Strategy Markup Language (StratML)

Talking Points - September 5, 2009

1. **Strategic Alignment** - While much lip service is paid to the concept of strategic alignment, actual practice leaves much to be desired in most organizations. The StratML standard will enable greater realization of the concept.

2. **Customer Focus/Stakeholder Engagement** - Likewise, most organizations tout their focus on the customer and claim to support close communication with their stakeholders, external as well as internal. However, reality commonly falls far short of the rhetoric. StratML will enable more efficient and effective stakeholder feedback on strategic goals and objectives.

3. **Collaboration/Partnerships** - Recognition is growing that no organization can succeed in isolation. Close collaboration with strategic partners is essential. StratML will enable discovery of potential performance partners and closer collaboration to ensure the efforts of each partner are more fully supportive of shared objectives.

4. **Performance Management** - It has been said that you can't manage what you can't measure. StratML will enable organizations to more efficiently measure, track, and report to their stakeholders progress against their strategic goals and objectives.

5. **Shelfware** - Typically, organizations spend a considerable amount of time and effort every few years to compile their strategic plans. The results are then announced with great fanfare in lengthy documents published in glossy formats with lots of flashy graphics. Such documents are usually outdated before the print is dry. Moreover, after being briefly scanned by some of the organization's stakeholders who are sufficiently motivated to take the time to wade through voluminous text to find something of interest to them, the documents are promptly placed on the shelf to begin gathering dust. The StratML standard will help make strategic plans living documents that can keep up with the pace of change and, thus, be taken more seriously.

6. **Data Stovepipes** - To the degree that strategic plans are more than shelfware, it is only because the goals and objectives they contain are rekeyed in other stovepipe information systems. StratML will enable the sharing of goal and objective statements across organizations and systems, thus eliminating the need to maintain such data redundantly in multiple stovepipe systems.

7. **Authoritative Sources** - Closely linked to the problem of data stovepipes is the inability to reference and reuse the data in authoritative sources. StratML will enable organizations to maintain a single, authoritative source for its mission, vision, values, goals, objectives, and stakeholders while referencing and reusing such data wherever and whenever needed.

8. **Semantic Web/Linked Data** - The concept of the Semantic Web arose a number of years ago

as the holy grail for information management, discovery, reuse, and machine (automated) "reasoning". More recently, in light of difficulties in selling the concept to the masses, the focus has been shifting to the somewhat more comprehensible concept of *open, linked data*. StratML is based upon the "open" Extensible Markup Language (XML) and it will enable linkages among strategic goals, objectives, and stakeholders not only within but also across organizations. Thus, it will enable population of the *Strategic* Semantic Web.

9. **Document/Records Management** - With further reference to the concept of strategic alignment, essentially what it means is that each of the records created in the course of ongoing business processes should be associated with (linked to) the strategic objective(s) it supports. In the context of document/records management, that means metadata should be embedded in or otherwise associated with each record identifying the objective(s) with which it is "aligned".

10. **iECM** - AIIM's Interoperable Enterprise Content Management (iECM) Committee is working to support adoption and use of the emerging Content Management Interoperability Services (CMIS) protocol, including cross-repository query services. Among the elements of metadata by which it should be possible to search across federated repositories are the names, descriptions, and identifiers for goal and objective statements. Use of the StratML standard will enable such queries.

11. **Social Networking/Web 2.0** - The newly interactive Web has generated much excitement and deservedly so. However, it also calls to mind the [Infinite Monkey Theorem](#). While it is fun to be able to see what each of us looks like (Facebook), to know who we know (LinkedIn), and to share what we're doing right now (Twitter), are those the things that truly matter? Certainly, we might hope that the days are past when whom one knows is more important than what one knows. However, what truly matters is our missions in life, the values we hold dear, and what we hope to *accomplish*. Helping us to more efficiently and effectively achieve our goals and objectives in consultation with our stakeholders and collaboration with our partners is what StratML is all about. StratML can help to mature the social networking technologies and services toward a much more productive future not only for organizations but also individuals who choose to lead mission/goal-directed lives.

12. **Intermediary Service Providers** - The time is ripe for a powerful marriage between StratML and social networking services, and the opportunity is great for forward-thinking intermediary service providers to begin to capitalize on the potential to enable myriad communities of interest (CoIs) to pursue their strategic objectives far more efficiently and effectively than has ever been possible before.