

RERC-ACT D3 Project: XML Task Repository Abstract

Following more than ten years of research and development in the area of electronic prompting/cueing technology, AbleLink Technologies has created an XML-based protocol for describing instructional media that creates a “language” for prompting systems which can facilitate sharing of instructional content across organizations and across technology platforms. This protocol, known as the AbleLink Instructional Media Standard (AIMS), is being used to develop a web based repository of sharable prompting content through the RERC on Advancing Cognitive Technologies. AIMS is a standardized format for defining a set of related picture, audio, and video files used for presenting instructional content. The instructional content may be step-by-step task instructions for individuals with cognitive disabilities, detailed instructions for complicated tasks for individuals without disabilities, training tasks for new employees at a job site, or possibly home health care instructions for family caregivers. The ways in which instructional media can be used for prompting is only limited by the imagination of the content developer. The AIMS protocol provides a common language for prompting technologies used to present the instructional prompts so that instructional content can be created once and then played on multiple systems and platforms and easily shared with other individuals or organizations. Just like a JPG is a standardized image format and MP3 is a standardized audio file format, AIMS provides a standardized file format for “instructional media.”

This technology was first created to provide a common prompting structure to allow sharing of tasks between its various desktop, Tablet PC, and PDA based prompting systems. However, in an effort to promote broader utilization of prompting technology, AbleLink has teamed with the RERC-ACT project to launch the AIMS initiative which makes this XML protocol freely available to individuals and organization involved in creating instructional media and technology-based prompting systems. In addition to providing free copies of the AIMS Task Builder application to registered users, this project has created an Internet-based infrastructure for allowing content developers to create and upload complete AIMS-based training tasks to a web-based repository. Other users can download tasks from the Aims Task Library and import this shared training content into any AIMS compliant electronic prompting system for further editing or end user instruction.

Detailed information on AIMS is available online (www.aimsxml.com).

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