalition: <http://www.useplus.com> – standards for licensing photographs and other visual images, machine and human readable
- ▶ ODRL: <http://odrl.net/> Open Digital Rights Language – “machine decidable permissions” – v2.0 in development

Towards 21st Century Rights Management: repository initiatives

- ▶ The ARROW project

<http://www.arrow-net.eu/>

- ▶ The Book Rights Registry

<http://books.google.com/googlebooks/agreement/>

- ▶ Global Repertoire Database (GRD)

<http://globalrepertoiredatabase.com/faq.html>

- ▶ A PLUS registry for photographs/photographers?

- ▶ Photographs and visual images in general remain one of the great unresolved issues in rights management

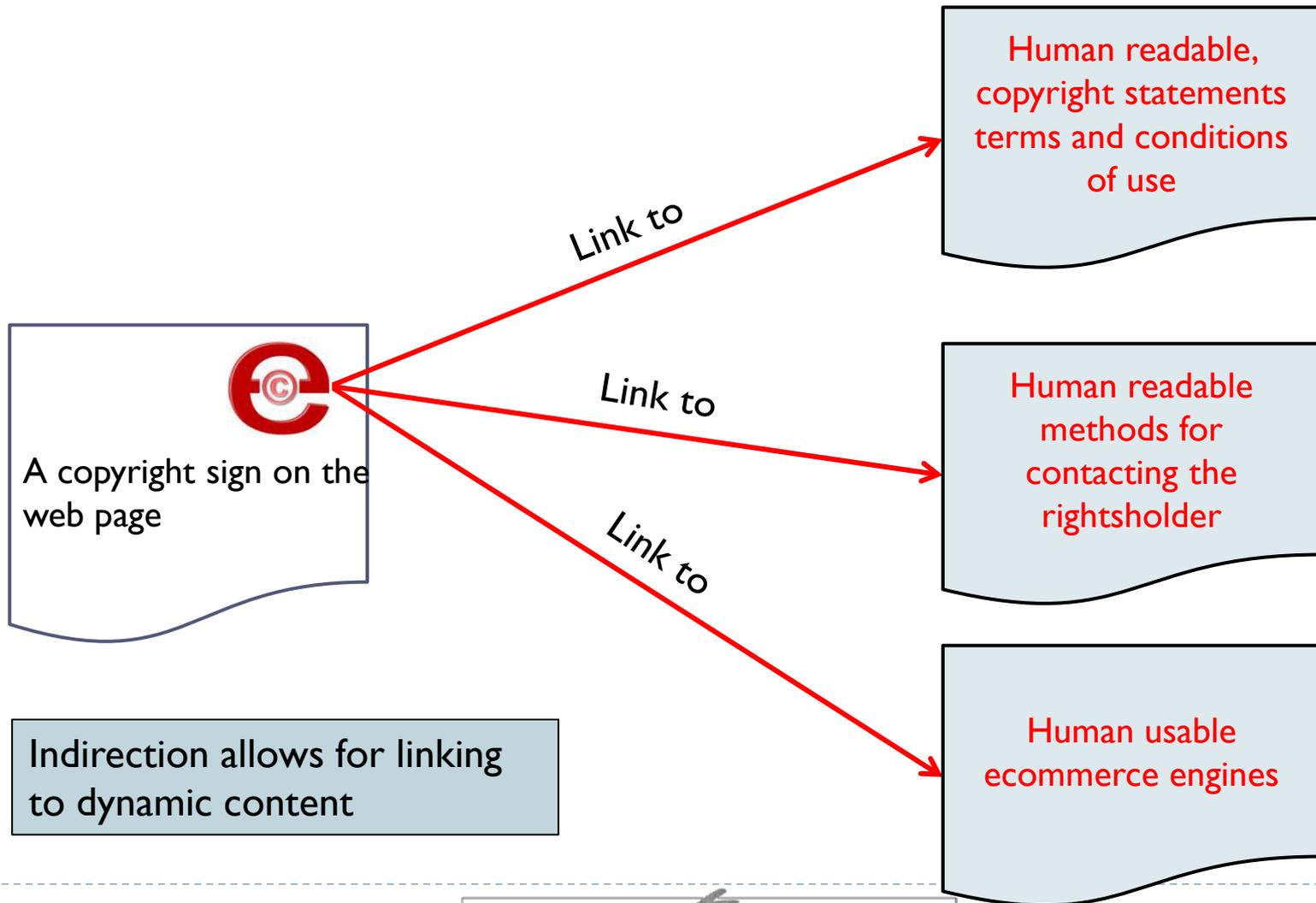
- ▶ The wider community of collective rights management organisations

A potential point of integration?

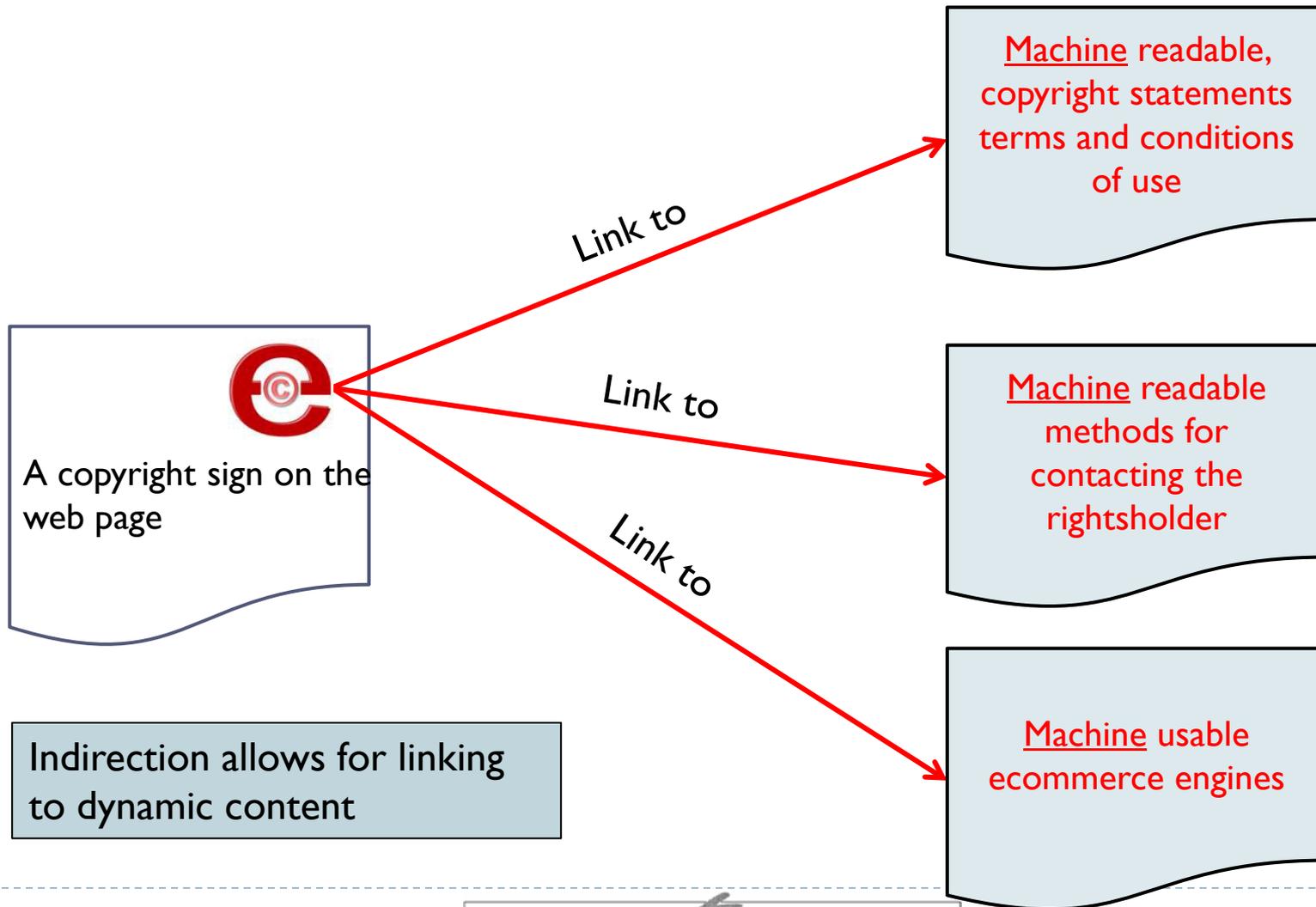
- ▶ “The Answer to the Machine is in the Machine?”
 - ▶ A “Big Idea” proposed to the European Commission as a contribution to the Digital Agenda
 - ▶ Originated by the European Publishers Council
 - ▶ <http://bit.ly/hFXPqg>
- ▶ “*The copyright symbol © was developed at the beginning of the 20th Century as a visually arresting signal – with a clear message*”
- ▶ “*...create a similar device for the 21st Century – interpretable and transactional by **both people and machines**”*”



Using the principles of the semantic web...



Using the principles of the semantic web...





Developing standards

Key issues (1) – modelling

- ▶ Respecting the rights continuum – rights and permissions follow the same structure throughout their lives
 - ▶ Ensure a consistent model
 - ▶ We are currently refining EDItEUR’s abstract “rights and permissions” model
- ▶ Based on verbs (actions)....
 - ▶ things the user may or may not do (like “publish” or “copy”)
- ▶ ...qualified by constraints
 - ▶ like when or where the action may take place
- ▶ ...and by duties
 - ▶ things the user **MUST** do (like make a payment)

Key issues (2) – semantics

- ▶ Clarity of definition of terms used
- ▶ Particularly difficult in rights
 - ▶ Difficult to gain consensus over what terms mean...
 - ▶ ...not least because (sometimes) lack of clarity is valued...
 - ▶ ...but inevitably compromises interoperability
- ▶ Simple “primitive” usages used to define more complex permissions
 - ▶ eg Translation rights
 - ▶ The right to *translate* (constrained by language)
 - ▶ The right to *publish* (constrained by what you are allowed to publish – the translation – and perhaps constrained by where and when)

Key issues (3) – interoperability

- ▶ Clarity in both the rights model and the semantics are critical for any kind interoperability to be a reality
 - ▶ We cannot fudge the semantics
- ▶ Draw on existing work – don't reinvent things that already exist and work with other organisations
 - ▶ Collaboration is critical
- ▶ Sectorally-bounded solutions will quickly prove inadequate
 - ▶ *Convergence* remains a core theme
- ▶ However, attempts at a single solution for everyone will prove impossible...so we must be realistic
 - ▶ Look at relatively “light touch” solutions such as that proposed in the EPC's “big idea”

Three critical strategic issues
facing standards organisations

Strategic issues – three Cs

- ▶ Complexity
- ▶ Compliance
- ▶ Convergence

If you have been, thank you for listening!

A framework for standards for
communicating about digital rights

mark@editeur.org

EDITEUR