

MusicXML and eScore Standardization at W3C

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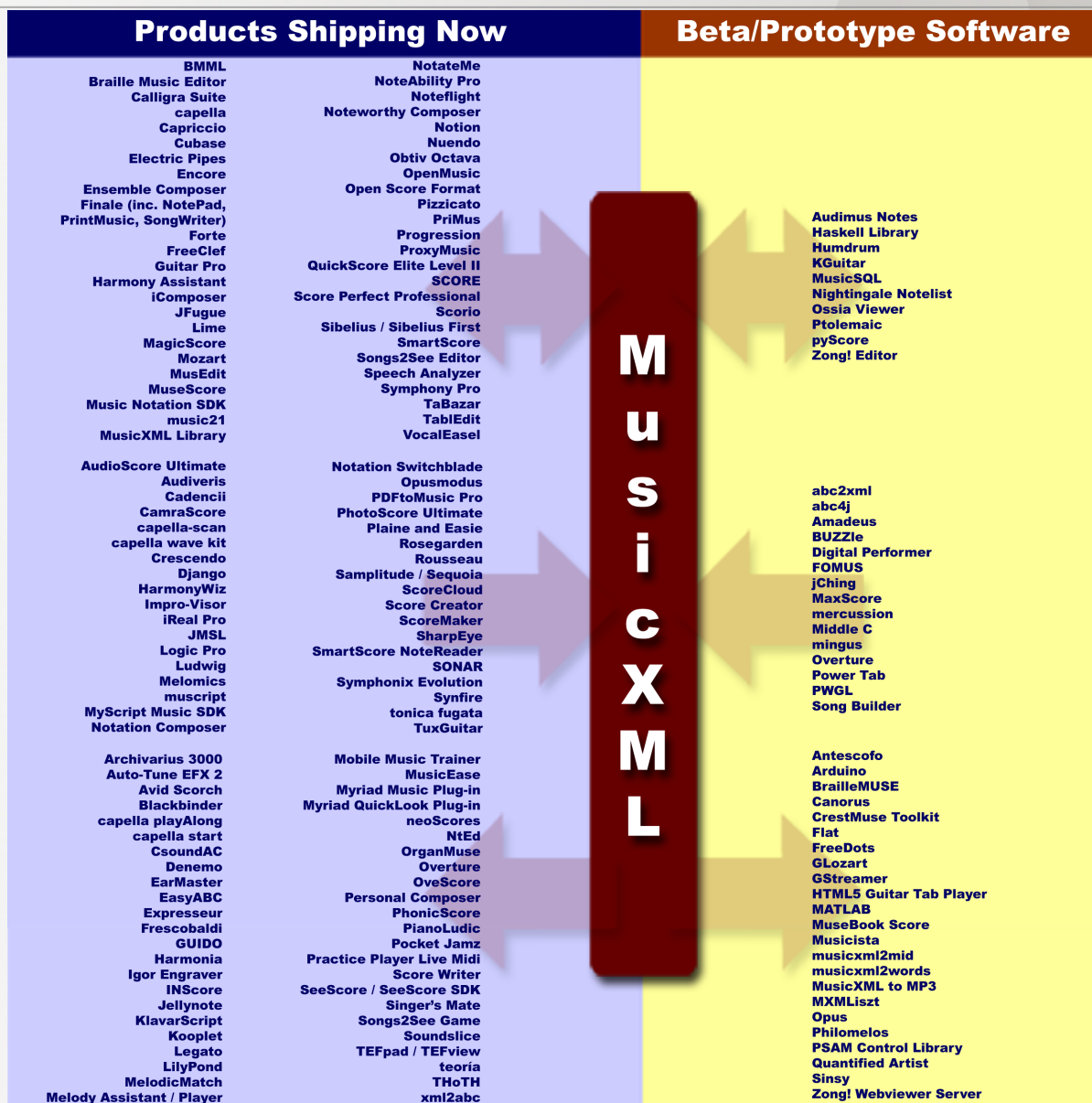


What is MusicXML?

- The open, de-facto standard format for exchanging digital sheet music between applications
- Invented by Michael Good at Recordare in 2000
- Developed collaboratively by a community of hundreds of musicians and software developers over the past 15 years
- Available under an open, royalty-free license that is friendly for both open-source and proprietary software
- Supported by over 180 applications worldwide
- More information at www.musicxml.com

Who Uses MusicXML

Usage map as of January 2015



Why a Standards Organization?

- Need to maintain the format to better support the industry's transition from printed to digital sheet music
- Music notation industry is unstable: most major players have had changes in ownership or direction in the past 2 years
- Always expected that MusicXML would eventually transfer from a company to a standards organization when mature, like PDF did
- However, standards organizations have a dismal history with music notation over the past 20 years

Music Notation Standards Landscape

- ISO / IEC – Already has unused SMDL standard
- MPEG – Already has unused MPEG 7 SMR standard
- IEEE – Already has unused IEEE 1599 standard
- MMA / AMEI – Home of related MIDI standards
- W3C – Home of related Web standards
- Nothing yet the size of the MusicXML community
 - MMA / W3C have limited music notation membership
 - Notation standards developed outside of the music industry remain unused

W3C Opportunity

- W3C offers Community Groups that do not require W3C membership to participate
- Could capture present-day MusicXML as a Community Group Report, possibly co-published with MMA
- Then evolve MusicXML support for web-based notation
 - Better use of W3C technology like annotations and web fonts
 - Evolve from an exchange format to an interactive platform
- May work best if group also includes Steinberg's SMuFL (Standard Music Font Layout)
- October 2014 TPAC meeting explored these possibilities

Status Quo Opportunity

- MusicXML developer community led by Recordare and MakeMusic has achieved unprecedented success in notation standard adoption
- Majority of the MusicXML developer community seems fine with status quo – it works, and provides the lowest possible overhead
- Similar situation emerging for SMuFL font standard
- MusicXML and SMuFL are both strategic to their host companies; standards groups tend to slow things down
- Planning a MusicXML 4.0 with better SMuFL support

Staying in Touch

- MusicXML forum: <http://forums.makemusic.com>
- Shows: Musikmesse, NAMM, SF MusicTech
- MusicXML Community Forum at Musikmesse tentatively planned for Friday, April 17
- Twitter: @MusicXML
- Facebook: www.facebook.com/MusicXML