Portable Contacts and vCardDAV

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draft-smarr-vcarddav-portable-contacts-00
Why am I here?

- Portable Contacts and vCardDAV share goals:
  “An address book access protocol leveraging the vCard data format.”
  “…keep the base specification feature set small with an adequate extension mechanism”
  “An XML schema which is semantically identical to vCard in all ways and can be mechanically translated to and from vCard format without loss of data”
  “Such a standard format would be preferable to multiple proprietary XML schemas”
Why am I here?

• Opportunity for greater awareness, interoperability, and overlap between specs
  – Communities, use cases, design constraints, lessons from early adopters / implementers
  – Common XML schema? (cf. draft-perreault-vcarddav-vcardxml-00)?
  – CardDAV server as a Portable Contacts Provider?
Brief history / context of “PoCo”

• Response to proliferation of proprietary Contact APIs (each with their own schema, auth, etc.)
  – Started spring 08; early involvement from google, yahoo, msft, aol, myspace, plaxo, sony ericsson, and grass roots (openid/oauth)
  – Stable draft spec with several live implementations

• Engineered for ease of adoption
  – Simplest wire format / toolchain requirements
  – Bridging “personal address book” and “social graph”
  – Focus on read-only access to start (vs. write/sync)
  – Based on existing standards wherever possible (vCard, OAuth, XFN, JSON, OpenSocial, etc.)

http://www.portablecontacts.net
Technical overview

- RESTful access API (URL → XML/JSON)
  - Protected by OAuth and/or HTTP Basic Auth
  - Query params to filter / sort / paginate results
  - Result is a list of contacts or a single contact

- Schema is set of Singular & Plural fields
  - Values are Simple (strings) or Complex (key/value pairs); specified “canonical values”
  - Fields based directly on vCard / OpenSocial

http://portablecontacts.net/draft-spec.html
http://www.portablecontacts.net
Sample invocation

Request:
http://sample.site.org/path/to/api/@me/@all?
  startIndex=10&count=10&sortBy=displayName&format=xml

Response (XML):
<response>
  <startIndex>10</startIndex>
  <itemsPerPage>10</itemsPerPage>
  <totalResults>12</totalResults>
  <entry>
    <id>123</id>
    <displayName>Minimal Contact</displayName>
  </entry>
  <entry>
    <id>703887</id>
    <displayName>Mork Hashimoto</displayName>
    <name>
      <familyName>Hashimoto</familyName>
      <givenName>Mork</givenName>
    </name>
    <birthday>0000-01-16</birthday>
  </entry>
</response>
Response (cont):

<gender>male</gender>
<drinker>heavily</drinker>
<tags>plaxo guy</tags>
<tags>favorite</tags>
<emails>
  <value>mhashimoto-04@plaxo.com</value>
  <type>work</type>
  <primary>true</primary>
</emails>
<emails>
  <value>mhashimoto-04@plaxo.com</value>
  <type>home</type>
</emails>
<emails>
  <value>mhashimoto@plaxo.com</value>
  <type>home</type>
</emails>
<urls>
  <value>http://www.seeyellow.com</value>
  <type>work</type>
</urls>
<urls>
  <value>http://www.angryalien.com</value>
  <type>home</type>
</urls>
<phoneNumbers>
  <value>KLONDIKE5</value>
  <type>work</type>
</phoneNumbers>
...

http://www.portablecontacts.net
Response (cont):

<photos>
  <value>http://sample.site.org/photos/12345.jpg</value>
  <type>thumbnail</type>
</photos>

<ims>
  <value>plaxodev8</value>
  <type>aim</type>
</ims>

<addresses>
  <type>home</type>
  <streetAddress><![CDATA[742 Evergreen Terrace Suite 123]]></streetAddress>
  <locality>Springfield</locality>
  <region>VT</region>
  <postalCode>12345</postalCode>
  <country>USA</country>
  <formatted><![CDATA[742 Evergreen Terrace Suite 123 Springfield, VT 12345 USA]]></formatted>
</addresses>

<organizations>
  <name>Burns Worldwide</name>
  <title>Head Bee Guy</title>
</organizations>

<accounts>
  <domain>plaxo.com</domain>
  <userid>2706</userid>
</accounts>

</entry>
</response>
More sample queries

• “Just names and emails”
  filterBy=emails&filterOp=present&
  fields=displayName,emails

• “Find-as-you-type”
  filterBy=displayName&filterOp=startswith&
  filterValue=Jos&sortBy=displayName&count=10

• “Family birthday calendar”
  filterBy=relationships&filterOp=equals&
  filterValue=kin&sortBy=birthday

• Interactive test harness:
  http://www.plaxo.com/pdata/testClient
State of Portable Contacts

• Draft spec has been actively reviewed & rev’d by participating people / companies (mailing-list archives online)
• Wire-aligned with OpenSocial REST API
• Live implementations by Google, MySpace, Microsoft, Plaxo, and several smaller companies
• Open-source reference implementation in Apache Shindig

http://www.portablecontacts.net
Proposed next steps

• Get more of the right people together
• Explore alignment of XML schema
• Try to build CardDAV → PoCo adapter

Q&A?