Creating and Maintaining an XML.org Focus Area

[XML.org Focus Areas](#) on OASIS Standards serve as community gathering places and non-commercial information resources that advance the work of OASIS. They provide technical and educational materials, collaborative workspaces, and discussion areas.

Focus Areas are excellent mechanisms for building and enabling communities-of-support. An OASIS Technical Committee (TC) should consider creating and maintaining a Focus Area if it:

    a) has produced one or more approved OASIS Standards;
    b) can assemble a core team of experts to serve on a Focus Area Editorial Board;
    c) anticipates the commitment of at least three Focus Area Sponsorships; and
    d) expects active community support for the Focus Area.

Focus Area Infrastructure

OASIS provides the Focus Area infrastructure based on the open source [Drupal](#) content management platform. As Drupal supports a variety of language character sets, XML.org Focus Areas may be created in any language supported, specific pages may be translated into multiple languages, and machine-translations for the site may be available.

All Focus Areas contain three major sections of content.

- "Knowledge Base" (KB) pages provides a reliable technical and educational background on the standard, as compiled by the Focus Area Editorial Board.

- "Today" pages serve as a community bulletin board and directory where readers share topical information and recommend useful resources. This can include news about events, testimonials, case studies, and lists of services and products which implement the topic OASIS Standard.

- "Wiki" pages enable the public to dynamically collaborate on documents and add new pages to the site through a wiki interface.

Focus Area Editorial Boards

Creation and oversight of content for each XML.org Focus Area is provided by an Editorial Board made up of OASIS members. Focus Areas are designed to be self-sustaining, with new content added by the community and old content automatically archived. The primary role of the Editorial Board is to a) develop and maintain the "Knowledge Base" of background information on the standard, b) help ensure that user postings on the "Today" and "Wiki" sections of the site adhere to the [XML.org Focus Area Editorial Guidelines](#) and c) promote the use of the site within the international community. Editorial Board members may also volunteer to translate portions of the Knowledge Base into other languages.

Focus Area Editorial Boards may be organized by members of one or more OASIS TCs. Participation in an Editorial Board is open to any OASIS member interested in actively advancing the use of OASIS Standards; membership in the TC that created the Focus Area's topic standard is not required.

Editorial Board members agree to actively participate in the creation and oversight of the Focus Area. International representation is encouraged; those who are unable to attend Board conference calls because of time zone or language barriers may still serve on Editorial Boards and actively participate in the review and maintenance of content.

Each XML.org Focus Area features a page listing the current Editorial Board members and their bios.

Focus Area Sponsorships

Funding for Focus Areas is provided by OASIS Sponsor members who find value in growing the market for standards-compliant products and benefit by recognition as leading supporters of the target OASIS Standard. To ensure adequate funding is available to cover IT support costs, at least three OASIS Sponsor-level member companies must each commit to a Focus Area Sponsorship before launch.

Launching a Focus Area

OASIS members interested in creating a Focus Area for an OASIS Standard should contact communications@oasis-open.org. The basic steps involved in launching include:

1. OASIS staff and interested members work with the appropriate OASIS TC(s) to build support for the Focus Area and solicit volunteers to serve on the Editorial Board.

2. OASIS staff works to secure commitment for Focus Area Sponsorship from existing and prospective OASIS Sponsor-level members. At least three sponsorships (@ 5,000 USD/year each) are needed to cover the costs of creating and maintaining a Focus Area.

3. OASIS IT staff creates a publicly archived email list for Editorial Board use. Editorial Board members subscribe to the list.

4. Editorial Board members use the email list and conference calls to elect a chair or co-chairs from their group, outline Knowledge Base content; and assign responsibility for specific pages. Chairs are responsible for convening Editorial Board calls and posting meeting minutes. Conference calls are scheduled by the Editorial Board (typically weekly until launch, then monthly or quarterly) to meet the projected launch date. The Editorial Board operates informally, with decisions made by group consensus. (Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised may be used should a formal process be needed.)

5. OASIS IT staff creates a skeleton site with empty content categories for the Focus Area, http://<name>.xml.org. Board members are given access as 'editors'.

6. Board members draft, collaborate on, and review Knowledge Base content, in keeping with the Terms of Use for XML.org Focus Areas. The Board also determines poll questions and forum topics.

7. OASIS Communications staff create and post "About" content to the Focus Area site and assist the Editorial Board as needed.

8. The affiliated TC(s) is(are) invited to review and comment on the Knowledge Base content. Their suggestions are reviewed and addressed by the Editorial Board.

9. The Editorial Board and TC members are invited to seed "Today" and "Wiki" pages with their own organization's product listings, testimonials, forum postings, news, etc.

10. OASIS staff provides a link to the new Focus Area from the XML.org homepage and from the affiliated OASIS TC's homepage.

11. OASIS issues a press release announcing the new Focus Area and covers it in Consortium newsletters and web sites. OASIS staff, Editorial Board members, and TC members work to promote use of the site.

Post-Launch

After the Focus Area is launched, the Editorial Board continues to communicate via its mail list and meets by phone less frequently (generally once a month or quarter). Editorial Board members commit to visit the site on a regular basis. Ongoing Editorial Board duties include:

- review Knowledge Base pages and update if necessary;

- routinely 'police' "Today" and "Wiki" pages (one Editorial Board member may be assigned to each major page) to remove any inappropriate posts (spam, inflammatory languages, anything that does not meet the XML.org Focus Area Editorial Guidelines);

- determine future poll questions and frequency (monthly or quarterly, at least);

- notify OASIS IT of any technical problems with the site;

- participate in forums and blogs (optional); and

- discuss enhancements to the site's functionality, ways to promote its use, etc.

Getting Started

OASIS members interested in starting an XML.org Focus Area should contact communications@oasis-open.org.