



UBL: XML Takes on the Vertical Industries

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[http://
oasis-
open.org/
committees/
ubl](http://oasis-open.org/committees/ubl)



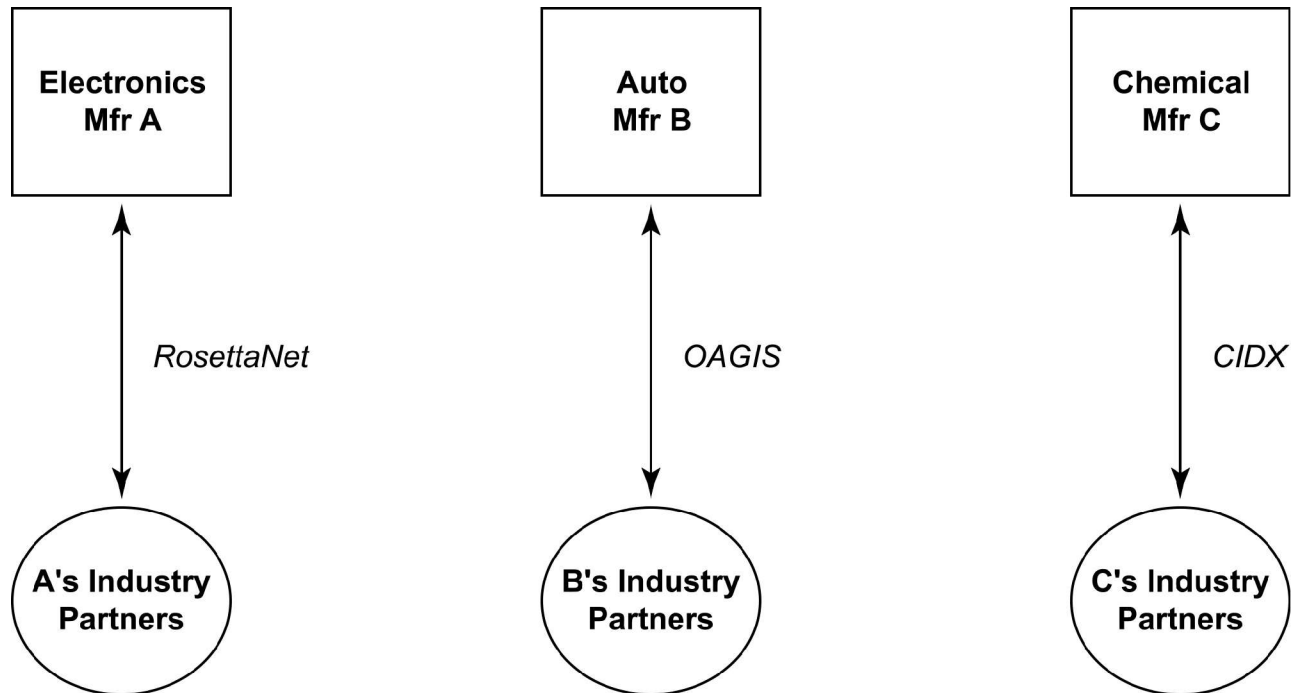
OASIS

XML and documents

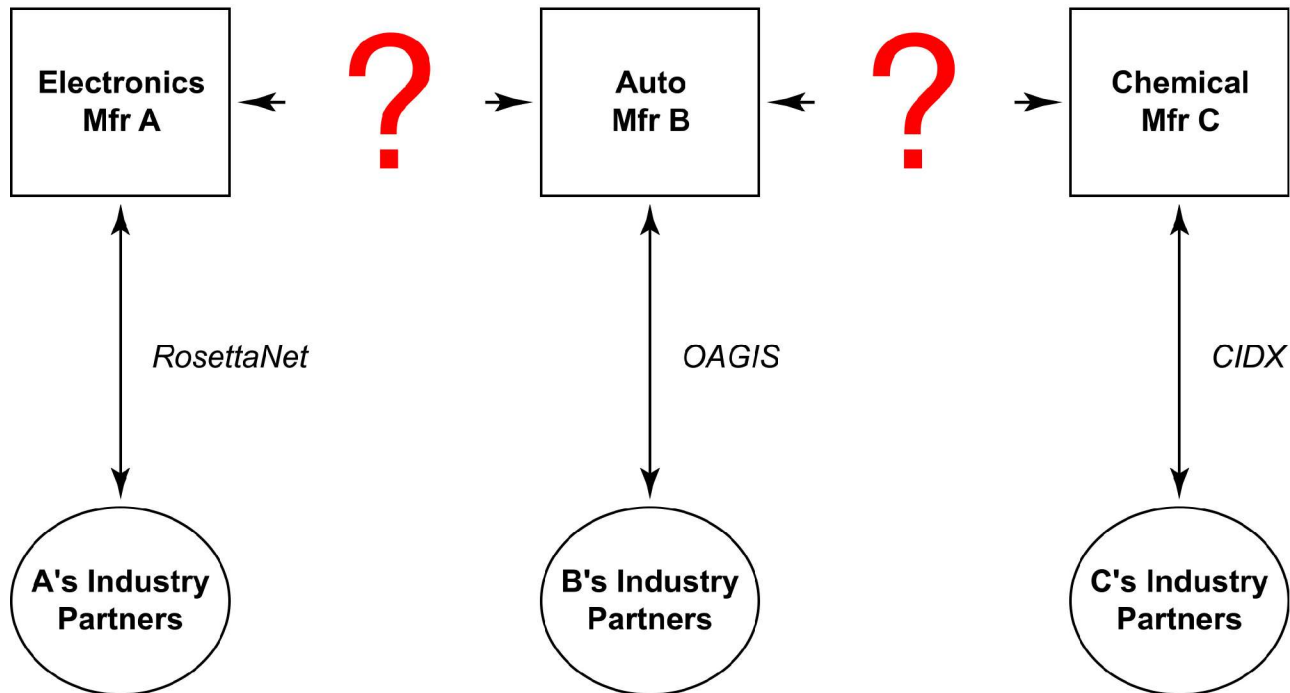
- XML provides a standard framework for defining an unlimited number of document languages for different purposes
- XML allows us to put business documents into a machine-readable form that is widely supported by generic XML tools
- So... What's the problem?



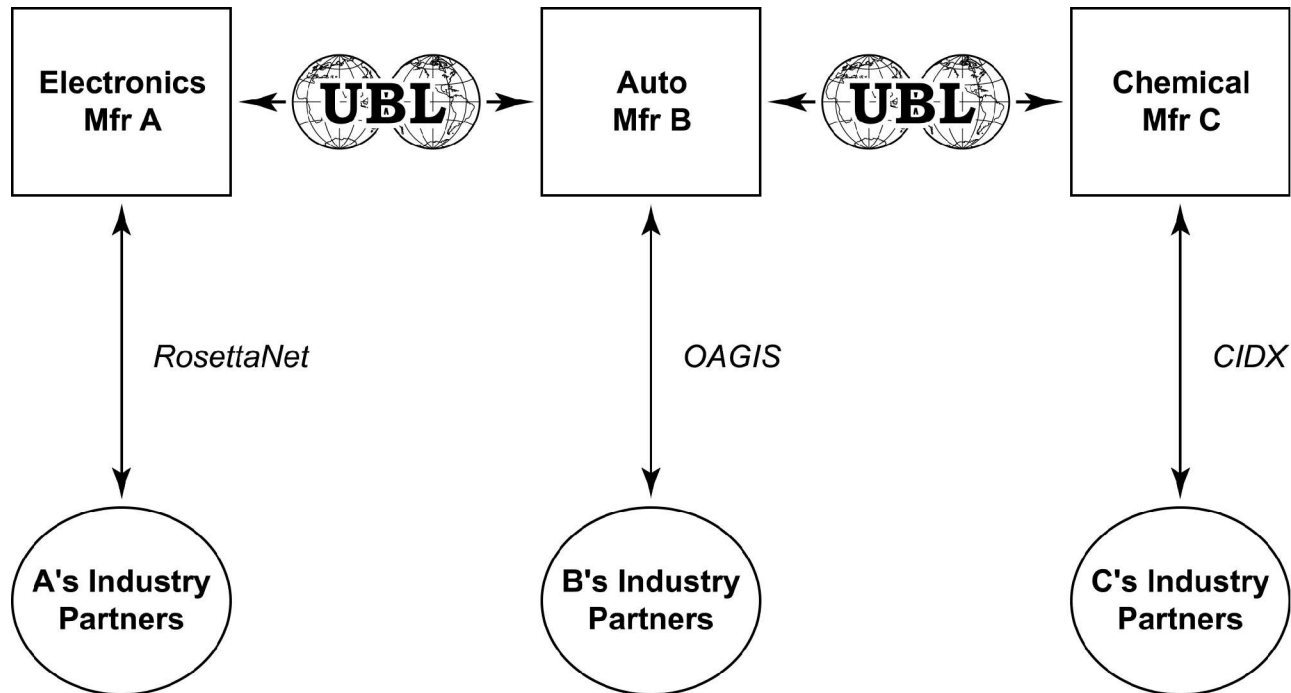
XML in verticals



The problem

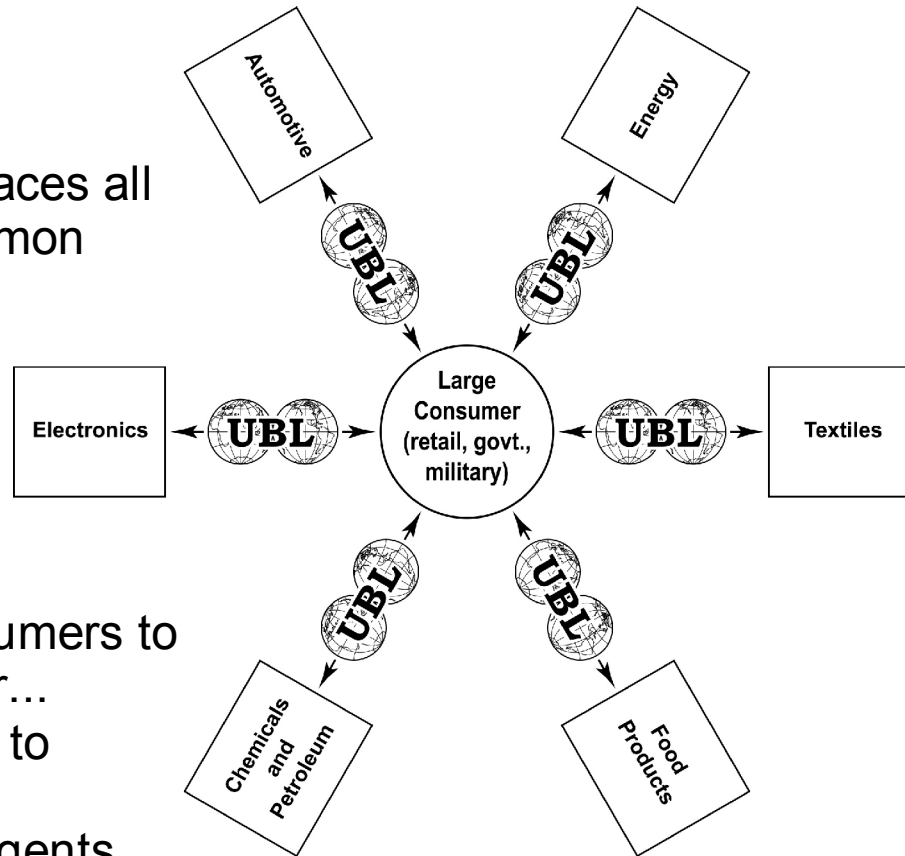


The solution



The role of a hub format

One adapter interfaces all suppliers to a common consumer...



as well as all consumers to a common supplier...
and *all businesses* to the tax authorities
and the customs agents
and the accountants
and the transporters ...

There appears to be no practical alternative to this plan.

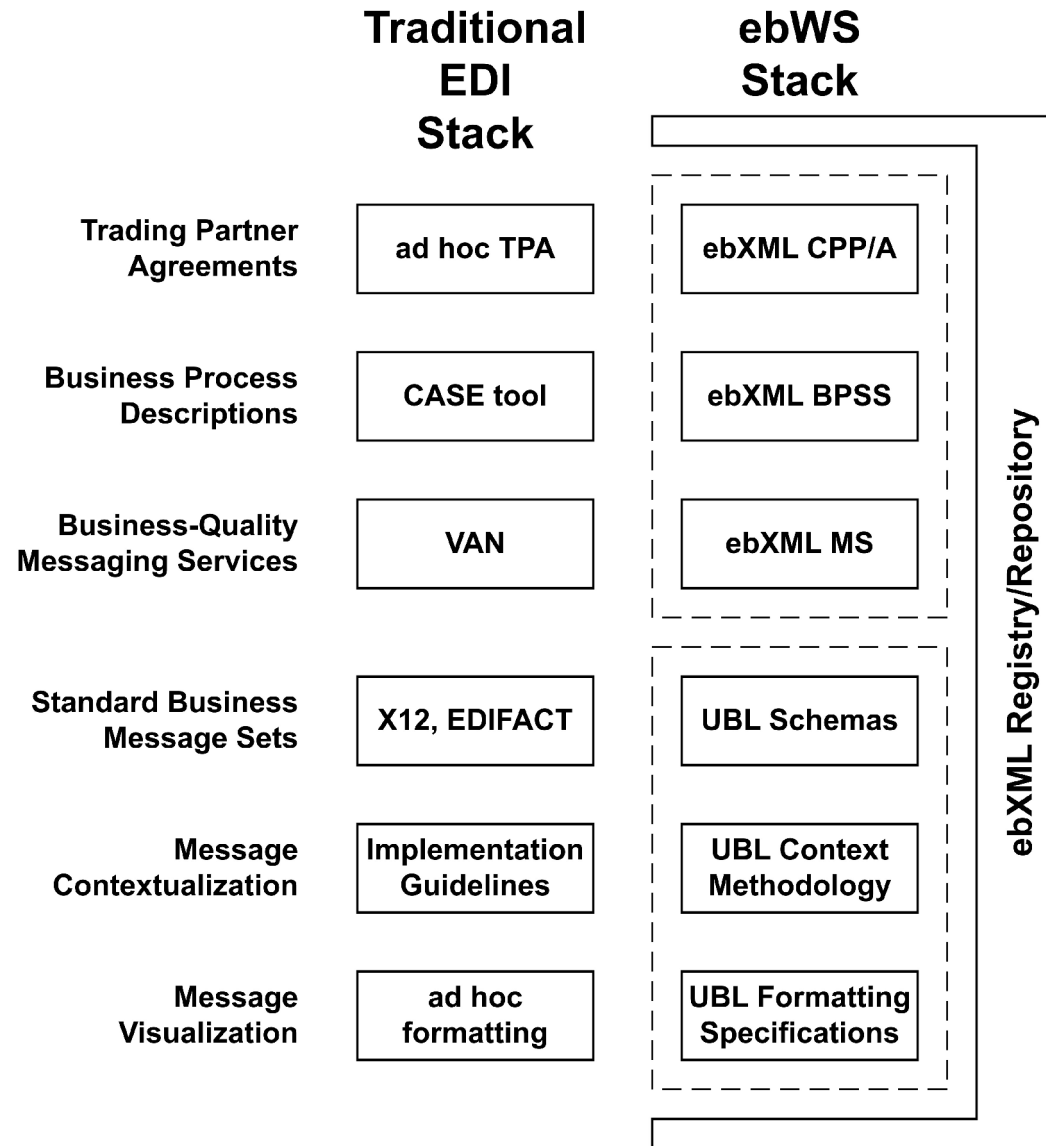


The Universal Business Language (UBL)

- International effort to define a royalty-free library of standard electronic business documents
- Designed in an open and accountable OASIS Technical Committee with participation from a variety of industry data standards organizations
- Plugs directly into existing traditional business, legal, and records management practices
- Standard electronic documents eliminate re-keying of data in existing fax- and paper-based supply chains
- Solves the $N(N-1)$ problem
- Fills the “payload” slot in XML-based B2B frameworks



EDI to eBWS (ebusiness web services)



Advantages of a single business format

- Lower cost of integration, both among and within enterprises, through reuse of common data structures
- Lower cost of commercial software (much lower than generic XML software)
- Easier learning curve (just a single library)
- Lower cost of entry and therefore quicker adoption by small and medium-size enterprises (SMEs)
- Standardized training, many skilled workers, universally available pool of system integrators
- Reprise: the World Wide Web
 - HTML + HTTP = The web for hypertext publishing
 - UBL + ebXML = The web for B2B



UBL timeline

Recent milestones:

- ✓ January – March 2003: UBL 0.7 public review
- ✓ June – July 2003: UBL 0.8 RosettaNet, OAG, and eGov review

1.0 schedule:

- August – October 2003: UBL 1.0 beta construction (normative schemas, data models, UML class diagrams, ASN.1 binding, formatting specifications, stylesheets, documentation, example instances, etc.)
- November 2003 – January 2004: UBL 1.0 beta testing
- February 2004: Submit UBL 1.0 for OASIS standardization



For more information

UBL: <http://oasis-open.org>

ebXML: <http://ebxml.org>

freebXML: <http://www.freebxml.org>

OpenOffice: <http://openoffice.org>

xmlroff: <http://xmlroff.sourceforge.net/>

To join UBL, contact the chair, Jon Bosak:

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