



Concept Collaboration – Outcomes

An update from the MoReq2010 project team

1. Introduction

The MoReq2010 Concept Collaboration took place over July and August of 2010. We would like to thank all those who took part in the consultation and made contributions via comments on the consultation portal. More than 100 people signed up to the consultation portal and contributed nearly 500 comments to the site.

Following this first consultation phase we additionally sought feedback from the MoReq2010 Experts' Review Group, a sub-committee of the European Archives Group that has been convened by the European Commission to provide expert advice to the DLM Forum on the MoReq2010 specification.

All feedback received, from the public consultation, the Experts' Review Group, and other meetings, discussions and private correspondence has been carefully reviewed and considered.

As we prepare for a new consultation on the draft specification for MoReq2010 we would like to take this opportunity to report on the outcomes to all those who took part in the first phase and provide a summary of how we have taken the many significant responses we received into consideration.

We would also like to encourage your further participation in the upcoming draft consultation. The consultation portal can be found at:

<http://contribute2moreq.eu/>

New participants can register at this site now. We will be announcing the next consultation phase shortly.

2. Publication format

The MoReq2010 specification will be published to the web as a web document. We now intend to make both PDF and Microsoft Word downloads available from the website. However, the website will always remain the authoritative version.

We hope to give members of the DLM Forum a first glimpse of the proposed user interface for MoReq2010 at the upcoming DLM Forum meeting in Brussels in November.

3. Change of name

Based on feedback received we will retain the nomenclature of “model requirements.”

However, despite this and despite availability in Word format, we continue to advise strongly against direct customisation of the MoReq2010 specification by consumers for their own purposes.

Clearly, any customisation of the specification will automatically nullify the testing and certification process and thereby undermine suppliers’ efforts to build compliant systems.

4. Pluggable and extensible architecture

Generally these concepts were very well received. They were also warmly endorsed by the Experts’ Review Group. Pluggability and extensibility lie at the heart of making MoReq a more flexible and modular specification.

However, feedback did remind us that any plug in modularity needs to be implemented as clearly and as simply as possible. This will be reflected in the draft specification.

5. Versioning

We noted the concern that was expressed by participants in how the MoReq2010 specification would be updated following its publication. There was a general call for a predictable and visible public maintenance and update schedule. Consultees felt the specification needed to be stable and feared excessive volatility.

Ongoing maintenance is not directly the province of the MoReq2010 Project Team, however we have passed on this request at a recent meeting of the MoReq Governance Board.

Following its publication, the MoReq Governance Board will take the lead responsibility for the upkeep of MoReq2010, including the development of new modules and review and maintenance activities on existing modules. We have conveyed the request for the development of a MoReq2010 specification roadmap and expect this issue to be addressed as early as the upcoming DLM Forum meeting in Brussels in November.

6. Compliance button

We believe that the debate over the necessary built in assurance mechanism that all MoReq2010 compliant records systems will require, will be better informed once the requirements around compliance reporting are available as part of the draft specification.

7. Non-functional requirements

A decision has been made to include these in the MoReq2010 specification.

8. Managed records

The comments received during the consultation in reference to managed records, as well as the additional advice received from the Experts' Review Group, have been particularly useful in reshaping our approach. This has allowed us to both simplify the model we intend to progress and link it back more closely to sound records management theory and good practice.

The following in point form are a summary of our key conclusions in this area, with your assistance:

- MoReq2010 needs to properly distinguish between the concepts of "classification" and "aggregation," their purpose and their implementation;
- We intend to make central use of the noun "aggregation" rather than introduce other alternative but controversial terminology;
- We intend to simplify and reduce the number of alternative options available for specialised aggregations, such as files; and
- We intend to link MoReq2010 much more closely to established records management authorities, in particular, ISO 23081.

9. Just records

We released several conceptual proposals to do with different types of records: simple, compound, physical, serial and external. We received strong feedback from all sources that such distinctions were, in the end, unnecessary and we are inclined to agree.

In the draft specification, therefore, we intend to unify the different records concepts as much as possible. Any distinction between different types of records or aggregations will be kept to a minimum and made by extending the core framework, rather than accommodated within it.

10. Authentication and identification

There was a degree of confusion around the proposal to consider authentication and identification as requirements external to the MoReq2010 specification. In the most part we felt that this was due more to the way the concepts were written up, rather than being objections to the proposals themselves. For instance, it was not meant to convey that a MoReq2010 compliant records system cannot perform its own user management, authentication and identification.

In principle we believe that it is simply not possible within the scope of the MoReq2010 test materials to provide for the rigorous testing and certification of records systems against complex modern information security requirements. Rather than mislead



consumer organisations into assuming that because a particular product is certified against MoReq2010 it is ipso facto secure, we prefer to direct them to more specialised information security standards, such as ISO 27001. This will enable them to certify a MoReq2010 product implementation in the context of their specific corporate security environment in a far more effective manner.

Adopting this approach means that we must consider issues such as user authentication and identification as being beyond the scope of MoReq2010. Of course, we will still specify these as non-testable assertions and require that suppliers provide certain information about the security of their products when they register for compliance testing against MoReq2010.

11. Long term preservation of user context

The Experts' Review Group reminded the MoReq2010 project team of the imperative to collect and retain historic information about the user context to complete the record.

Please note that, especially where MoReq2010 records systems rely on external authentication and identification services, the draft specification will include requirements for collecting and preserving immediate contextual information from these services.

12. Atomicity of functions

Feedback received identified some instances of iterative functions, generally repetitive execution of other simpler functions, where atomicity was not desirable. As a direct consequence of this feedback the draft specification will identify which functions must be executed atomically and which functions are iterative and may fail gracefully, and at which particular points in their execution they may fail to ensure the integrity of the records system.

13. Audit trails vs. event histories

Following advice from the Experts' Review Group, and others, we will be moving away from the concept of audit trails and will instead focus in the draft specification on maintaining an individual event history as an integral part of an entity's metadata.

In other words, MoReq2010 will no longer specify an audit trail as if it were a single unified "system log." Instead, each entity will have its own event history that is updated by the system as necessary. (How a supplier may internally implement this concept will not be specified.)

14. Access control

One concept we put forward was in relation to the implementation of role based access control. We recognised the need to have an alternative to flawed permissions-based

security models and proposed making the MoReq2 access control model more explicit. To allow for legacy systems we suggested a rating structure.

This approach was criticised as being too complex for both suppliers and consumers.

In the draft specification we therefore intend to simplify the proposal, as follows:

- The core framework will refer only to the two principal roles of “user” and “administrator”
- The full role based access model as proposed during the concept collaboration will be reintroduced as an extension module

As a result, there will only be two possible levels of compliance and no rating system. Products will either comply to the core framework only, or they will comply to the core framework plus the “Roles” extension module.

15. Retention and disposal schedules

We proposed introducing version control for retention and disposal schedules. Many respondents made the counter-proposal that retention and disposal schedules should be immutable, forcing an administrator to create a new schedule rather than being able to modify an existing one.

We agree with this feedback and intend to implement it in the draft specification.

16. Retention and disposal process

Feedback on concepts related to the current retention and disposal process has led us to believe that their definition in MoReq2 can be confusing to some practitioners and is not well understood. In particular this relates to the retention and disposal process as it applies to entities with multiple assigned retention and disposal schedules.

The most elegant way of resolving this apparent complexity is to ensure that at any given time only one retention and disposal schedule will be active on any particular record or aggregation. We intend to introduce very simple rules for governing this into the draft specification.

17. Date of last access

In line with feedback received during the concept consultation we intend to remove “date of the most recent access to a collection” as a trigger event.

18. Stubs

We will be making the amount of metadata to be retained by a stub configurable based on system implementation.

19. Scheduling

We posted a concept related to extending the retention and disposal model to include related scheduled tasks, such as the automatic closure of aggregations at particular times, downgrading of an aggregation's security category after a given period, etc.

Feedback indicated that while these tasks were important, they were not strictly considered to be part of retention and disposal scheduling. It became clear that a wider concept of scheduling was needed to encompass both retention and disposal scheduling and other similar types of schedules.

As a result, in the draft specification we intend to introduce a generic concept of scheduling as an integral part of a MoReq2010 compliant records system.

In the core framework scheduling will be used only in relation to retention and disposal. However, the concept will be extensible so that other modules can define additional scheduled behaviour without having to revisit the underlying concept.

Scheduling can then be reused in any module where delayed system behaviour is required.

20. Conclusion

In conclusion a great deal of feedback was collected during the concept consultation phase.

The public response as well as the advice of the ERG has been a useful reminder that the new MoReq2010 specification needs to be soundly based on a strong theoretical underpinning. The underlying concepts of records management need to be clearly stated and interpreted.

We will be paying close attention to all the feedback we received from the concept collaboration as we carry these concepts forward into the more detailed phases of the MoReq2010 project. We hope to attract a similar level of expert feedback to the draft consultation when it is launched in the next few days, and this will continue to be invaluable in shaping the future of MoReq.

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