

Frequently Asked Questions

April 2013

1. What is the LCC?

The LCC is a cross-media, multinational coalition of more than 40 partners from the media and creative industries, including representatives of authors and artists, working together with their standards bodies to establish automated communications between rightsholders and those who wish to use content.

2. What is the LCC trying to achieve?

The principal goal of the Linked Content Coalition is to enable greater legitimate use of digital content through better management of data relating to rights across the network. The LCC recognizes that securing the highest possible level of automation in licensing will reduce barriers to entry, reduce cost in the supply chain, increase volume of use and encourage innovation.

3. How did the LCC start?

LCC was initiated by the European Publishers Council, a high level group of Chairmen and CEOs of leading European media corporations actively involved in multimedia markets spanning newspaper, magazine, book, journal, internet and online database publishers, and radio and TV broadcasting.

The LCC project is based on a “big idea” successfully submitted by the European Publishers Council to the European Commission’s Information Society Directorate General (DG InfSo), in response to a competition launched by Vice President Neelie Kroes in October 2010 that called for “Big Ideas for the Digital Agenda”.

4. Who is involved with the LCC?

The LCC comprises representatives from all media types and all parts of the rights data supply chain – rights owners, intermediaries, rights exchanges and users – as well as existing standards bodies and technology providers. A full list of Coalition Partners may be found [here](#).

5. Is the LCC a European initiative?

No. Although the LCC originated from a European initiative it is global in scope and ambition to reflect the reality of the online world and the business interests of its members.

6. Why do we need the LCC?

There is a huge and rapidly expanding amount of digital content available through the internet, but it is often difficult for those (companies or individuals) who want to trade in rights to find each other. Transactions are too people-heavy and therefore both expensive and inefficient. New business opportunities are deferred because of the cost of complying with multiple standards. Multiple registries and exchanges are unable to communicate effectively or automatically.

Existing standards bodies and other organisations are creating standards and methods of communicating rights but these are often focused on specific media silos

7. How have you established that there is a need for the LCC?

Use Cases were collected early in the project from across the copyright industries. They showed a very high degree of commonality of requirements from standards and data in different sectors. Three clear requirements emerged:

- Providing better rights information to partners in the supply chain
- Providing better rights information to end users
- Facilitating the creation of a voluntary but effective market for automated and semi-automated rights trading.

This process has been extended during the project by mapping a range of use cases into the RRM covering a wide range of types of rights data from existing schemas. This process of validation will be continued in a formal way within the RDI project.

8. What has the LCC delivered?

The LCC's first outputs are the LCC Framework for the Rights Data Supply Chain which comprise:

- the LCC Rights Reference Model (RRM), a formal, general and extensible reference data model for representing intellectual property rights and entitlements for any media or content, and
- present "best practice" principles for Identification, Messaging and how users access rights data and acquire licenses.

9. What is the Rights Reference Model?

The RRM provides a common language and approach to describing intellectual property rights for any media or content which has been designed as far as possible to be "future-proof" to be able to accommodate new developments.

Technically the RRM is a formal, general and extensible reference data model which identifies eight types of entity, their core attributes and the relationships between them. One very significant feature is the single Right entity, through which permissions and entitlements of all

kinds (including ownership claims and permissions) may be expressed to any level of detail with their associated prohibitions and conditions. This provides a breadth and simplicity to the model which other rights-based models typically lack.

10. What is the Common Rights Format?

The Common Rights Format (CRF) is an exemplary expression of the RRM provided as an XML schema (XSD) which enables data to be expressed in XML in a way that complies with the RRM.

11. What's in it for business?

Easier discovery of rights ownership will increase market size for rightsholders and decrease copyright infringement.

- Increasing automation will reduce cost and increase profitability for all supply chain participants.
- More standardization will lower system development costs, encouraging transformative innovation and increasing market size for all supply chain participants.
- Positively addressing perceived inefficiencies in the digital supply chain will counter pressure from regulators to reform copyright law.

12. What's in it for consumers?

To ensure that consumers can easily access and enjoy more content whether through human readable or automated licensing schemes. Consumers will benefit from greater choice of and greater access to more content.

13. What's in it for regulators?

Policy makers the world over recognise that the digital economy is still a huge, largely untapped resource and that meeting the challenge of online remuneration and recognition of copyright remains a significant obstacle to growth. In approving this project, the European Commission recognizes the importance of online copyright. The LCC's aim is to facilitate online media and therefore make a significant contribution to the future of the digital economy. We are taking this story around the world to audiences of businesses, consumers and regulators. The LCC is not about changing copyright law but about creating the infrastructure to enable current copyright law to work properly and in a way that encourages innovation and investment in the sector.

14. What political support does the LCC have?

It has received considerable support from DG InfSo and other parts of the Commission, as well as from many members of the European Parliament and Member States.

15. Will the LCC replace existing standards?

No: just the opposite. Its task is to design and implement ways in which existing data, identifier and messaging standards can work together (or *interoperate*) in the most seamless and automated ways. Only where suitable tools or standards which are needed do not exist does the LCC encourage new initiatives to fill gaps.

16. Do you expect all rights communication to be automated?

The LCC vision is not Utopian: there will always be problems with the creation and supply of data, and there will always be many rights transactions and data flows which cannot be wholly automated through data weaknesses or the need for human negotiation. However, there is a great deal that can be done to create a data network suited to digital needs and capabilities that puts users and providers in contact as seamlessly as possible. It has been achieved for much online commerce, and there is no reason why it cannot now be done for rights.

17. Is the LCC based on a specific technology?

No. The RRM is an abstract data model which can be expressed or implemented in many different syntactic forms (such as a relational database schema, an object model, an RDF or XML schema or a formal ontology) without changing its meaning.

18. Does LCC enforce specific business models?

No. The LCC is neutral about business models. Rights may be exploited for value or exercised freely according to the wishes of whoever has the right to assign them. Other business model "anomalies" such as works in the public domain, fair use provisions or "orphan works" can also be accommodated.

19. Does LCC support automatic or compulsory licensing?

No. The LCC seeks to encourage and facilitate the automation of rights management where appropriate but not the automatic or compulsory licensing of rights where this is not the intent of the rights owner.

20. Is the LCC just for commercial content?

No. The principles set out in the LCC Framework are equally applicable in both "commercial" and "cultural" domains: libraries, museums and archives may be acquirers and exploiters of rights and creators of content just as commercial publishers or aggregators are, as can a bank or a supermarket or a private individual loading a video or photograph onto a file-sharing service.

21. Is LCC designed for specific media types?

No. The LCC Framework is applicable across all media types.

22. How can LCC represent something as complex as rights?

Rights administration will always involve complexity because the content, the uses to which it is put and the conditions which apply really are complex, and have become much more so in the digital age. The Framework, however, offers an integrated strategy which can be applied both "top down" and "bottom up", making use of existing schemas and infrastructure but describing ways of creating, aggregating and transforming complex, multimedia data to fill gaps in the network. LCC simplifies as much as possible, and makes no demands for anyone to do anything

The LCC vision is not Utopian: there will always be problems with the creation and supply of data, and there will always be many rights transactions and data flows which cannot be wholly automated through data weaknesses or the need for human negotiation. However, there is a great deal that can be done to create a data network suited to digital needs and capabilities that puts users and providers in contact as seamlessly as possible. It has been achieved for much online commerce, and there is no reason why it cannot now be done for rights.

23. Do we really need something as complex as the RRM?

The rights to a piece of content can be very complex and it would be inappropriate to design something which didn't reflect this complexity. But this doesn't mean that a user always needs to be aware of the complexity "under the hood" in their day to day work.

When you want to describe a colour more often than not you will simply say that it is "red". You probably know that if you want to define what type of "red" you mean to a third party you might use the proprietary "Pantone" reference system or if you were using a Microsoft programme you might use one of two models which can be found in the "custom" section of the "more colours" drop down called "RGB" or "HSL". A quick glance at the Wikipedia pages for Pantone, RGB or HSL will quickly show how complex it can be to describe something as apparently simple as a colour and its relationship to other colours. Not being aware of this complexity or the underlying theory doesn't stop us from saying "red"!

24. What will the LCC do now?

There are two main areas in which LCC expects to concentrate next :

- Interoperability: aggregation and transformation services using the RRM
- Data capture: Identification of parties, content and rights "at the point of entry" to the Web

There is also some remaining work to be done on the Framework:

- LCC Principles of User Interface

- Matrix of existing schemas and identifiers: LCC hopes to expand Table 1 above into a more comprehensive directory of metadata, identifier and message standards for the Digital Identifier Network.

25. What is the Rights Data Integration project?

Rights Data Integration (RDI) is an initiative co-funded by the European Commission which is due to start in May 2013. RDI is independent of the LCC although many of the participants are the same.

The objective of RDI is to show how the LCC Framework can make it easier to find the rights owners for different types of content and where appropriate to obtain a license to use that content. It will use an RRM-based "hub" to transform data into a "one stop shop" for users without requiring rights owners to change their systems.

The preparation of course material for schools, colleges or home learning is a good example of how this might work. A single package of material might involve extracts from literature, text books and periodicals, together with pictures, music and audio visual content. Obtaining the rights to use all of these different types of material can be time consuming and costly involving multiple rights languages. RDI will demonstrate how this process might be fully or partially automated.

26. What is the relationship between the LCC and the UK Government's "Copyright Hub"?

The UK Copyright Hub initiative supports the LCC, and the RRM is being considered as the start point for its data architecture.

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