

Network Working Group  
Internet-Draft  
Intended status: Informational  
Expires: April 24, 2014

A. Melnikov  
Isode Ltd  
October 21, 2013

User-Agent and X-Mailer Header Field registration for Email  
draft-melnikov-email-user-agent-00

## Abstract

This memo registers User-Agent and X-Mailer header fields in the Permanent Message Header Field Names IANA registry.

## Status of This Memo

This Internet-Draft is submitted in full conformance with the provisions of [BCP 78](#) and [BCP 79](#).

Internet-Drafts are working documents of the Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF). Note that other groups may also distribute working documents as Internet-Drafts. The list of current Internet-Drafts is at <http://datatracker.ietf.org/drafts/current/>.

Internet-Drafts are draft documents valid for a maximum of six months and may be updated, replaced, or obsoleted by other documents at any time. It is inappropriate to use Internet-Drafts as reference material or to cite them other than as "work in progress."

This Internet-Draft will expire on April 24, 2014.

## Copyright Notice

Copyright (c) 2013 IETF Trust and the persons identified as the document authors. All rights reserved.

This document is subject to [BCP 78](#) and the IETF Trust's Legal Provisions Relating to IETF Documents (<http://trustee.ietf.org/license-info>) in effect on the date of publication of this document. Please review these documents carefully, as they describe your rights and restrictions with respect to this document. Code Components extracted from this document must include Simplified BSD License text as described in Section 4.e of the Trust Legal Provisions and are provided without warranty as described in the Simplified BSD License.

---

Internet-Draft      User-Agent and X-Mailer Header Fields      October 2013

## Table of Contents

<a href="#">1.</a>	Introduction . . . . .	<a href="#">2</a>
<a href="#">2.</a>	Conventions Used in This Document . . . . .	<a href="#">2</a>
<a href="#">3.</a>	User-Agent header field . . . . .	<a href="#">2</a>
<a href="#">4.</a>	IANA Considerations . . . . .	<a href="#">3</a>
<a href="#">5.</a>	Security Considerations . . . . .	<a href="#">3</a>
<a href="#">6.</a>	References . . . . .	<a href="#">3</a>
<a href="#">6.1.</a>	Normative References . . . . .	<a href="#">4</a>
<a href="#">6.2.</a>	Informative References . . . . .	<a href="#">4</a>
<a href="#">Appendix A.</a>	Acknowledgements . . . . .	<a href="#">4</a>
<a href="#">Appendix B.</a>	Use of User-Agent and X-Mailer by existing email agents . . . . .	<a href="#">4</a>

## [1.](#) Introduction

User-Agent and X-Mailer are common Email header fields for identifying any software (and its components) that generates email messages. They are used for helping in debugging email generation and processing errors, for tracking use of different email clients. The User-Agent header field is already registered for use in HTTP [[RFC2616](#)] and NetNews [[RFC5536](#)]. This document registers it for use in email.

## [2.](#) Conventions Used in This Document

The key words "MUST", "MUST NOT", "REQUIRED", "SHALL", "SHALL NOT", "SHOULD", "SHOULD NOT", "RECOMMENDED", "MAY", and "OPTIONAL" in this document are to be interpreted as described in [[RFC2119](#)] when they appear in ALL CAPS. These words also appear in this document in lower case as plain English words, absent their normative meanings.

The formal syntax use the Augmented Backus-Naur Form (ABNF) [[RFC5234](#)] notation including the core rules defined in [Appendix B of RFC 5234](#) [[RFC5234](#)].

## [3.](#) User-Agent header field

The User-Agent header field contains information about the user agent (typically a Mail User Agent) generating the email message, for statistical purposes and tracing of standards violations to specific software in need of correction.

ABNF for this header field is defined as follows:

```
user-agent      = "User-Agent:" 1*product [CFWS] CRLF
product         = [CFWS] token [ [CFWS] "/" product-version ]
```

Melnikov

Expires April 24, 2014

[Page 2]

---

Internet-Draft

User-Agent and X-Mailer Header Fields

October 2013

```
product-version = [CFWS] token
CFWS            = <Defined in RFC 5322>
token           = <Defined in RFC 2045 Section 5.1>
```

This header field MAY contain multiple <product> tokens identifying the user agent and any subproducts that form a significant part of it, listed in order of their significance for identifying the application.

NOTE: Many popular email clients and agents are using X-Mailer header field instead of the User-Agent header field.

NOTE: [[RFC2616](#)] describes a similar facility for the HTTP protocol. The Email format differs in that "{" and "}" are allowed in tokens (<product> and <product-version>) and comments are permitted wherever white space is allowed.

#### [4.](#) IANA Considerations

IANA is requested to add the following list of header field names to the "Permanent Message Header Field Names" registry (in <http://www.iana.org/assignments/message-headers/perm-headers.html>):

Header field: User-Agent  
Applicable protocol: mail  
Status: standard  
Author/change controller: IESG ([iesg@ietf.org](mailto:iesg@ietf.org)) on behalf of the IETF  
Specification document(s): [[this document]]  
Related information: [[RFC2616](#)] ([Section 14.43](#))

Header field: X-Mailer  
Applicable protocol: mail  
Status: standard

Author/change controller: IESG ([iesg@ietf.org](mailto:iesg@ietf.org)) on behalf of the IETF  
Specification document(s): `[[this document]]`  
Related information: [[RFC2616](#)] ([Section 14.43](#))

## [5.](#) Security Considerations

TBD

## [6.](#) References

Melnikov

Expires April 24, 2014

[Page 3]

---

Internet-Draft      User-Agent and X-Mailer Header Fields      October 2013

### [6.1.](#) Normative References

- [RFC2119] Bradner, S., "Key words for use in RFCs to Indicate Requirement Levels", [BCP 14](#), [RFC 2119](#), March 1997.
- [RFC2045] Freed, N. and N. Borenstein, "Multipurpose Internet Mail Extensions (MIME) Part One: Format of Internet Message Bodies", [RFC 2045](#), November 1996.
- [RFC5322] Resnick, P., Ed., "Internet Message Format", [RFC 5322](#), October 2008.
- [RFC5234] Crocker, D. and P. Overell, "Augmented BNF for Syntax Specifications: ABNF", STD 68, [RFC 5234](#), January 2008.

### [6.2.](#) Informative References

- [RFC5536] Murchison, K., Lindsey, C., and D. Kohn, "Netnews Article Format", [RFC 5536](#), November 2009.
- [RFC2616] Fielding, R., Gettys, J., Mogul, J., Frystyk, H., Masinter, L., Leach, P., and T. Berners-Lee, "Hypertext Transfer Protocol -- HTTP/1.1", [RFC 2616](#), June 1999.

## [Appendix A.](#) Acknowledgements

This document copies lots of text from [[RFC5536](#)], so the author of this document would like to acknowledge contributions made by the authors of that RFC.

[Appendix B](#). Use of User-Agent and X-Mailer by existing email agents

Name of an Email Agent	Header Field used for identification
Thunderbird	User-Agent
Trojita	User-Agent
Mutt	User-Agent
Facebook	X-Mailer
Yahoo! Mail	X-Mailer
Inky	X-Mailer

Melnikov

Expires April 24, 2014

[Page 4]

Internet-Draft

User-Agent and X-Mailer Header Fields

October 2013

Apple iPad Mail	X-Mailer
git	X-Mailer
Microsoft Outlook	X-Mailer
Microsoft Windows Live Mail	X-Mailer

Author's Address

Alexey Melnikov  
Isode Ltd  
5 Castle Business Village  
36 Station Road  
Hampton, Middlesex TW12 2BX  
UK

EMail: Alexey.Melnikov@isode.com

