

Clyde Hatter
XML: Why and for What?
NALIT, 2006

Why are people moving towards this technology?

- ◆ **Data longevity**
- ◆ **Interoperability**
- ◆ **Ubiquity**

What are the advantages?

- ◆ **Avoid vendor lock-in**
- ◆ **Re-use data**
- ◆ **Future-proof data**
- ◆ **Draw upon existing base of IT expertise**

Disadvantages?

- ◆ **More discipline required from end-users**
- ◆ **Perceived lack of ownership**
- ◆ **Downstream gains leading to upstream costs**
- ◆ **Not an out-of-the-box solution**

Pitfalls?

- ◆ **Citations to paper documents**
- ◆ **Complex formatting**
- ◆ **Hard-to-use editing tools**
- ◆ **Archaic processes**
- ◆ **Inter-agency relationships**
- ◆ **Gold-plated requirements**

How long will it take?

- ◆ **Clear project aims?**
- ◆ **Experienced team?**
- ◆ **Duplicate current processes and outputs?**
- ◆ **Number of integration points?**

How long will it take?

- ◆ **Existing processes documented?**
- ◆ **Number of offices involved?**
- ◆ **Requirement to convert existing data?**
- ◆ **State of existing data?**

Factors *influencing* time and capital expenditure

- ◆ **Fixed-cost versus time-and-materials**
- ◆ **Defined stages with clear outcomes and deliverables**
- ◆ **Co-development requirements**
- ◆ **Development platform and infrastructure constraints**
- ◆ **Session calendar**

Areas of expenditure

- ◆ **Process analysis**
- ◆ **Document analysis**
- ◆ **Data modelling**
- ◆ **Development architecture**
- ◆ **Functional specification**
- ◆ **Integration specification**

Areas of expenditure

- ◆ **Use-case production**
- ◆ **UI design**
- ◆ **Prototype**
- ◆ **Development**
- ◆ **Usability testing**
- ◆ **QA testing**

Areas of expenditure

- ◆ **Training**
- ◆ **Support**
- ◆ **Parallel running**

The 'XML' component will be a small part of the overall project cost

What other applications might be appropriate for XML?

- ◆ **Applications that exchange data**
- ◆ **Applications that create documents-of-record**
- ◆ **Applications that assemble documents from many sources of information**
- ◆ **Applications that publish to many formats**

If not XML, then what?

- ◆ **Relational database**
- ◆ **Proprietary word-processor format**
- ◆ **Other structured markup format**
- ◆ **Proprietary content management system**
- ◆ **Combination of above**

IT commitment

- ◆ **Re-skill**
- ◆ **See the world from the end-user's perspective**

Document-processing staff commitment

- ◆ **Willingness to embrace change**
- ◆ **Willingness to accept short-term pain for long-term gain**
- ◆ **Active, not passive, participation**

Professional staff commitment

- ◆ **Willingness to drive change**
- ◆ **Willingness to review time-hallowed practices**

Leadership

- ◆ **Understand what technology can achieve**
- ◆ **Wider eDemocracy vision**
- ◆ **Identify process efficiencies across multiple offices**