

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.)

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 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.ietf.org/internet-drafts/draft-smarr-vcarddav-portable-contacts-00.txt>

<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 meta-data

First result

Second result

Simple field

Complex field

<http://www.portablecontacts.net>

Response (cont):

<gender>**male**</gender>

<drinker>**heavily**</drinker>

<tags>**plaxo guy**</tags>

<tags>**favorite**</tags>

OpenSocial field

<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>

Plural field

<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

Proposed next steps

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

Q&A?