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vCard Extensions for Instant Messaging (IM)
draft-jennings-impp-vcard-08

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Abstract

This document describes an extension to vCard to support Instant Messaging (IM) and Presence Protocol (PP) applications. IM and PP are becoming increasingly common ways of communicating, and users want to save this contact information in their address books. It allows a URI that is associated with IM or PP to be specified inside of a vCard.

Editorial Note (To be removed by RFC Editor before publication)

This work is being discussed on the imc-vcard@imc.org mailing list.

1. Overview

As more and more people use various instant messaging (IM) and presence protocol (PP) applications, it becomes important for them to be able to share this contact address information along with the rest of their contact information. [RFC 2425](#) [1] and [RFC 2426](#) [2] define a standard format for this information, which is referred to as vCard. This document defines a new type in a vCard for representing instant IM and PP URIs. It is very similar to existing types for representing email address and telephone contact information.

The type entry to hold this new contact information is an IMPP type. The IMPP entry has a single URI (see [RFC 3986](#) [3]) that indicates the address of a service that provides IM, PP, or both. Also defined are some parameters that give hints as to when certain URIs would be appropriate. A given vCard can have multiple IMPP entries, but each entry can contain only one URI. Each IMPP entry can contain multiple parameters. Any combination of parameters is valid, although a parameter should occur at most once in a given IMPP entry.

The type of URI indicates what protocols might be usable for accessing it, but this document does not define any of the types. For example a URI type of

"sip" [5] indicates to use SIP/SIMPLE,
"xmpp" [6] indicates to use XMPP,
"irc" [7] indicates to use IRC,
"ymsgr" indicates to use yahoo,
"msn" might indicate to use Microsoft messenger,
"aim" indicates to use AOL, and
"im" [8] or "pres" [9] indicates to use a CPIM or CPP gateway.

The normative definition of this new vCard type is given in [Section 2](#), and an informational ABNF is provided in [Section 3](#).

2. IANA Considerations

The required email to define this extension (as defined in [RFC2425](#)) was sent on October 29, 2004 to the ietf-mime-direct@imc.org mailing list with the subject "Registration of text/directory MIME type IMPP" (see <http://www.imc.org/ietf-mime-direct/mail-archive/msg00068.html>).

This specification updates the "text/directory MIME Types" subregistry in the "text/directory MIME Registrations" registry at <http://www.iana.org/assignments/text-directory-registrations> with the following information:

Type name: IMPP

Type purpose: To specify the URI for instant messaging and presence protocol communications with the object the vCard represents.

Type encoding: 8bit

Type value: A single URI. The type of the URI indicates the protocol that can be used for this contact.

Type special notes: The type may include the type parameter "TYPE" to specify an intended use for the URI. The TYPE parameter values include one or more of the following:

- o An indication of the type of communication for which this URI is appropriate. This can be a value of PERSONAL or BUSINESS.
- o An indication of the location of a device associated with this URI. Values can be HOME, WORK, or MOBILE.
- o The value PREF indicates this is a preferred address and has the same semantics as the PREF value in a TEL type.

Additional information can be found in _RFCAAAA_.

Intended usage: COMMON

[Note to IANA: Please replace AAAA with the RFC number for this specification.]

3. Formal Grammar

The following ABNF grammar [4] extends the grammar found in [RFC 2425](#) [1] ([Section 5.8.2](#)) and [RFC 2426](#) [2] ([Section 4](#)).


```
;For name="IMPP"
param      = impp-param ; Only impp parameters are allowed

value      = URI
            ; URI defined in Section 3 of [3]

impp-param = "TYPE" "=" impp-type *("," impp-type)

impp-type  = "PERSONAL" / "BUSINESS" / ; purpose of communications
            "HOME" / "WORK" / "MOBILE" /
            "PREF" /
            iana-token / x-name;
            ; Values are case insensitive
```

4. Example

```
BEGIN:vCard
VERSION:3.0
FN:Alice Doe
IMPP;TYPE=personal,pref:im:alice@example.com
END:vCard
```

5. Security Considerations

This does not introduce additional security issues beyond the current vCard specification. It is worth noting that many people consider their presence information more sensitive than other address information. Any system that stores or transfers vCards needs to carefully consider the privacy issues around this information.

6. Acknowledgments

Thanks to Brian Carpenter, Lars Eggert, Ted Hardie, Paul Hoffman, Sam Roberts and Pekka Pessi for their comments.

7. References

7.1. Normative References

- [1] Howes, T., Smith, M., and F. Dawson, "A MIME-Content-Type for Directory Information", [RFC 2425](#), September 1998.
- [2] Dawson, F. and T. Howes, "vCard MIME Directory Profile",

[RFC 2426](#), September 1998.

- [3] Berners-Lee, T., Fielding, R., and L. Masinter, "Uniform Resource Identifier (URI): Generic Syntax", STD 66, [RFC 3986](#), January 2005.
- [4] Crocker, D., Ed. and P. Overell, "Augmented BNF for Syntax Specifications: ABNF", [RFC 4234](#), October 2005.

[7.2.](#) Informational References

- [5] Rosenberg, J., Schulzrinne, H., Camarillo, G., Johnston, A., Peterson, J., Sparks, R., Handley, M., and E. Schooler, "SIP: Session Initiation Protocol", [RFC 3261](#), June 2002.
- [6] Saint-Andre, P., "Internationalized Resource Identifiers (IRIs) and Uniform Resource Identifiers (URIs) for the Extensible Messaging and Presence Protocol (XMPP)", [RFC 4622](#), July 2006.
- [7] Butcher, S., "Uniform Resource Locator Schemes for Internet Relay Chat Entities", [draft-butcher-irc-url-04](#) (work in progress), January 2004.
- [8] Peterson, J., "Common Profile for Instant Messaging (CPIM)", [RFC 3860](#), August 2004.
- [9] Peterson, J., "Common Profile for Presence (CPP)", [RFC 3859](#), August 2004.

[Appendix A.](#) Change Log (to be removed by RFC Editor before publication)

[A.1.](#) Since [draft-jennings-impp-vcard-06.xml](#)

Remove "Notational Conventions" (weren't actually used). Take out reference to [RFC2119](#) accordingly.

Highlight editing instructions for the RFC Editor.

Add link to mention of registration request email.

Update reference to ABNF RFC and XMPP URI/IRI draft.

Add Julian Reschke as Editor.

[Appendix B.](#) Since [draft-jennings-impp-vcard-07.xml](#)

Update XMPP URI/IRI reference.

Add and resolve issues "abnf-ref-normative", "clarify-type-recurrence" and "cite-rfc3986-for-URI".

Add open issue "mention-other-approaches".

[Appendix C.](#) Resolved issues (to be removed by RFC Editor before publication)

Issues that were either rejected or resolved in this version of this document.

[C.1.](#) ref-rfc4622

Type: edit

julian.reschke@greenbytes.de (2006-07-26): Update ref to XMPP URI/IRI spec.

Resolution: Done.

[C.2.](#) abnf-ref-normative

Type: change

julian.reschke@greenbytes.de (2006-09-13): Ted Hardie: I believe citing the ABNF RFC as normative is also required.

Resolution (2006-09-13): Done.

[C.3.](#) cite-rfc3986-for-URI

Type: change

julian.reschke@greenbytes.de (2006-09-13): Ted Hardie: This document apparently imports the definition of uri from 2425, which in turn says that URI is "as defined in 1738". 1738's description of URIs has long been superseded, and its formal description of genericurl (the closest thing to this) is in [RFC822](#)'s BNF-like grammar, not ABNF. May I suggest this document cite [RFC 3986](#) directly? It's a full standard.

Resolution (2006-09-13): Done.

C.4. clarify-type-recurrence

Type: change

julian.reschke@greenbytes.de (2006-09-14): Clarify that type parameter contains one or more values.

Resolution (2006-09-14): Done.

Appendix D. Open issues (to be removed by RFC Editor prior to publication)

D.1. edit

Type: edit

julian.reschke@greenbytes.de (2006-06-25): Umbrella issue for editorial fixes/enhancements.

D.2. irc-uri

Type: edit

julian.reschke@greenbytes.de (2006-06-25): Take out reference to IRC URI draft (which is dead)?

D.3. mention-other-approaches

Type: edit

julian.reschke@greenbytes.de (2006-09-21): Lars Eggert (IESG discussion): Might want to mention that some vendors have already extended the vcard format to include IM addresses.

julian.reschke@greenbytes.de (2006-09-21): I think there are two sides to this: (1) is there a deployed format that we could use instead of inventing a new one, and (2) if we decide to invent a new one, should we discuss other approaches we rejected? My take: (1) the format used by Apple (mentioned by Lars) assigns a new type for each IMPP URI scheme - that seems to be a bad idea as it doesn't allow clients to uniformly treat different IMPP systems without prior knowledge of what the URI scheme is. So no, the format used by Apple doesn't seem to be a good idea. As for (2), I'd like to avoid that additional work. However I'm open to add minimal text mentioning other approaches if people make a concrete proposal for spec text.

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