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## Liaison letter

**To: W3C**

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Dear W3C Colleagues,

It's been about a year since we last had contacts however we've recently had a lengthy discussion about our use of your specifications where it seems appropriate to seek guidance from you.

Release 2, version 2.1 of our specification that we completed last year references a number of W3C specifications that at the time were still some form of working draft. During that work, we had a lengthy debate about referencing draft specifications from your organisation. In the end, there was a compromise to reference a specific working draft – in the knowledge that this would become out of date and may not reflect the final specification.

We are just starting work on enhancements to our browser specification. The obvious solutions for a number of these enhancements is to use some of your work. Unfortunately as before, the issue of referencing working drafts arises. For example, here is a list of the W3C specifications that have been mentioned as possible references for this work that are not yet in at least candidate recommendation;

- Protocol for Media Fragments 1.0 Resolution in HTTP – Working Draft 1 December 2011
- CSS Fonts Module Level 3 - Working Draft 4 October 2011
- HTML 5 Canvas 2D Context - Working Draft 25 May 2011
- CSS Basic User Interface Module Level 3 (CSS3 UI) - Working Draft 17 January 2012
- CSS Backgrounds and Borders Module Level 3 - Last Call Working Draft 14 February 2012
- CSS Transitions Module Level 3 - Working Draft 01 December 2009
- CSS Animations Module Level 3 - Working Draft 20 March 2009
- CSS 2D Transforms - W3C Working Draft 15 December 2011 and  
CSS 3D Transforms Module Level 3 - W3C Working Draft 20 March 2009  
(Or perhaps the merged CSS Transforms Working Draft of 28 February 2012)

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Given this long list of working drafts, the entire discussion about referencing has of course been repeated. We identified a number of options for how references like these could be handled.

Option	Description	Comment
A	Reference a specific version (working draft or better) by date (i.e. continue the previous practice)	The references have to be periodically reviewed & updated which doesn't always happen
B	Reference the current draft without a date	Need to define a way of working to minimise the impact of changes in the underlying documents. e.g. not referencing specific sections by number which would be broken by document re-numbering
C	Only reference proposed recommendations	Not possible in the real world
D	Delay work on DAE enhancements until all references are at least proposed recommendation (or perhaps candidate recommendation)	Not commercially acceptable.
E	Defer fixing which version is used until even later in the process than now	e.g. until work starts on testing or certification?
F	Someone (e.g. W3C TV group) to define an "abstraction layer" providing other organisations with a stable set of features while de-coupling them from specific versions of basic W3C specifications and changes in those.	Changes in the underlying W3C specifications would be accommodated in the "abstraction layer" ideally without impacting the referencing OIPF or DTG specifications.
G	Automatically use the latest version (working draft or better) as of date of publication of the OIPF specification (but don't include the date in the body of the document)	
H	Something else	

We would welcome a discussion with you about these and any other options for how to satisfactorily reference your work in general and the list of specifications above in particular. How has this issue been addressed before?

We have copied this letter to two organisations which are users of the Open IPTV Forum specifications - the UK Digital TV group who have encountered the same issue in their work and the HbbTV consortium who will likely encounter these issues in their work in the near future. We recommend that they be included in any discussion as well.

Yours sincerely,

Luca Pesando

Richard Brennan

Jon Piesing

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