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Using Information Technologies to Empower and Transform

IDESG Standards Coordination Committee

Terminology Work

**Proposals regarding methodology
and process**

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? Content

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? Rationale

- ▶ A “terminology to call our own”
 - ▶ Provides a common **grounding** that helps us all communicate, within and between different groups of the IDESG, as well as externally
 - ▶ Provides a **formal foundation** for future information and system modelling
 - ▶ Allows us to establish “boundary objects”¹ – concepts described using ***our*** vocabulary that map to equivalent ideas in someone else’s – allows unambiguous conversations *beyond* our domain

1. Note that “boundary object” is a sociological construct and is not the same as the UML entity that uses the same name (although the UML entity is derived from this construct)

? Things that *we* need to understand

- ▶ We (as the lead/responsible group) need to understand – and agree to use, consistently – some key ideas for this work:
 - ▶ **Concept** “a distinct unit of meaning or knowledge”. It should not be confused with...
 - ▶ The mental model of something
 - ▶ **Term** “a specific (usually language dependent) representation or expression of the concept”
 - ▶ The label we give it...
 - ▶ **Definition** “a descriptive statement that serves to differentiate one concept from another”
 - ▶ The way we describe it....

Rec #1: Use these three terms and concepts consistently in **all** discussions on terminology



Things that we want *others* to understand

- ▶ “This is what we mean in our domain”
 - ▶ “When we talk about concept **x**, we will consistently use the term **y**.”
 - ▶ “When we use the term **y**, it will always refer to concept **x**.”

Rec #2: In all discussions with external groups, make it clear that **our** terminology is appropriate to **our** domain and that we will cooperate to map equivalent concepts

Rec #3: Ensure that the agreed IDESG Terminology is publicly accessible and that there is a clear but simple process for introducing new concepts and terms



? Scope

- ▶ Identify the main concepts important to the development of the identity ecosystem
 - ▶ Not identity terminology *per se*
 - ▶ Context of the IDESG - *multidisciplinary*
 - ▶ More centred on online trust

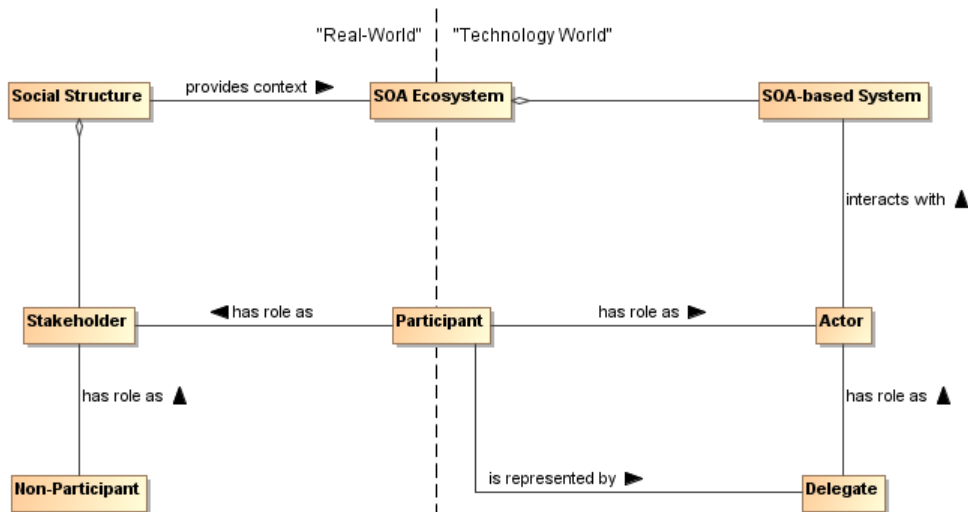


? “Hot Topics”

- ▶ Several Committees/Working Groups responded
 - ▶ Concern about ambiguity around many *terms* being used, seemingly, to describe one key *concept*: what it means to be ‘the user’ in an online system
 - ▶ major discussion and insights
 - ▶ Realization that there are many concepts that need to be differentiated and clearly and separately defined
- Rec #4:** Establish a *core* terminology around the main entities and relationships in an “*identity* ecosystem”. Build outwards from there as necessary

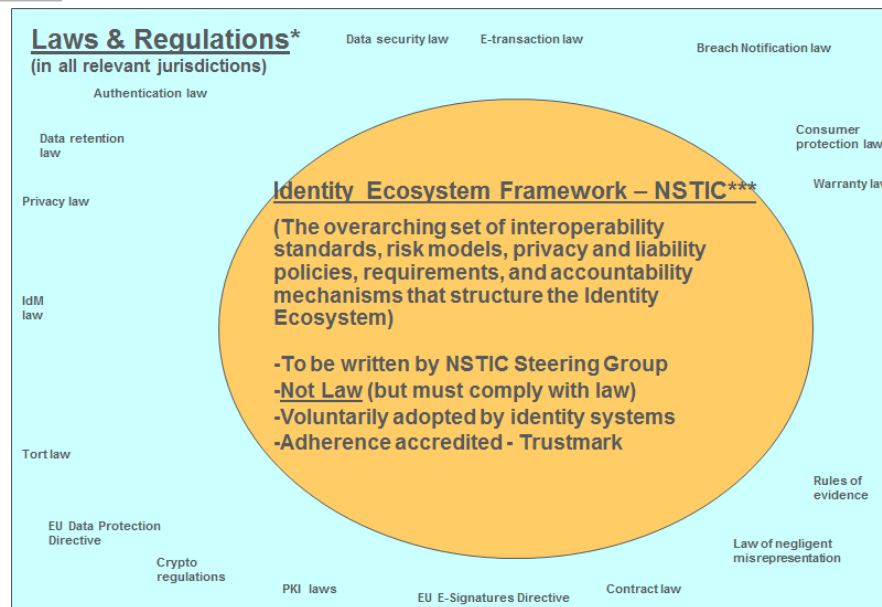


Some relevant sources for concepts and terms



From OASIS Specification "SOA Reference Architecture Foundation"

Tom Smedinghof "Emerging Legal Framework for identity management"



? Why?

- ▶ The SOA ecosystem model is appropriate to the core IDESG work:
 - ▶ IDESG context *is* that of an ecosystem
 - ▶ Understanding and definition of entities and roles played in analog real world, in digital systems, and the interfaces between the two
 - ▶ Uses ISO methodology (ISO 1087)
 - ▶ Smedinghof's paper covers many of the core ideas that need to be addressed
 - ▶ Including defining what an “identity ecosystem framework” actually is
 - ▶ Develop core concepts from these two works as a starter set
 - ▶ Identity ecosystem, ecosystem framework, parties involved and their relationships
 - ▶ Policy issues, trust, etc.
- Rec #5:** Build the core terminology using concepts from Tom Smedinghof's paper and, as needed, from the OASIS SOA Reference Architecture Foundation and ITU X.1252



How to proceed



? Methodology (1)

► *Conceptually:*

- Distinguish it – make clear that there **is** a distinct concept
- Describe it – identify the “unique combination of characteristics” that underlines that distinction
- Define it – provide a descriptive statement that serves to differentiate the concept from another

If the assertion is maintained that a distinct concept exists

- Label it – give it a name
 - If the name exists already, decide whether a homonym is acceptable; if so, ensure the catalog highlights that different definitions/concepts exist for the same term and, ideally, the context(s) in which each would be used
- Catalog it – include it the terminology
- Publicize it

? Methodology (2)

► *Practically:*

- A person or group believes they have identified a distinct concept
- Use a standard template to make a first attempt to describe and define it
 - Open publishing method
- Publish “candidate concept”
 - Candidate concept and proposed term is locked
- Start a discussion and allow a comment period
 - Open method for commenting; and for editing (with tracking and roll-back) the descriptions, proposed definitions and related materials (citations, etc.)
- Terminology group reviews proposal and comments
- Confirms concept; rejects it as a duplicate; or refers it back for further discussion
- If confirmed, publish and lock the concept, term and definition
 - Comments should continue to be open and encouraged

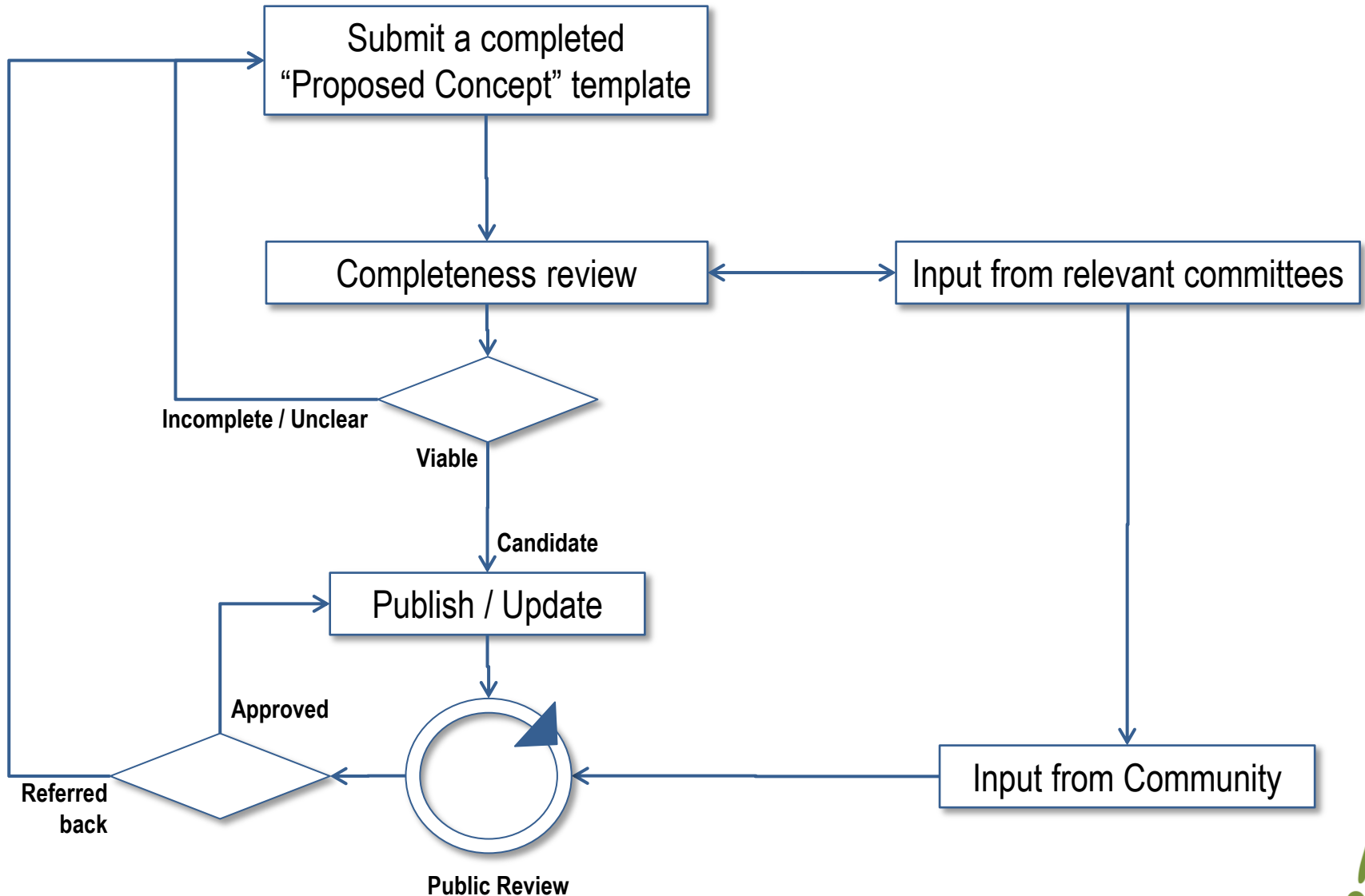
Rec #6: Agree and publicize this simple workflow

Rec #7: Agree and publicize a “candidate concept” submission template

Rec #8: Create and publish entries for initial candidate concepts



Proposed Workflow





Proposed Candidate Concept Template

- ▶ Describe your concept
 - ▶ Spell out the characteristics of the concept that help distinguish it
- ▶ Define your concept
 - ▶ Give an initial, dictionary-style, proposed definition that, if needed, also helps distinguish your proposed concept from other concepts with which it could be confused
- ▶ Name your concept
 - ▶ Choose a name (the proposed “term”) that is likely to be clear, familiar and unambiguous
- ▶ Provide references or anecdotes
 - ▶ If you are aware that the concept has already been defined somewhere or has been identified as a distinct concept in an ongoing discussion, provide some pointers



? Methodology (3)

Then,

- ▶ Identify concept and term ‘clusters’:
 - ▶ *Types of entity; organization; role; relationship; process; activity; etc.;*
- ▶ Identify context-dependent uses of terms; underline ambiguities; alternate uses; flag up ‘danger words’; etc.;
- ▶ Add granularity as required

Rec #9: Agree initial “concept clusters” – establish small group of SMEs to discuss and propose candidate concepts for the cluster

Can we start with clustering the terms used in the NSTIC strategy document?

Interesting presentation by Tom Smedinghof on understanding the concepts involved in an “identity ecosystem framework” and what it could/should mean – will be presented to Chairs meeting next week

Remember:

- ▶ we are a multi-disciplinary organization
- ▶ We have multiple audiences
- ▶ do **not** make assumptions that terms or even concepts are shared – ‘if in doubt, spell it out’

Rec #10: Have the terminology group report regularly to Plenary and Committee Chairs’ Group; and update repository

? Infrastructure and Tools (1)

► Text-centred tool - Wiki?

► ‘Wikimedia paradigm’ for presenting concepts

► Familiar way of presenting, finding, commenting upon and navigating concepts and terms

► Also being requested by a number of other Committees and Working Groups

Rec #11: Present these requirements to Communications & Outreach Committee; Argue for tools that reflect this familiar paradigm

Latest: Secretariat is due to present, as a technology advisory meeting on 18 Jan 2013, proposals for the introduction of Media Wiki



? Infrastructure and Tools (2)

► Image-centred tools

- Good for visualization of concepts *and* the relationships between them

- Major considerations:

- Simplicity - Concept Map(s)?

- Formality/Tractability – UML, ISO Topic Maps, RDF/A, OWL

- Tools?

- Plenty of enterprise-grade options

- Need to assess cost/benefit – keep it simple but no simpler

Rec #12: Discuss requirements with other committees/working groups likely to require similar tools

Flipcharts and pens are good enough to start with

? Summary of Recommendations

- ▶ **Rec #1:** Use “concept”, “term” and “definition” consistently in **all** discussions on terminology
- ▶ **Rec #2:** Make an IDESG Terminology publicly available and easy to update
- ▶ **Rec #3:** In all discussions with external groups, make it clear that **our** terminology is appropriate to **our** domain and that we will cooperate to map equivalent concepts
- ▶ **Rec #4:** Establish a **core** terminology around the main entities and relationships in an “**identity** ecosystem”. Build outwards from there as necessary
- ▶ **Rec #5:** Build the core terminology using concepts from Tom Smedinghof’s paper and, as needed, from the OASIS SOA Reference Architecture Foundation and ITU X.1252
- ▶ **Rec #6:** Agree and publicize a simple workflow
- ▶ **Rec #7:** Agree and publicize template for “candidate concepts”
- ▶ **Rec #8:** Create and publish initial entries for core concepts
- ▶ **Rec #9:** Have a terminology group report regularly and update repository
- ▶ **Rec #10:** Report to Plenary and Committee Chairs Group
- ▶ **Rec #11:** Present our requirements to Communications & Outreach Committee; Argue for tools that reflect familiar “Wikimedia” paradigm
- ▶ **Rec #12:** Discuss requirements with other committees/working groups likely to require similar visual modeling tools



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