

Position Paper

Semantic Web Workshop

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SC4 is a StartUp company founded January 2001. Our mission is to deliver tools and consulting solutions which help a wide community of users to publish their knowledge on the Semantic Web. We believe that the Semantic Web will change the way people and machines are communicating dramatically. The most important critical success factor (beyond standards) of the Semantic Web is, that the devices which people use to enter their knowledge into the Semantic Web are easy to use and resulting models are easy to understand.

One major problem we found at most of our customers is the need for enterprise or organization wide ontologies, with domain or - especially in Europe - country specific variants. Those ontologies are needed for Knowledge Management Systems, Data Warehouse Systems and the specification of new software. Other applications are CRM and EAI solutions.

Our product SemTalk™ is integrated into MS Office. It uses MS Visio for graphical specification of knowledge. SemTalk™ reads and writes a subset of RDFS. It is integrated in Word XP in a way that it analyzes each sentence you type and matches it with an RDFS model. In order to do this we have implemented a simple model crawler. We expect from this workshop to get partners / ideas to solve especially this issue with a better compliance to standards.

It is our vision that the Semantic Web and SemTalk™ will increase the use of modeling in the daily work significantly. We just attach a RDF model as a graphical summary of its contents. We do not assume every letter or mail in a newsgroup, but in a lot of cases a simple drawing sketching out the most important statement will be worth to spend this small effort. Sharing knowledge and documents will become simple and cheap.

SemTalk™ is implemented basically in Visual Basic and MSXML. It has an integrated object engine to take care of object representation and some reasoning. Visio 2000 is used for graphical presentation. RDFS models are stored in a distributed, hyperlinked fashion as XML flat files.

For the simplified creating of ontologies we use threefold strategy in our workshops:

- Linguistic / statistical analysis of source documents (together with Univ. Leipzig)
- Direct linking of source documents to graphical models and vice versa
- Business process model to reduce the complexity of the modeling space

SemTalk is currently beta software. Pilot projects are going to start soon with a major Swiss bank and a Japanese toy vendor. SemTalk™ has been presented the first time at the DFKI / Univ. Karlsruhe knowledge management conference in Baden-Baden March 2001.

Our partners are currently Microsoft / Visio, IMG AG Switzerland, a major consulting company related to

Hochschule St. Gallen, and Intraware AG, a BPM tool vendor. Intraware's most important US customer for its product Bonapart is Mitre Corp.

We have opened Bonapart to the Semantic Web by an http based R/W RDF(S) interface. SemTalk™ can be used as a client for BPM tools as System Architect, Bonapart and in the near future with OntoWeb's Sesame. One of the challenges of the workshop might be to specify standard query interfaces to Semantic Web repositories, possibly following Arjohn Kampman's proposal for Sesame. We are also in touch with Persist AG and Ontoprise.

Since our background is BPM and especially simulation, we are very interested in agent technology, DAML and other ways to build appliances using the Semantic Web.

Homepage: www.sc4.org

Beta version: www.cfillies.de

Some slides: www.cfillies.de