



MedBiquitous Learning Objects Working Group Charter

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Mission

The mission of the MedBiquitous Learning Objects Working Group is to develop XML standards and Web services requirements and descriptions to enable interoperability, accessibility and reusability of Web-based medical learning content.

Context

MedBiquitous develops information technology standards for healthcare education and competence assessment. Through working groups and a standards committee, MedBiquitous members are creating a technology blueprint for healthcare education and competence assessment. Based on XML and Web services standards, this blueprint will weave together the many activities, organizations, and resources that support the ongoing education, performance, and assessment of healthcare professionals.

While online learning provides a convenient way to deliver learning to geographically dispersed physicians, high production costs prevent many educators from developing top-quality online learning resources. Pharmaceutical and device companies often produce top-quality learning resources but are unable to reuse these resources or share them with others.

Fortunately, XML standards have been created to address many of these issues. The Advanced Distributed Learning Initiative (ADL), funded by the United States Department of Defense, has assembled a set of standards for online learning called the Shareable Content Object Reference Model (SCORM). ADL defines SCORM as “a collection of specifications adapted from multiple sources to provide a comprehensive suite of e-learning capabilities that enable interoperability, accessibility and reusability of Web-based learning content.” SCORM consists of standards for learning object metadata and content packaging and a run-time environment for learning objects. Many developers of educational authoring systems and learning management systems are implementing SCORM standards in their products.

SCORM itself leverages standards and specifications produced by others, including Learning Object Metadata (LOM). Developed by the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) Learning Technology Standards Committee (LTSC).

To take advantage of this strong industry backing, MedBiquitous will work with ADL and IEEE LTSC to develop educational standards and guidelines for healthcare. With these standards in place, organizations will be able to share and reuse modules of online learning, thereby decreasing production costs, increasing return on investment, and offering healthcare professionals, patients, and caregivers effective and convenient opportunities for learning. Standards would also enable the dynamic delivery of learning content tailored to a learner's needs.

Since SCORM does not explicitly address many of the unique requirements of healthcare education, the MedBiquitous Learning Objects Working Group is working with the ADL and IEEE LTSC to:

- Create healthcare specific extensions to learning object metadata.
- Create SCORM usage guidelines for healthcare.
- Define requirements for related Web services.
- Define requirements for medical learning resource repositories or registries.

The Working Group will also explore completing a pilot project that demonstrates sharing and reuse of learning objects.

Scope

The working group will focus on creating specifications for Healthcare Learning Object Metadata and SCORM for Healthcare. The group may supplement these efforts with requirements for common registries, repositories, or Web services to connect registries and repositories such as HEAL, MedEdPortal, and IVIMEDS. Whenever possible, the group will leverage useful specifications developed by other organizations. The MedBiquitous Technical Steering Committee will offer guidance and technical support for approaches requiring Web services descriptions.

The specifications and services created by this working group will likely serve as foundation pieces for other specifications and Web services designed by MedBiquitous and will be architected to allow for other parts of the MedBiquitous blueprint for healthcare education and competence assessment.

Work Plan

The Working Group will meet via teleconference on most occasions. Face-to-face working group meetings or barn raisings may be convened upon occasion. Working Group members or staff will perform much of the group's work independently with member comments submitted to a discussion list.

References

Advanced Distributed Learning SCORM Overview,
<http://www.adlnet.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=scormabt>

The IEEE LTSC website,
<http://www.ieeeltsc.org>