



CONSTRUCTECH

Constructech magazine influences construction professionals to unleash the business value of technology.

Home | News | Archives | Tech Day | Awards | Tech Index | Resources | Subscribe | Digital

Search



Login | Register



agcXML Reboot Fuels Optimism for Software Interoperability

March 28, 2013

The idea of software interoperability is getting a boost with talk of the agcXML getting new life. Led by a new group that looks to get all the major players aligned around the idea of open data exchange, such efforts could open the door for bigger and better things in construction software.

Launched back in 2009, agcXML was an initiative funded and led by the AGC (Associated General Contractors of America), www.agc.org, Arlington, Va., and managed by the National Institute of Building Sciences, under a contract with AGC. It was designed to enable the reliable exchange of transactional data involved in a typical construction project including, such as submittals, RFIs (requests for information), payment data, and addenda, among others.

This resulted in a set of XML schemas designed to facilitate the exchange of such data among disparate software applications. Through the agcXML schemas, non-proprietary data format and classification systems would allow software developers the ability to modify applications in order to import and export data in a standard format. The schemas were to remain the property of AGC and made publicly available and licensed at no cost to all parties for any actions that were deemed to be a "legitimate purpose in support of the exchange of agcXML data.



Successful trials at industry trade shows made believers out of many. In particular a demonstration between e-Builder, www.e-builder.net, Ft. Lauderdale, Fla., and Penta Technologies, www.penta.com, Brookfield, Wis., using agcXML schemas showed off the power of successful and seamless data exchange between IT systems for owners and contractors. But since that time, the industry hasn't heard much with regards to moving agcXML forward.

However, as they say in the software game, such efforts seem to be in for a "reboot" of sorts as the AGC recently engaged the services of Burger Consulting Group Inc., www.burgerconsulting.com, Chicago, Ill., to provide the support functions for the development and promotion of agcXML.



Throughout the course of the next 24 months the group plans to be actively engaged in developing new schema, updating existing schema, and reviewing and endorsing complementary schemas. In addition, Burger Consulting will be presenting the standard to contractors and software developers as well as working with software vendors on the technical specifications and structure.

According to Christian Burger, president and founder of Burger Consulting Group, they have spent a great deal of time getting organized with the clear intent of having a smooth start to the process. This has resulted in a charter that now exists with objectives and mission and an organization chart and protocols for communication.

"This initiative can help everybody, or it could only help a few depending on whether or not they want to adopt it, but the AGC does not have an interest in helping any one company compete in the marketplace and they don't have a revenue objective here of trying to sell something," says Burger. "All they want to do is put in a series of standards for data for



More News

- Talent Management in Construction
- How Can Construction Help Raise the Grade?
- Making Use of Data in the Field
- Construction Technology Helps with Green Certification
- Next-Gen CRM Goes Social, Mobile



construction business transaction data that will enhance interoperability."

While the term agcXML might not mean a great deal to some in the construction industry, it's the pure idea of interoperability that will resonate. "When you talk to a contractor they don't necessarily care what you call it, they just want their estimating system to talk to their accounting system, or their time card system to feed to their payroll, or their collaboration system to work with their owners' project management system," says Burger.



Some tend to question why now for a return to such efforts. You could chalk it up to timing compared to when it launched, or to the fact that technology has progressed to the point that the idea of interoperability seems much more feasible these days. Whatever the reason, the fact of the matter is the software market is once again huddling up on such efforts. In the end, it all could lead to big things for technology in construction.

<p>Construction Accounting www.construction-software.com/account... Construction Accounting Software by ComputerEase Software</p>	➔
<p>PDF Construction Takeoffs www.Bluebeam.com/Takeoff Free Trial. Area, length, counts. Add formulas for estimating costs.</p>	➔
<p>Constant Contact® www.constantcontact.com The Trusted Leader in Email Marketing. Try it Free Today.</p>	➔
<p>Free Construction Bids www.BidTool.net Free Access to Commercial Construction Bids in Your Area.</p>	➔



[Advertising](#) | [Subscriber Services](#) | [Reprints](#) | [Press Room](#) | [Enewsletters](#) | [Industry Events](#) | [Contact Us](#) | [Partners](#)

Copyright © Specialty Publishing Co. | Constructech magazine 2013 | Questions? Please contact the Webmaster at webmaster@constructech.com