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TITLE: WG3 Position on ISO/IEC JTC1/SC32 N506

SOURCE: WG3 Convenor

REFERENCE DOCUMENTS:

- 1) ISO/IEC JTC1/SC32 N506 Towards new SC32 WG5 Modelling Work
- 2) ISO/IEC JTC1/SC32 N522 BUSINESS PLAN FOR ISO/IEC JTC 1/SC32, Data Management and Interchange

Discussion

[1] states:

The reorganisation of work and introduction of new work in SC32 WG5 (and WG3) calls for additional modelling to represent the interaction between the standards and the entities that implement those standards.

This document is a contribution to such modelling. It is anticipated that there will be a need for at least a standing document, and possibly a part of an IS to explain the model.

WG3 does not accept this premise. Experience has shown that generic models like The Reference Model of Data Management (RMDM), contribute little to the understanding of the interrelationships between components of a data management environment and nothing to the understanding of the interrelationships between standards or to the planning of new standards or the development of existing ones. WG3 is convinced that any effort invested in any such new project would not be productive. Also, WG3 believes that any specific modelling efforts for tutorial purposes which is oriented towards standards must take place within the projects responsible for existing standards or those in development and not as (part of) an independent project.

A successful standardization effort requires the support and active participation of a significant community of interest. Indeed the requirement that 5 National Bodies commit to support any New Project proposal is an attempt to ensure, by indirect means, that a significant community of interest does exist. WG3 does not see the presence of such a community in the proposed activities of WG5.

[1] also contain statements that suggest that WG5 will continue with efforts to specify facilities for the specifying fragmentation and replication of tables across independent servers despite the clear opposition of WG3 to these activities.

The agreed description of the scope of WG3 [2] includes:

To develop and maintain languages for the dynamic specification, maintenance and *description of database structures* and contents in multi-user and *multi-server environments*.

This in the view of WG3 includes the specification of distributed data and the manipulation of such data and indeed WG3 is actively addressing these aspects. With the backing and active support of both the major database software suppliers and the user community represented in WG3 and its National Body equivalents, WG3 has just been successful in submitting SQL/MED for FDIS ballot.

On the other hand, the proposed work for WG5 appears again to be infringing on the work of WG3 and to be outside the agreed scope of WG5, which is:

Standards to facilitate interworking of applications and databases that may be located on different sites. These standards relate *principally to communications* and management data. They are complementary to and dependent on standards for database languages. The activities include the analysis of distributed database applications and requirements, definition of system models, communication APIs and protocols for interworking between client systems and one or more server systems; the systems may be on different hardware, with software from different suppliers.

This does not, in WG3's view, include the specification of the distribution of data, but only the protocols needed for the exchange of such data and the specification of any management data necessary to support those protocols.

WG3 has tried very hard to reach an understanding with WG5 on the proper division of areas of activity between WG3 and WG5. However, WG5 does not seem to be operating within what WG3 understands to be its properly defined scope. WG3 feels that this continuing need to negotiate and re-negotiate with WG5 and to continually monitor the adherence to the agreements made is detrimental to the progression of the work within WG3. WG3 clearly has a well established and active community interested not only in the development of its standards but in the implementation and deployment of those standards.

WG3 is not entirely unaware of some deficiencies in its own standards and would welcome help and suggestions on how to improve those areas. In the area of interworking with other complimentary standards, WG3 would welcome requirement specifications and/or notification of problems in their definitions that inhibit the development of interfaces between such complimentary standards and those of WG3.

Conclusion

WG3 believes that the work plan included in ISO/IEC JTC1/SC32 N506, "Towards new SC32 WG5 Modelling Work", should not be approved by SC32. Furthermore WG3 believes that SC32 should consider whether there is indeed a significant enough community of interest in the work of WG5 and sufficient National Body participation in the group to invest effort in the further development of the projects in WG5.