Qualdocs Project

Working Group Charter

Revision	Date	Author	Notes
1	7/24/00	Paul Moore, Peerless Systems Networking	Initial version

This document is the charter for the PWG's Qualdocs project. Note that it is not a requirements definition; rather it is a broad description of what the group is to achieve and deliver. A detailed requirements document will be produced later.

Charter Statement

The working group is tasked with defining a protocol that enables the synchronous, negotiated exchange of image documents on a network. The exchange must be capable of being made safe.

Particular emphasis is placed on recreating the appropriate characteristics of PSTN faxing for use on the Internet and company intranets.

Explanation of terms

Synchronous

In a synchronous exchange the fundamental model is that the sender is assured that the receiver has received the data. The sender is in direct communication with the receiver and can interrogate the receiver. Examples of such exchanges are fax, IPP, HTTP, etc.

This contrasts with the asynchronous, store-and-forward nature of email systems and the current Internet Fax standards.

Negotiated

The two parties in the exchange need to be able to reach an agreement about the parameters of the exchange. This should include things such as image size, resolution, color depth, etc.

Image documents

The data exchanged is in the form of images that will typically have been captured by scanners, copiers or cameras. The protocol must be capable of transmitting ordered sequences of associated pages or images.

Safe

The exchange must be capable of being made secure. This must include confidentiality of data whilst in transit, controlling the access to receivers and authentication of the sender and / or receiver.

Fax characteristics

The important features of fax that are to be focussed on include public access (i.e. it is possible to send a fax to a person without them having to grant access to me), simply understood and communicated addressing, and simplicity of the conceptual model and actual use from the user's viewpoint.

Some features are not desirable, in particular the low image quality and transmission speed of current fax standards.

Deliverables

- o A specification (possibly more than one if deemed necessary) for the protocol.
- o Ideally a set of 'baked-off' interoperable implementations of senders and receivers of the protocol

Other possible deliverables could include:

- o A reference implementation of a sender and receiver
- o An "Open Source" implementation of one or more components
- o A conformance definition that could be used to build conformance test suite(s)
- o A test suite.

Guidelines

The protocol should re-use as much of the current de-jure and de-facto standards as possible.

It would be useful to bear in mind the possibility of carrying out the higher levels of the protocol using varying underlying technologies. For example wireless or Infrared as well as network protocols.

In keeping with the PWG guidelines the finished specification must not include any technology that is not usable license-free.

Although this working group is not formally chartered by the IETF it may well decide to submit its work to the IETF. It should therefore produce specifications that will be acceptable to that body.

Timing & Milestones

The initial charter of the WG shall run for 18 months from its agreement.

Charter + 0: Agreed charter

Charter + 3 months: Agreed requirements

Charter + 8 months: Agreed Specification

Charter + 12 months: Bake-off

Charter + 16 months: Revised specification & Implementors guide.