Open 3P Standard Custodian Board

Document control

Title	Open 3P change protocol
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Status	Draft
Approved by	
Date of approval	
Review frequency	
Next review date	

Version control

Version	Date	Summary of changes	Name
0.9	17th January 2024	Draft for approval	Julian Tait

Open 3P data standard change protocol

1. Scope

The change protocol creates a strict framework for the development and release of the Open 3P data standard. The data standard consists of three elements:

- The standard schema – the technical structure
- Normative documentation – information that determines conformance to the standard
- Non-normative or informative documentation – provides explanation and guidance

This data standard change protocol applies to the standard schema and the normative documentation and NOT the non-normative documentation

2. Versioning system

The Open 3P data standard schema and normative documentation are developed in a way that enables standard users and developers to implement the data standard with confidence. As well as having robust governance processes through the Open 3P Standard Custodian Board.

The technical process of incremental schema and normative documentation development adopts a subset of the Semantic Versioning Specification (SemVer) that imposes a simple set of rules to dictate how version numbers are assigned and implemented and their significance.

SemVer imposes a MAJOR.MINOR.PATCH (X.Y.Z) numbering protocol that allows everyone to understand the version, dependencies and compatibilities associated with that version.

Simply:

- MAJOR version increments will dictate that the version is not compatible with previous versions, they are sometimes referred to as a breaking changes.
- MINOR version increments show that versions have additional functionality in a backwardly compatible manner.
- PATCH increments are small backwards compatible changes such as clarifications and corrections.

How the version increments will determine this.

3. SemVer Specification as applied to the Open 3P data standard

Version protocol

The Open 3P data standard using SemVer MUST declare a public release. This release SHOULD be precise and comprehensive.

A normal version number MUST take the form X.Y.Z where X, Y, and Z are non-negative integers, and MUST NOT contain leading zeroes. X is the major version, Y is the minor version, and Z is the patch version. Each element MUST increase numerically. For instance: 1.9.0 -> 1.10.0 -> 1.11.0.

Once a versioned update has been released, the contents of that version MUST NOT be modified. Any modifications MUST be released as a new version.

Major version zero (0.y.z) is for initial development. Anything MAY change at any time. The standard SHOULD NOT be considered stable.

Version 1.0.0 defines the public release of the standard. The way in which the version number is incremented after this release is dependent on this public version of the standard and how it changes.

Major version X (X.y.z | X > 0) MUST be incremented if any backward incompatible changes are introduced to the publicly released standard and/or normative documentation. These could be but are not restricted to:

- Standard schema
    - Entity creation
    - Entity deletion
    - Changing the relationship of a schema element to other schema elements
    - Changing the entity type of a schema element
- Normative documentation
    - Non-compatible method changes

It MAY also include minor and patch level changes. Patch and minor versions MUST be reset to 0 when a major version is incremented.

Minor version Y (x.Y.z | x > 0) MUST be incremented if new, backward compatible functionality is introduced to the public data standard. It MUST be incremented if any element of the public data standard functionality is marked as deprecated. It MAY be incremented if substantial new functionality or improvements are introduced within the release candidate. It MAY include patch level changes. Patch version MUST be reset to 0 when minor version is incremented. These could be but are not restricted to:

- Standard schema
    - Addition of field
    - Deprication of field
- Normative documentation
    - Compatible method change

Patch version Z (x.y.Z | x > 0) MUST be incremented if only backward compatible small changes are introduced. These could be but are not restricted to:

- Standard schema
    - Addition of a controlled list item
    - Non-substantive change to field name
- Normative documentation
    - Refining of method
    - Refining of description

Release candidate

A release candidate version MAY be denoted by appending a hyphen and a series of dot separated identifiers immediately following the patch version. Identifiers MUST comprise only ASCII alphanumerics and hyphens [0-9A-Za-z-]. Identifiers MUST NOT be empty. Numeric identifiers MUST NOT include leading zeroes. Release candidate versions have a lower precedence than the associated standard version. A release candidate version indicates that the version is unstable and might not satisfy the intended compatibility requirements as denoted by its associated normal version. Examples: 1.0.0-alpha, 1.0.0-alpha.1, 1.0.0-0.3.7, 1.0.0-x.7.z.92, 1.0.0-x-y-z.--.

4. Hierarchy

Within the Open 3P data standard the normative documentation is sub-ordinate to the standard schema, as it is a precise set of instructions that enable conformance to the schema.

Therefore:

- A change in the standard schema MUST create a related change in the normative documentation
- A change in the normative documentation MUST NOT create a change in the standard schema

Versioning as a composite of changes to the standard schema and normative documentation is affected the following way:

- A change in the standard schema creates a corresponding change in the normative documentation, and that change in the normative documentation is part of the standard schemas version change and increments the version
- A change in the normative documentation does not create a corresponding change in the standard schema and the change increments the version