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ISO copyright office
CP 401 • Ch. de Blandonnet 8
CH-1214 Vernier, Geneva
Phone: +41 22 749 01 11
Fax: +41 22 749 09 47
Email: copyright@iso.org
Website: www.iso.org

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This document was prepared by the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) (as EPUB 3 Overview) and drafted in accordance with its editorial rules. It was adopted, under the JTC 1 PAS procedure, by Joint Technical Committee ISO/IEC JTC 1, *Information technology*.

A list of all parts in the ISO/IEC 23736 series can be found on the ISO website.

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EPUB 3 Overview

Recommended Specification 26 June 2014

This version

http://www.idpf.org/epub/301/spec/epub-overview-20140626.html

Latest version

http://www.idpf.org/epub3/latest/overview

Previous version

http://www.idpf.org/epub/301/spec/epub-overview-20140228.html

A diff of changes from the previous version is also available.

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Editors

Garth Conboy, Google Inc.

Matt Garrish, Invited Expert

Markus Gylling, International Digital Publishing Forum (IDPF)

William McCoy, International Digital Publishing Forum (IDPF)

MURATA Makoto, JEPA EPUB Study Group

Daniel Weck, DAISY Consortium

This document is informative

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1 Introduction

1.1 Overview

The EPUB® specification is a distribution and interchange format standard for digital publications and documents. EPUB defines a means of representing, packaging and encoding structured and semantically enhanced Web content — including HTML5, CSS, SVG and other resources — for distribution in a single-file format.

EPUB 3, the third major release of the standard, consists of a set of four specifications, each defining an important component of an overall EPUB Publication:

- EPUB Publications 3.0.1 [Publications301], which defines the semantics and overarching conformance requirements for each Rendition of an EPUB Publication.
- EPUB Content Documents 3.0.1 [ContentDocs301], which defines profiles of XHTML, SVG and CSS for use in the context of EPUB Publications.
- EPUB Open Container Format (OCF) 3.0.1 [OCF301], which defines a file format and processing model for encapsulating a set of related resources into a single-file (ZIP) EPUB Container.
- EPUB Media Overlays 3.0.1 [MediaOverlays301], which defines a format and a processing model for synchronization of text and audio.

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EPUB has been widely adopted as the format for digital books (eBooks), and these new specifications significantly increase the format's capabilities in order to better support a wider range of publication requirements, including complex layouts, rich media and interactivity, and global typography features. The expectation is that EPUB 3 will be utilized for a broad range of content, including books, magazines and educational, professional and scientific publications.

This document provides a starting point for content authors and software developers wishing to understand these specifications. It consists entirely of informative overview material, including a roadmap to the four building-block specification documents that compose EPUB 3.

Another informative document, EPUB 3 Changes from EPUB 2.0.1 [EPUB3Changes], describes changes in EPUB 3 from the previous version, but is intended primarily for Authors and EPUB Reading System vendors migrating from EPUB 2.0.1 to EPUB 3 and for those who anticipate supporting both versions.

› 1.2 Roadmap

This section provides an overview of the EPUB 3 specifications by explaining in brief the components of an EPUB Publication. Links to additional information within this document and to the specifications are included.

An EPUB Publication, at its most basic level, is a bundled collection of resources that can be reliably and predictably ingested by an EPUB Reading System in order to render its contents to a User. Each EPUB Publication consists of one or renderings of its content, called Renditions.

Some of the resources in the EPUB Container facilitate the discovery and processing of the Renditions, while others make up the content of the source publication. The latter, EPUB Content Documents, are described in Content Documents and are fully defined in [ContentDocs301].

An EPUB Publication's resources are typically bundled for distribution as a ZIP-based archive with the file extension `.epub`. As conformant ZIP archives, EPUB Publications can be unzipped by many software programs, simplifying both their production and consumption. The container format is introduced in Container and defined in [OCF301].

The container format not only provides a means of determining that the zipped content represents an EPUB Publication (the `mimetype` file), but also provides a universally-named directory of informative resources (`/META-INF`). Key among these is the `container.xml` file, which directs Reading Systems to the root files of the available Renditions of the EPUB Publication (their Package Documents).

The Package Document is itself a kind of centralized information source for a given Rendition, storing metadata about the specific work expressed by the Rendition, providing an exhaustive list of resources and defining a default reading order. The Package Document is introduced in Package Document and defined in [Publications301].

The preceding components of an EPUB Publication are not new to EPUB 3, and will be familiar to anyone who has worked with EPUB Publications before, although they have been changed and enhanced in this version. A new core addition to EPUB 3, however, is the Media Overlay Document, which defines a means of synchronizing text and audio playback for a given Rendition. The Overlay Document is introduced in Multimedia and defined in [MediaOverlays301].

The following example shows the resources a minimal single-Rendition "Hello World" EPUB Publication might contain:

```
mimetype
META-INF/container.xml
```

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