SVG

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Scalable Vector Graphics (SVG) Requirements

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Status of this document

This document is a work in progress representing the current consensus of the W3C Scalable Vector Graphics Working Group. This draft of the SVG Requirements document has been approved by the SVG working group to be posted for review by W3C members and other interested parties. It is the first public review draft of this document. Publication as a working draft does not imply endorsement by the W3C membership.

Review comments from the public should be sent to www-svg@w3.org, which is an automatically archived email list. Information on how to subscribe to public W3C email lists can be found at http://www.w3.org/Mail/Request.

Introduction

The W3C has chartered a Scalable Vector Graphics working group to produce a specification for an SVG format, written as a modular XML tagset and usable as an XML namespace, which can be widely implemented in browsers and authoring tools and which is suitable for widespread adoption by the content authoring community as a replacement for many current uses of raster graphics.

This will mean that the graphics in Web documents will be smaller, faster, more interactive, and be displayable on a wider range of device resolutions from small mobile devices through office computer monitors to high resolution printers. This will be a significant advance in Web functionality. Interoperability, both in multiple browsers across multiple platforms and in multiple authoring tools (both read and write), is a prime focus.

The SVG working group decided to solicit public review and feedback at the earliest

graphics language specification. This document reflects early SVG working group discussions on what SVG should and should not be. The working group has not reached consensus on all topics, so the document below sometimes describes particular features as open issues that are still under discussion.

This document lists both SVG Design Goals and SVG Detailed Requirements. The SVG Design Goals describe the high-level objectives which SVG should attempt to achieve. These design goals should also act as the criteria by which proposed features are judged. The SVG Detailed Requirements contains the actual list of proposed features.

A first draft of the detailed specification for SVG will be made available a couple of months after the posting of this requirements document for public review. The specification will be developed largely by looking at:

- the design goals and detailed requirements that are contained in this document
- review comments on this document from public feedback, invited experts and working group members

The home page for the W3C graphics activity is http://www.w3.org/Graphics/Activity.

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SVG Design Goals

The following are the Design Goals for SVG. Besides providing a set of high-level objectives for SVG, these goals act as the criteria by which proposed features are judged. Thus, the features list shown below under SVG Detailed Requirements should reflect the higher-level goals listed here.

These SVG Design Goals are not listed in any particular order. It is recognized that some of the goals might conflict or be unachievable and that tradeoffs will need to be made.

Open specification

A. The specification should be controlled by the members in the W3C, not by a single vendor. Thus, the specification should not subject to sudden change by a single vendor.
B. The specification should be vendor neutral and thus should not contain features biased towards a particular vendor.

Widely implemented and supported

C. SVG should be a standard feature in Web browsers
D. Implementations of SVG should be consistent so that the same visual results and behaviors exist in all conforming SVG processors.
E. There should not be subset problems and incompatible generator/reader sets. Thus, there should be a single language specification, not a set of layered language specifications.
F. There should be widespread support in authoring applications and related tools
G. To promote widespread adoption and support, SVG should be specified to be as basic and simple as possible while still providing necessary features to satisfy the needs of graphics on the Web. While the chief goal is to aim at the middle ground, a basic and simple feature set will allow it to be used on devices with a wide range of resolutions and capabilities, from small mobile devices through office computer monitors to high resolution printers.
H. Straightforward generation via hand-authoring with a text editor or server-side scripts (e.g., CGI)
I. SVG should be as self-contained as possible. While SVG should leverage and be compatible with other W3C work, it should attempt to do so without introducing excessive dependencies on other specifications.
J. Ready availability to the casual implementor is desirable
K. Reference source code is desirable

Relationship to other Web standards efforts

L. Defined as an application of XML
M. Compatible with and/or leverages other relevant standards efforts, including XML namespaces, XML links (XLink), DOM, CSS, XSL and metadata.For example:
    - the elements and attributes of an SVG drawing should be scriptable via the DOM
    - text should be expressed as XML character data so that it can be found by search engines
    - attributes which make sense to be part of a style should be expressed in CSS

    The SVG working group will need to coordinate proactively with other working groups when it is more appropriate to meet the SVG requirements through modifications to other Recommendations.

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