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NISO and OAI Publish American National Standard on ResourceSync Framework Specification

Baltimore, MD – May 7, 2014 - The National Information Standards Organization (NISO) and the Open Archives Initiative (OAI) announce the publication of the ResourceSync Framework Specification (ANSI/NISO Z39.99-2014)—a new American National Standard for the web detailing various capabilities that a server can implement to allow third-party systems to remain synchronized with its evolving resources. The ResourceSync joint project, funded with support from the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation and Jisc, was initiated to develop a new open standard on the real-time synchronization of web resources.

“Increasingly, large-scale digital collections are available from multiple hosting locations, are cached at multiple servers, and leveraged by several services,” explains Herbert Van de Sompel, Scientist, Los Alamos National Laboratory, OAI Executive, and Co-chair of the ResourceSync Working Group. “Since Web resources are continually changing, this proliferation of content yields the challenging problem of keeping services that leverage a server’s evolving content synchronized in a timely and accurate manner. Our two-year collaborative effort resulted in a specification that can be used to meet this challenge for a wide variety of use cases. This was possible by devising a modular specification and by grounding it in protocols that are already widely adopted.”

“The OAI Protocol for Metadata Harvesting (PMH) 2.0 specification can be used to effectively synchronize the metadata about resources,” states Simeon Warner, Director, IT Application Development, Cornell University, “but synchronizing the resources themselves was never specified. Although some resource synchronization methods exist, they are generally ad hoc, arranged by the individuals involved, and cannot be universally deployed. This new specification fills that void.”

“The ResourceSync specification introduces a range of easy to implement capabilities that a server may support to enable remote systems to remain more tightly in step with its evolving resources,” explains Michael L. Nelson, Associate Professor, Old Dominion University, Computer Science. “It also describes how a server can advertise the capabilities it supports. Remote systems can inspect this information to determine how best to remain aligned with the evolving data. All capabilities are implemented on the basis of the document formats introduced by the Sitemap protocol. Capabilities can be combined to achieve varying levels of functionality and hence meet different local or community requirements.”

“We expect this new standard will save a tremendous amount of time, effort, and resources by repository managers through the automation of the replication and updating process,” states Todd Carpenter, NISO Executive Director. “The end result will be to increase the general availability of content in web repositories and alleviate the variety of problems created by

outdated, inaccurate, superseded content that exists on the Internet today.”

The ResourceSync specification and video tutorials on using the standard are available on the NISO website at www.niso.org/workrooms/resourcesync/.

About the National Information Standards Organization (NISO)

NISO fosters the development and maintenance of standards that facilitate the creation, persistent management, and effective interchange of information so that it can be trusted for use in research and learning. To fulfill this mission, NISO engages libraries, publishers, information aggregators, and other organizations that support learning, research, and scholarship through the creation, organization, management, and curation of knowledge. NISO works with intersecting communities of interest and across the entire lifecycle of an information standard. NISO is a not-for-profit association accredited by the American

National Standards Institute (ANSI). More information about NISO is available on its website: www.niso.org.

About the Open Archives Initiative (OAI)

The Open Archives Initiative (OAI) develops and promotes interoperability standards that aim to facilitate the efficient dissemination of content. The Open Archives Initiative has its roots in an effort to enhance access to e-print archives as a means of increasing the availability of scholarly communication. Continued support of this work remains a cornerstone of the Open Archives program. OAI is committed to exploring and enabling the fundamental technological framework and standards to open up access to a range of digital materials. www.openarchives.org

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