J. Kunze
University of California
B. Kahle
Internet Archive
J. Masanes
European Archive
G. Mohr
Internet Archive
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A Name-Value Language (ANVL)

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Abstract

ANVL (A Name-Value Language) is a simple record syntax based on email headers. An ANVL record is a sequence of data elements ending in a blank line. An element consists of a label, a colon, and an optional value, and a long value may be folded (continued) onto the next line by inserting a newline and indenting the next line. A value folded across several lines is treated as if the lines were joined on one long line; any line beginning with '#' is treated as a "comment". Example ANVL record:

```
entry:
# first draft
who:  Gilbert, W.S. | Sullivan, Arthur
what:  The Yeomen of
       the Guard
when/created:  1888
```

1. A Name-Value Language

ANVL (A Name-Value Language) is a simple record syntax based on email headers [RFC822]. It is generally much simpler than email headers, but it adds comment lines, record boundaries, and the assumption of UTF-8 [RFC3629] character encoding.

An ANVL record is a sequence of data elements ending in a blank line. An element consists of a label, a colon, and an optional value. Here is an example of a record in the ANVL syntax.

```
entry:
# first draft
who:   Gilbert, W.S. | Sullivan, Arthur
what:  The Yeomen of
       the Guard
when/created:  1888
```

A long value may be folded (continued) onto the next line by inserting a newline and indenting the next line. An element value folded across several lines is treated as if the lines were joined together on one long line, with the end-of-line and any subsequent spaces and tabs considered equivalent to exactly one space. Finally, any line beginning with a '#' (hash) character is treated as if it were not present; this is a "comment" line.

The ANVL specification is silent on the nature or lexical composition of both names and values. Other specifications may use ANVL by layering on semantics and additional syntactic rules, but that is outside the scope of ANVL.

2. Registration of MIME Media Type text/anvl

This section describes, as per [RFC2048], the MIME type associated with the ANVL format.

MIME media type name: text

MIME subtype name: anvl

Required parameters: None

Optional parameters: None

Encoding considerations:

UTF-8 is the default character encoding. While [RFC2046] (section 4.1.1) stipulates that "text" types use CRLF (hex 0d + hex 0a) as an end-of-line marker, in practice this is not always true (e.g., text/xml). It is important for applications also to accept CR or LF by itself

as an end-of-line.

Security considerations:

The ANVL record syntax poses no direct risk to computers and networks. Implementors need to be aware of source authority and trustworthiness of information structured in ANVL. Readers and writers subject themselves to all the risks that accompany normal operation of data processing services (e.g., buffer overflow attacks). Because it discloses and bounds data elements, ANVL may actually be used to clarify and secure a communication that would otherwise be completely unstructured.

Interoperability considerations: None

Published specification: RFC yyy

Applications which use this media type: Any simple data transfer

Additional information: none

Person and email address to contact for further information:

John Kunze jak@ucop.edu

Intended usage: COMMON

Author/Change controller: IESG

3. IANA Considerations

After IESG approval, IANA is expected to register the ANVL type "text/anvl" using the application provided in this document.

4. Authors' Addresses

Brewster Kahle
Internet Archive
116 Sheridan Avenue
Presidio of San Francisco
San Francisco, CA 94129, USA

Fax: +1 415-840-0391
EMail: brewster@archive.org

John A. Kunze
California Digital Library
University of California, Office of the President
415 20th St, 4th Floor
Oakland, CA 94612-3550, USA

Fax: +1 510-893-5212
EMail: jak@ucop.edu

Julien Masanes
European Archive
Prinsengracht 707
1017 JW Amsterdam, The Netherlands

EMail: julien.masanes@netpreserve.org

Gordon Mohr
Internet Archive
116 Sheridan Avenue
Presidio of San Francisco
San Francisco, CA 94129, USA

Fax: +1 415-840-0391
EMail: gojomo@archive.org

5. Informative References

[RFC822]   D. Crocker, "Format of ARPA Internet Text Messages", August 1982,
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[RFC2046]   N. Freed, N. Borenstein, "Multipurpose Internet Mail Extensions (MIME) Part
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[RFC2048]   N. Freed, J. Klensin, J. Postel, "Multipurpose Internet Mail Extensions
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[RFC3629]   F. Yergeau, "UTF-8, a Transformation Format of ISO 10646", November 2003,
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Table of Contents