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**Information technology — Software asset  
management —**

**Part 2:  
Software identification tag**

*Technologies de l'information — Gestion de biens de logiciel —  
Partie 2: Étiquette d'identification du logiciel*

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## Foreword

ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) and IEC (the International Electrotechnical Commission) form the specialized system for worldwide standardization. National bodies that are members of ISO or IEC participate in the development of International Standards through technical committees established by the respective organization to deal with particular fields of technical activity. ISO and IEC technical committees collaborate in fields of mutual interest. Other international organizations, governmental and non-governmental, in liaison with ISO and IEC, also take part in the work. In the field of information technology, ISO and IEC have established a joint technical committee, ISO/IEC JTC 1.

International Standards are drafted in accordance with the rules given in the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2.

The main task of the joint technical committee is to prepare International Standards. Draft International Standards adopted by the joint technical committee are circulated to national bodies for voting. Publication as an International Standard requires approval by at least 75 % of the national bodies casting a vote.

Attention is drawn to the possibility that some of the elements of this document may be the subject of patent rights. ISO and IEC shall not be held responsible for identifying any or all such patent rights.

ISO/IEC 19770-2 was prepared by Joint Technical Committee ISO/IEC JTC 1, *Information technology*, Subcommittee SC 7, *Software and systems engineering*.

ISO/IEC 19770 consists of the following parts, under the general title *Information technology — Software asset management*:

- *Part 1: Processes*
- *Part 2: Software identification tag*
- *Part 3: Software entitlement tag*

## Introduction

This part of ISO/IEC 19770 provides an International Standard for software identification tags. The software identification tag is an XML file containing authoritative identification and management information about a software product. The software identification tag is installed and managed on a computing device together with the software product. The tag may be created as part of the installation process, or added later for software already installed without tags. However, it is expected more commonly that the tag will be created when the software product is originally developed, and then be distributed and installed together with the software product. Having the tag available from the beginning allows for the more effective management of distribution and repackaging external to the software consumer, and then of release management within the software consumers organization.

This part of ISO/IEC 19770 supports software asset management processes as defined in ISO/IEC 19770-1. It is also designed to work together with the future ISO/IEC 19770-3 which will provide an International Standard for software entitlement tags.

Software identification tags will benefit all stakeholders involved in the creation, licensing, distribution, releasing, installation, and on-going management of software. Key benefits associated with software identification tags include:

- a) The ability to consistently and authoritatively identify software products that need to be managed for any purpose, such as for licensing, upgrading, packaging or for the specification of dependencies. Software identification tags provide the meta-data necessary to support more accurate identification which differentiates this approach from traditional file-oriented identification techniques.
- b) The ability to identify groups or suites of software products in the same way as for individual software products, enabling entire groups or suites of software products to be managed with the same flexibility as for individual products.
- c) Facilitation of de facto standardization between different software creators, and within software creator organizations, of how different versions of software are identified, allowing for better identification and management by software consumers of those different versions; for example, being able to distinguish between free-standing versions and versions which are components of suites, upgrade paths, etc.
- d) Facilitation of automated approaches to license compliance, using information both from the software identification tag and from the software entitlement tag as will be specified in ISO/IEC 19770-3.
- e) The ability to provide comprehensive information about the structural footprint of packages, i.e. the list of components such as files and system settings associated with that package, in order to link package-level management with file-level management.
- f) The ability to provide information about how to identify if a particular software package is being actively used or not.
- g) The ability to deal with the complexities of software installed on removable or shared storage, or in virtual environments (subject to the evolving ability of platforms and installers to identify devices and environments).
- h) The ability to reflect within the software identification tag the identities and requirements of different entities, including software creators, software licensors, packagers, distributors external to the software consumer, release managers within the software consumer, and those responsible for installing and managing software on an on-going basis.
- i) The ability to allow for the validation of any of this information through the optional use of digital signatures by anyone creating or modifying information in the software identification tag.

- j) The ability for entities besides the software creators (e.g. independent providers, or in-house personnel) to create software identification tags for legacy software, and also for software from software creators who do not provide software identification tags themselves.
- k) The ability of this International Standard to evolve in informal and formal ways, as common approaches become accepted throughout industry for dealing with additional types of information not currently covered by this part of ISO/IEC 19770, such as for product activation.





# Information technology — Software asset management —

## Part 2: Software identification tag

### 1 Scope

#### 1.1 Purpose

This part of ISO/IEC 19770 establishes specifications for tagging software to optimize its identification and management.

#### 1.2 Field of application

This part of ISO/IEC 19770 applies to:

- a) Platform providers: These are the entities which are responsible for the computer or hardware device and/or associated operating system, or virtual environment, on which software may be installed or run. Platform providers which support this part of ISO/IEC 19770 additionally provide tag management capabilities at the level of the platform or operating system.
- b) Software providers: These are the entities that create (“software creators”), package (“software packagers”) or license (“software licensors”) software for distribution or installation. These include software manufacturers, independent software developers, consultants, and repackagers of previously manufactured software. They may also be in-house software developers.
- c) Tag providers: These are the entities that create (“tag creators”) or modify (“tag modifiers”) software identification tags. A tag provider may be part of the software provider organization, or may be a 3<sup>rd</sup> party organization or the software consumer.
- d) Tag tool providers: These are the entities that may provide any number of tools that create, modify or use software identification tags. These tools include development environments that provide automatically generated software identification tags, installation tools that may create and/or modify tags on behalf of the installation process as well as desktop management tools that may create tags for software that does not have a tag and/or modify tags with release details throughout the software lifecycle. See Annex C for details on how tool providers are likely to use software identification tags.
- e) Software consumers: These are the entities that purchase, install and/or otherwise consume software, and who are intended as one of the major beneficiaries of the improved information provided by the software identification tag as specified in this part of ISO/IEC 19770. See Annex D for details on how software consumers are likely to use software identification tags.

#### 1.3 Limitations

This part of ISO/IEC 19770 does not detail SAM processes required for reconciliation of software entitlements with software identification tags.

This part of ISO/IEC 19770 does not specify product activation or launch controls.

This part of ISO/IEC 19770 is not intended to conflict either with any organization's policies, procedures or standards or with any national laws and regulations. Any such conflict should be resolved before using this part of ISO/IEC 19770.

## **2 Conformance**

### **2.1 General**

Conformance can apply to a product or an organization. For organizational conformance, the scope defined shall cover both the organizational scope as well as the products that are included in the scope.

If a claim of conformance is made for a product or organization, the claim shall specify the scope for which the conformance was tested.

Conformance throughout this clause is most often defined in terms of complying with the requirements of 6.1, 8.3, 8.4, and 8.5. Requirements for platform conformance are also specified in 7.2. There are also normative requirements specified in other subclauses of Clauses 6 and 7, indicated by the use of the word “shall”, but these are not included in the coverage of statements of conformance, except to the extent that they are also included in 6.1, 7.2, 8.3, 8.4, or 8.5. Statements including the word ‘should’ are recommendations but not mandatory.

### **2.2 Product conformance**

#### **2.2.1 Example reasons for product conformance**

There are a number of reasons for an organization to seek individual product conformance to this part of ISO/IEC 19770. This may be sought when a specific product is being provided for a market that requires conformance (for example, if government organizations require products to conform to this part of ISO/IEC 19770 in order to be included on a project). It might also be desired by platform providers who want to provide a more secure and auditable tag storage that can be used to identify definitively which end-users installed which software packages.

#### **2.2.2 Product scope**

There shall be a clear statement for product scope describing, in unambiguous terms, the software products to which it applies and, where appropriate, clarifying the products to which it does not apply. The product conformance scope may be defined in any way considered appropriate, such as for a specific software product, for all software products, for all software products on specific platforms, for the software products of specified manufacturers and/or for all software products created after a specified date, as long as it is unambiguous. In the case of a product which creates or modifies software identification tags, the scope shall be the product itself and all software produced or modified by the product when tag-conformity functionality is enabled.

#### **2.2.3 Software product conformance**

Full conformance for a software product is achieved in one of two ways:

- a) For a product which is installable, full conformance is achieved by demonstrating that all software identification tags installed by it at installation shall comply with all mandatory requirements of this part of ISO/IEC 19770, as specified in 6.1 and 8.3. If optional or extended tag elements are used these shall also comply with requirements as specified in 8.4 and 8.5.

This conformance shall be demonstrated by performing equivalence partitioning with the exit criteria that all tests pass and 100 % equivalence partition coverage of the tag creation/installation is achieved. Equivalence partitions shall be derived from the statement of product scope.

If the software product consists of a package of other software products, then the software product shall retain all component tags and reference all child tag elements, which, under any circumstances, still need to be identified separately (for the purpose of licensing, security or other).

- b) For a product that is distributable but not yet installed, full conformance is achieved by demonstrating that distributable builds are issued with a unique tag that shall comply with all mandatory requirements of this part of ISO/IEC 19770, as specified in 6.1 and 8.3. If optional or extended tag elements are used these shall also comply with requirements as specified in 8.4 and 8.5. The exception to this is that any mandatory elements which are installation-specific are not included.

This conformance shall be demonstrated by performing equivalence partitioning with the exit criteria that all tests pass and 100 % equivalence partition coverage is achieved. Equivalence partitions shall be derived from the statement of product scope.

If the software product consists of a package of other software products, then the software product shall retain all component tags and reference all child tag elements which under any circumstances still need to be identified separately (for the purpose of licensing, security or other).

#### 2.2.4 Third party software identification tag conformance

Third party tag provider organizations may undertake the process of creating software identification tags for any software packages that do not include such tags. This may be done for older software products, shareware/freeware type products, or for companies that decide not to follow this part of ISO/IEC 19770. These tags may be provided to organizations to assist in their software discovery and identification procedures.

Full conformance for third party created software identification tags is achieved by demonstrating that all software identification tags produced by the organization comply with all mandatory requirements of this part of ISO/IEC 19770, as specified in 6.1 and 8.3. If optional or extended tag elements are used these shall also comply with requirements as specified in 8.4 and 8.5. Any new data that is added shall conform to the same standards as those required for installable software conformance.

Conformance for third party created software identification tags requires that the tag providers demonstrate that the software\_ids they create are unique, and use consistent values for the identification of software providers. The expectation is that the tag providers will maintain a list of unique software providers for all tags created, and that the list includes a consistent software provider regid (that references the provider's domain) and a unique ID (which may be a GUID) for each reference and that these details are used consistently in the created tags.

This conformance shall be demonstrated by performing equivalence partitioning with the exit criteria that all tests pass and 100 % equivalence partition coverage of the tag production is achieved. Equivalence partitions shall be derived both from the range of software that the tag tool shall work on and the corresponding statements of product scope.

#### 2.2.5 Software installer product conformance

Full conformance for a software installer product is achieved by demonstrating that all software identification tags installed by it at installation comply with all mandatory requirements of this part of ISO/IEC 19770, as specified in 6.1 and 8.3. If optional or extended tag elements are used these shall also comply with requirements as specified in 8.4 and 8.5.

This conformance shall be demonstrated by performing equivalence partitioning with the exit criteria that all tests pass and 100 % equivalence partition coverage of the tag creation/installation is achieved. Equivalence partitions shall be derived both from the range of software that is installed and the corresponding statements of product scope.

If the software being installed consists of a package of other software products, then the software product shall retain all component tags and reference all child tag elements which under any circumstances still need to be identified separately (for the purpose of licensing, security or other).