AgXML

AgXML Executive Overview
Updated February 1, 2001

What is AgXML?

AgXML is a group of companies committed to bringing the efficiencies of ecommerce to grain- and oilseed-related business processes. We are doing the following:

1. Identifying business processes that, if automated, would improve efficiencies.
2. Determining the data requirement of the business processes identified in number 1.
3. Defining XML schemas that support the data requirements determined in number 2.

For more information

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Who's in touch with AgXML?

The following companies or organizations have attended meetings, have participated in conference calls, or have indicated that they would like to be kept informed of AgXML activities. They appear in alphabetical order and inclusion in this list in no way indicates support of or commitment to AgXML activities.

- 1stAg
- Accenture
- Ag Processing
- AgriCore
- Agris
- Archer Daniels Midland
- Bartlett Grain
- Bridge
- Bunge
- Burlington Northern Santa Fe
- Canadian Wheat Board
- Cargill
- Cenex Harvest States
- ConAgra
- Corn Products International
- Eridania Beghin-Say America

- FCStone, L.L.C.
- Louis Dreyfus
- Monsanto
- The National Grain and Feed Association
- Pioneer Hi-Bred International, Inc.
- Pradium
- RAPID
- Refco
- Rooster
- Saskatchewan Wheat Pool
- Tenco
- The Andersons, Inc.
- The Scoular Company
- UGG
- United Agri Products
- Vantage Point

Why are we doing what we're doing?

As the mission implies, there is a considerable amount of inefficiencies resulting in unnecessary costs in various business processes within the grain and oilseed industry. AgXML will identify and plan to improve upon in priority order the inefficiencies that can be eliminated or reduced through electronically enabling portions of various business process.

What's your approach?

Basically this is an open effort. "Open" means that anyone is welcome to learn about what the group is trying to accomplish, the activities to date, and the plans moving forward. As a group we are striving to reach out to as many grain and oilseed "touch points" as we can. This includes the NGFA, RAPID, agchem, transportation, etc.

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What is AgXML's scope?

Contracts

What's In? *This is what we have taken into consideration and believe will work.*

1. Bulk
2. Land-produced
3. Commodities
4. Grain (including wheat and rice)
5. Oilseeds
6. Ammendments
7. Multiple Pricing
8. Execution of futures for pricing
9. Kinds of contracts (ownership transfers)

	Futures	Basis	Flat	Flat-Priced
Priced	X	X	X	X
Futures	X			
Basis		X		
Unpriced				

    a. Priced (futures, basis, and flat/established) or flat-priced
    b. Unpriced/No Price Established
    c. No basis established/futures contract

10. Industry glossary with per-company cross-reference (aliases)
11. Meets US standards
12. Domestic
13. Export
14. English language
15. Multiple currency
16. Multiple shipments
17. Multiple prices
18. Multiple commodities

What's Out? *This is what may work, but we're not sure or what we know won't work.*

19. NGFI
20. Processed goods (e.g. soybean meals, processed oils)
21. Bags, Containers, Packaging (non-bulk)
22. Freight
23. Sending orders to a futures house, clearinghouses, commission houses, etc.
24. Giving up assignment
25. Non-US standards (we welcome input to move this to the *What's In* section)
26. Non-English languages
27. Exchange rates

To Decide

28. Storage agreement (ownership does not transfer) and Delayed Price/Deferred Price/Priced Later—Deb will make a case for it.
29. Soybean meals—Dan will make a case for it.
30. Will this work with Canada???? Investigate.

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Shipments

What's In? *This is what we have taken into consideration and believe will work.*

31. Modes
    a. Truck
    b. Rail
    c. Barge
32. Certifications
    a. Weight
    b. Grade
    c. *More will probably be added.*
33. Bill of lading
    a. Order
    b. Straight
    c. Billing instructions
    d. Routing instructions
34. Review what's already "out there"

What's Out? *This is what may work, but we're not sure or what we know won't work.*

35. Placement (origin and destination)
36. Release (origin and destination)
37. Claims
38. Shipment advice

To Decide

39. Vessel
40. Delivery order
41. Settlement (settlement group will review)
42. Other certs (identify and review for scope)
43. Tenders
44. Equipment registers
45. US/non-US
46. Export
47. Bulk, Processed
48. Single/multiple commodity?

What has AgXML accomplished so far?

1. We have hammered out an XML schema for contracts. We still have to work on amendments, terms and conditions, and some of the enumerations.
2. We have created high-level UML activity diagrams and use cases for contracts.
3. We have created a rough-draft version of activity diagrams and use cases for barge shipments, truck shipments, and rail shipments. We have begun the process of converting that documentation to UML activity diagrams and use cases.
4. We have a second draft outlining the organizational structure and operation of an L.L.C.. We have general agreement among the participants for the formation of an L.L.C..
5. We're ready for companies to create at least two sample XML instance documents reflecting the content of typical and complex contracts, grain certifications, weight certifications, and bill of lading.

Who owns the work?

Good question—nobody in particular right now. That's a big reason why the AgXML participants want to create an organization—to own the work.

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What's the plan?

The plan in detail is outlined in a Microsoft Project 2000 file. A summary of the plan will be created for this soon. Basically we want to wrap up contracts (to the extent we can prior to implementation) in Februay and continue our early work on shipments.

Benefits and Costs *brainstorming stage of development*

Contract

Business Need

Need to communicate contract information between counter-parties in a trade.

Brief Project Description

Create an XML standard for grain and oilseed contracts to use in an electronic medium for transmission among trading partners.

Technology Components

- Define the schema.
- Each company will have the ability to create a contract that conforms to the schema.
- Each company will have the ability to send and receive the XML contracts.
- Each company will have the ability to process XML contracts (whether that means manual display or full integration into back-end systems).

Purpose

Note: Review overall purpose and add/edit as appropriate.

Estimated Benefits/Justification

- Efficiency
- Postage
- Clerical work
- Data entry
- Errors
- Quicker confirmation and related processes
- Side benefits of updating internal systems to accommodate external XML data flow
- Faxing
- *Note: Go through this exercise for both peer-to-peer and hub models.*

Potential Resource Requirements

- People to define and validate standards. X% of L.L.C. members present at each meeting.
- Project manager.
- Meeting space, food, etc.
- Web hosting.
- Email list service.
- Conference calling.

Estimated Cost

- People's time
- Meetings
- Messaging infrastructure
- Back-end integration

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- *Note: These costs occur at several levels—grain companies, portals, grain elevators, and producers.*
- *Note: Go through this exercise for both peer-to-peer and hub models.*

Customer/Audience

- Elevators
- Processors
- Trading companies
- Brokers
- Producers
- Commercial end users
- Transportation carriers
- Software companies (Business System Vendors)
- Regulatory agencies
- Inputs
- Other service providers

Potential Alternatives Considered

1. Keep doing things the way we always have
2. EDI in general
3. Private/for profit BSV offering end-to-end solution to the industry.
4. NGFA EDI

Approaches your company can take.

Join AgXML.

- Commit financial and human resources to make this initiative work.
- If you're so inclined, provide leadership in the direction and execution of this initiative.

Join alternative initiative to AgXML.

- Not sure what the alternatives are, but feel free to explore.

Wait and see.

- Maybe save some money.
- Miss out on providing input on standards, technology, and processes that will impact your company.