Draft Input for DRM customer communication

Submitted by ANSI at 3/2/04 Meeting of OMF DRM Ad-Hoc

Following is background and a proposed outline of elements that could be included in harmonized customer communication regarding the need for DRM.

Background/Goals

The goal here will be to determine the potential effect of DRM implementation on the standards distribution process, and by extension the impact of DRM on the users of standards. As there is generally some user-backlash related to the launch of DRM efforts, a comprehensive customer communications and relations plan is essential – a coordinated effort among SDO's will certainly lessen negative effects which might occur due to perceptions of access to standards being hindered.

So the question to answer is: what's the best way to communicate to customers that standards are copyrighted and that, in the digital age, DRM is a necessary measure for information suppliers to employ?

Form of communication

What are the best forms of communicating the need for DRM? While a communication in the form of a letter was discussed at the first meeting, a hard copy mailing of a letter is likely to be ignored.

Perhaps another more effective approach might be to develop boilerplate text that can be utilized by SDOs in any way that is most appropriate. For example, this text could be delivered at the point of purchase, namely as content on the online storefront.

As another example, boilerplate text could be integrated into an SDO's DRM FAQs to augment any other technology-specific content.

Approach for this draft input

Before the effort is made to craft the exact language to be used, our proposed first step is to attempt to reach some consensus on which broad themes would be most effective in communicating the need for DRM to our customers. For the purposes of discussion, here is an outline of proposed themes with some proposed sample text (in *italics*). The text would not necessarily be used in whole or in the order presented.

Proposed themes and sample text

1. Defining DRM for the customer

What is Digital Rights Management (DRM)?

Digital rights management (DRM) is a term used to describe technologies used for the copyright protection of digital content. DRM is the most effective means by which content owners can control and protect access to standards.

2. Educating customers that SDOs are self-supporting - countering the argument that all standards should be free

The standards development process must be self-supporting, and sales of standards are the primary source of funding. So managing access to standards based on copyright ownership and protecting content rights is imperative to the continued development, distribution, and promulgation of standards.

Question for discussion: Is it feasible to adjust pricing based on level of rights restriction? For example, one version of a document allows for unlimited printing and costs $100. Another version restricts printing to 2 copies, but costs $75.

3. Effort to balance user needs and degree of protection

In order to protect the copyright of standards, standards developing organizations (SDOs) and vendors have been working to incorporate DRM technology that is both user-friendly and effective. As a group, SDOs are striving to meet the needs of both the copyright owners and the customers who purchase and use the standards.

4. Ensuring integrity and authenticity

- *DRM can ensure that electronic standards delivered over the internet retain their integrity, and therefore their authenticity. Electronic formats and delivery of standards provide enhanced convenience to users, but also present the possibility for the production of counterfeit standards. By providing a system or service for establishing rights and permissions to standards, users can be assured of the authenticity of the standards that they have purchased.*

- *The use of DRM enables the trusted exchange of copyrighted electronic works among standards rights holders, intermediaries, and users.*

4. Electronic standards offer enhanced functionality for the user

Electronic formats and delivery of standards provide enhanced functionality and convenience for users. In addition to allowing customers to read standards on portable devices such as laptops or PDAs, keyword searches can be performed that allow the user to more quickly and accurately locate information within a standard. New ways of delivering standards content, such as pay-per-view, can also be realized.

But this added functionality and convenience also opens the door for copyright infringement and unauthorized transfer of standards. So in order to deliver these features, the standards developer must be more vigilant in protecting their intellectual property.

6. What types of controls can users expect?

Standards developers authorize the PDF version(s) of their standards to be licensed and installed on one personal computer - the PC from which the purchase was made and from where the PDF download was originally opened. Additionally, standards developers permit the user to make one hardcopy reproduction and one local electronic reproduction for backup purposes.

The electronic backup function is provided to allow recovery of a locked file if the original is no longer available due to accidental deletion, hardware failures, or other losses. This electronic backup version can only be accessed using the original PC.

These terms and conditions are articulated in the software license agreement included with every electronic standard download. To ensure compliance with this license, standards developers have added software that essentially "locks" the electronic standard to your computer.