OBIX Version 1.1

Committee Specification Draft 0102 / Public Review Draft 0102

11 July 2013 19 December 2013

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Additional artifacts:
This prose specification is one component of a Work Product that also includes:
- XML schemas: http://docs.oasis-open.org/obix/obix/v1.1/csprd012/schemas/

Related work:
This specification replaces or supersedes:

This specification is related to:
- **Encodings for oBIX: Common Encodings Version 1.0.** Edited by Marcus Jung. Latest version. [http://docs.oasis-open.org/obix/obix-encodings/v1.0/obix-encodings-v1.0.html](http://docs.oasis-open.org/obix/obix-encodings/v1.0/obix-encodings-v1.0.html). 11July 2013. OASIS Committee Specification Draft 01 / Public Review Draft 01...

**Abstract:**

ObIX version 1.1 provides the core information model and interaction patterns for communication with building control systems. ObIX (the Open Building Information eXchange) supports both machine-to-machine (M2M) communications and enterprise to machine communications. This document also describes the default XML encoding for oBIX. An oBIX XML schema (XSD) is included. Companion documents will specify the protocol bindings and alternate encodings for specific implementation cases.

**Status:**

This document was last revised or approved by the OASIS Open Building Information Exchange (ObIX) TC on the above date. The level of approval is also listed above. Check the “Latest version” location noted above for possible later revisions of this document.

Technical Committee members should send comments on this specification to the Technical Committee’s email list. Others should send comments to the Technical Committee by using the “Send A Comment” button on the Technical Committee’s web page at [http://www.oasis-open.org/committees/obix/](http://www.oasis-open.org/committees/obix/).

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**Citation format:**

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[OBIx-v1.1]

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1 Introduction

eOBI is designed to provide access to the embedded software systems which sense and control the
world around us. Historically, integrating to these systems required custom low level protocols, often
custom physical network interfaces. But now the rapid increase in ubiquitous networking and the
availability of powerful microprocessors for low cost embedded devices is now weaving these systems
into the very fabric of the Internet. Generically the term M2M for Machine-to-Machine describes the
transformation occurring in this space because it opens a new chapter in the development of the Web -
machines autonomously communicating with each other. The eOBI specification lays the groundwork
for building this M2M Web using standard, enterprise-friendly technologies like XML, HTTP, and
URIs.

1.1 Terminology

The keywords “MUST”, “MUST NOT”, “REQUIRED”, “SHALL”, “SHALL NOT”, “SHOULD”, “SHOULD
NOT”, “RECOMMENDED”, “MAY”, and “OPTIONAL” in this document are to be interpreted as described
in RFC2119.

1.2 Normative References

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reference</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PNG</td>
<td>W3C Recommendation, “PNG (Portable Network Graphics) Specification”, 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RFC2119</td>
<td>Bradner, S., “Key words for use in RFCs to Indicate Requirement Levels”, BCP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><a href="http://www.ietf.org/rfc/rfc3986.txt">http://www.ietf.org/rfc/rfc3986.txt</a></td>
</tr>
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<td>SI Units</td>
<td>International System of Units (SI), NIST Reference.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><a href="http://physics.nist.gov/cuu/Units/units.html">http://physics.nist.gov/cuu/Units/units.html</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOA-RM</td>
<td>Reference Model for Service Oriented Architecture 1.0, October 2006. OASIS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WS-Calendar</td>
<td>WS-Calendar Version 1.0, 30 July 2011. OASIS Committee Specification.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
|                            | http://docs.oasis-open.org/ws-calendar/ws-calendar/v1.0/ws-calendar-1.0-
                            | spec.html                                                                  |
| WSDL                       | Christensen, E., Curbera, F., Meredith, G., Weerawarana, S., “Web Services
|                            | http://www.w3.org/TR/wsd1                                                   |
| XLINK                      | DeRose, S., Maler, E., Orchard, D., Walsh, N. “XML Linking Language (XLink)
| XPOINTER                   | DeRose, S., Maler, E., Daniel Jr., R., “XPointer xpointer() Scheme”, December|
| ZonInfo DB                 | IANA Time Zone Database, 24 September 2013 (latest version).                |
|                            | http://www.iana.org/time-zones                                             |

1.3 Non-Normative References

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reference</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Casing</td>
<td>Capitalization Styles, Microsoft Developer Network, September, 2013.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1.4 Namespace

If an implementation is using the XML Encoding according to the OBIX Encodings specification document, the XML namespace URI (see XML-ns) that MUST be used is:

\[ \text{http://docs.oasis-open.org/obix/ns/2013}\]

Dereferencing the above URI will produce the Resource Directory Description Language (RDDL 2.0) document that describes this namespace.

1.5 Naming Conventions

Where XML is used, for the names of elements and the names of attributes within XSD files, the names follow the Lower Camel Case convention (see Casing following design points illustrate for a description of Camel Case), with all names starting with a lower case letter.

1.6 Editing Conventions

For readability, Element names in tables appear as separate words. In the Schema, they follow the rules as described in Section 1.5.

Terms defined in this specification or used from specific cited references are capitalized; the same term not capitalized has its normal English meaning.

All sections explicitly noted as examples are informational and SHALL NOT be considered normative.

All UML and figures are illustrative and SHALL NOT be considered normative.

1.7 Language Conventions

Although several different encodings may be used for representing OBIX data, the most common is XML. Therefore many of the concepts in OBIX are strongly tied to XML concepts. Data objects are represented in XML by XML documents. It is important to distinguish the usage of the term document in this context.
from references to this specification document. When “this document” is used, it references this specification document. When “OBIX document” or “XML document” is used, it references an OBIX object, encoded in XML, as per the convention for this (specification) document. When used in the latter context, this could equally be understood to mean an OBIX object encoded in any of the other possible encoding mechanisms.

When expressed in XML, there is a one-to-one-mapping between Objects and elements. Objects are the fundamental abstraction used by the OBIX data model. Elements are how those Objects are expressed in XML syntax. This specification uses the term Object and sub-Object, although one can equivalently substitute the term element and sub-element when referencing the XML representation. The term child is used to describe an Object that is contained by another Object, and is semantically equivalent to the term sub-Object. The two terms are used interchangeably throughout this specification.

1.8 Architectural Considerations

Table 1-1 illustrates the problem space oBIX attempts to address. Each of these concepts is covered in the subsequent sections of the specification as shown.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concept</th>
<th>Solution</th>
<th>Covered in Sections</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Information Model</td>
<td>Representing M2M information in a standard syntax – originally XML but expanded to other technologies</td>
<td>4, 5, 6, 8, 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interactions</td>
<td>transferring M2M information over a network</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Normalization</td>
<td>developing standard representations for common M2M features: points, histories, and alarms</td>
<td>11, 12, 13, 14, 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foundation</td>
<td>providing a common kernel for new standards</td>
<td>7, 11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.1.1 XML

The principal requirement of oBIX is to develop a common XML syntax for representing Problem spaces for OBIX.

1.8.1 Information Model

OBIX defines a common information model to represent diverse M2M systems and an interaction model for their communications. The design philosophy of oBIX is based on a small but extensible data model which maps to a simple fixed XML syntax. This core object model and its XML syntax is simple enough to capture entirely in one illustration provided, which is done in Section 4.1. The object model’s extensibility allows for the definition of new abstractions through a concept called Contracts. The Contracts. Contracts are flexible and powerful enough that they are even used to define the majority of the oBIX conformance rules in this specification is actually defined in oBIX itself through contracts.

1.1.2 Networking

1.8.2 Interactions

Once we have a way to represent M2M information in XML a common format, the next step is to provide standard mechanisms to transfer it over networks for publication and consumption. O BIX breaks networking into two pieces: an abstract request/response model and a series of protocol bindings which
implement that model. In Version 1.1 of oBIX, the two goals are accomplished in separate documents: this core specification defines the core model, while several protocol bindings designed to leverage existing Web Service infrastructure: an HTTP REST binding and a SOAP binding infrastructure are described in companion documents to this specification.

### 1.1.3.1.8.3 Normalization

There are a few concepts which have broad applicability in systems which sense and control the physical world. Version 1.1 of oBIX provides a normalized representation for three of these; described in Table 1-2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concept</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Points</td>
<td>Representing a single scalar value and its status – typically these map to sensors, actuators, or configuration variables like a setpoint.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Histories</td>
<td>Modeling and querying of time sampled point data. Typically edge devices collect a time stamped history of point values which can be fed into higher level applications for analysis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alarms</td>
<td>Modeling, routing, and acknowledgment of alarms. Alarms indicate a condition which requires notification of either a user or another application.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

Table 1-2 Points: representing a single scalar value and its status – typically these map to sensors, actuators, or configuration variables like a setpoint.

---

Histories: modeling and querying of time sampled point data. Typically edge devices collect a time stamped history of point values which can be fed into higher level applications for analysis.

---

Alarms: modeling, routing, and acknowledgment of alarms. Alarms indicate a condition which requires notification of either a user or another application.

### 1.1.4.1.8.4 Foundation

The requirements and vertical problem domains for M2M systems are immensely broad – too broad to cover in one single specification. oBIX is deliberately designed as a fairly low level specification, but with a powerful extension mechanism based on Contracts. The goal of oBIX is to lay the groundwork for a common object model and XML syntax which serves as the foundation for new specifications. It is hoped that a stack of specifications for vertical domains can be built upon oBIX as a common foundation.

### 1.2.1.1 Terminology

The key words “MUST”, “MUST NOT”, “REQUIRED”, “SHALL”, “SHALL NOT”, “SHOULD”, “SHOULD NOT”, “RECOMMENDED”, “MAY”, and “OPTIONAL” in this document are to be interpreted as described in RFC2119.

### 1.3.1.1 Normative References

**RFC2119**  Bradner, S., “Key words for use in RFCs to Indicate Requirement Levels”, BCP 14, RFC 2119, March 1997.


**SOA.RM**  Reference Model for Service Oriented Architecture 1.0, October 2006 OASIS Standard.
1.41.1 Non-Normative References


1.51.9 Changes from Version 1.0

Changes to this specification since the initial version 1.0 are listed in Table 1-3 below, along with a brief description.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Change</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Add date, time primitive types and tz Facet to the core object model.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Add binary encoding – Note this is now part of the Encodings for OBIX document.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Add support for History Append operation.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Add HTTP content negotiation – Note this is now part of the OBIX REST document.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Add the of attribute to the ref element type and specify usage of the is attribute for ref.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Add metadata inclusion for alternate hierarchies (tagging).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Add compact history record encoding.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Add support for alternate history formats.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Add support for concise encoding of long Contract Lists.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Add Delete request semantics.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clean up references and usage in text, add tables and Table of Tables, capitalization of important words.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Add conformance clauses.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Move Lobby earlier in document and add Bindings, Encodings, and Models sections.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1-3 Add date, time primitive types and tz Facet to the core object model.

Table 1-3 Add binary encoding – Note this is now part of the document.
- Add support for History Append operation.
- Add HTTP content negotiation—Note this is now part of the document.
- Add the of attribute to the ref element type and specify usage of the is attribute for ref.
- Add metadata inclusion for alternate hierarchies (tagging).
- Add compact history record encoding.
- Add support for alternate history formats.
- Add support for concise encoding of long contract lists.
- Add Delete request semantics.
- Clean up references and usage in text.
- Add conformance clauses.

Changes from Version 1.0.
2 Quick Start [non-normative]

This chapter is for those eager beavers who want to immediately jump right into OBIX and OBIX in all its angle bracket glory. The best way to begin is to take a simple example that anybody is familiar with — the staid thermostat. Let’s assume we have a very simple thermostat. It has a temperature sensor which reports the current space temperature and it has a setpoint that stores the desired temperature. Let’s assume our thermostat only supports a heating mode, so it has a variable that reports if the furnace should currently be on. Let’s take a look at what our thermostat might look like in OBIX XML:

```xml
<obj href="http://myhome/thermostat">
  <real name="spaceTemp" unit="obix:units/fahrenheit" val="67.2/">
  <real name="setpoint" unit="obix:units/fahrenheit" val="72.0/">
  <bool name="furnaceOn" val="true"/>
</obj>
```

The first thing to notice is that the Information Model: there are three element types. In OBIX there is a one-to-one mapping between objects — `obj`, `real`, and `elements`. Objects are the fundamental abstraction used by the OBIX data model. Elements are how those objects are expressed in XML syntax. This document uses the term object and sub-objects, although you can substitute the term element and sub-element when talking about the XML representation.

`bool`. The root `obj` element models the entire thermostat. Its `href` attribute identifies the URI for this OBIX document. There are The thermostat Object has three child `object` Objects, one for each of the thermostat’s variables. The real `object` store our two floating point values: space temperature and setpoint. The `bool` `object` stores a boolean variable for furnace state. Each sub-element contains a `name` attribute which defines the role within the parent. Each sub-element also contains a `val` attribute for the current value. Lastly we see that we have annotated the temperatures with an attribute called unit so we know they are in Fahrenheit, not Celsius (which would be one hot room). The OBIX specification defines a bunch of these annotations which are called Facets.

How did we obtain this Object? The OBIX specification leverages commonly available networking technologies and concepts for defining Interactions between devices. The thermostat implements an OBIX Server, and we can use an OBIX Client to issue a request for the thermostat’s data, by specifying its uri. This concept is well understood in the world of M2M so OBIX requires no new knowledge to implement.

In real life, we wish to represent Normalized information from devices. In most cases sensor and actuator variables (called PPoints) imply more semantics than a simple scalar value. In the example of our thermostat, in addition to the current space temperature, it also reports the setpoint for desired temperature and whether it is trying to command the furnace on. In other cases such as alarms, it is desirable to standardize a complex data structure. OBIX captures these concepts into Contracts. Contracts allow us to tag Objects with normalized semantics and structure.

Let’s suppose our thermostat’s sensor is reading a value of -412°F? Clearly our thermostat is busted, so we should report a fault condition. Let’s rewrite the XML to include the status Facet and to provide additional semantics using Contracts:

```xml
<obj href="http://myhome/thermostat/">
  <!-- spaceTemp point -->
  <real name="spaceTemp" is="obix:Point" val="-412.0" status="fault"
    unit="obix:units/fahrenheit"/>

  <!-- setpoint point -->
  <real name="setpoint" is="obix:Point" val="72.0"
    unit="obix:units/fahrenheit"/>

  <!-- furnaceOn point -->
  <bool name="furnaceOn" is="obix:Point" val="true"/>
</obj>
```
Notice that each of our three scalar values are tagged as `obix:Points` via the `is` attribute. This is a standard contract defined by eOBI for representing normalized point information. By implementing these contracts, clients immediately know to semantically treat these objects as points.

Contracts play a pivotal role in eOBI because they provide a Foundation for building new abstractions upon the core object model. Contracts are slick because they are just normal objects defined using standard eOBI. In fact, the following sections defining the core eOBI object model are expressed using Contracts. One can see how easily this approach allows for definition of the key parts of this model, or any model that builds upon this model.
3 Architecture

The oOBIX architecture is based on the following design philosophies and principles:

- **Object Model**: a concise object model used to define all OBIX information.
- **Encoding**: a set of rules for representing the object model in certain common formats Table 3-1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Philosophy</th>
<th>Usage/Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Object Model</td>
<td>A concise object model used to define all OBIX information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encodings</td>
<td>Sets of rules for representing the object model in certain common formats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>URIs</td>
<td>Uniform Resource Identifiers are used to identify information within the object model</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REST</td>
<td>A small set of verbs is used to access objects via their URIs and transfer their state</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contracts</td>
<td>A template model for expressing new OBIX “types”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extensibility</td>
<td>Providing for consistent extensibility using only these concepts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Table 3:1 **URIs**: URIs are used to identify information within the object model.
- **REST**: a small set of verbs is used to access objects via their URIs and transfer their state.
- **Contracts**: a template model for expressing new OBIX “types”.
- **Extensibility**: providing for consistent extensibility using only these concepts.

3.1 Object Model

All information in oOBIX is represented using a small, fixed set of primitives. The base abstraction for these primitives is cleverly called **Object**. An **Object** can be assigned a URI and all **Objects** can contain other **Objects**.

There are ten special kinds of value objects used to store a piece of simple information:

- **bool**: stores a boolean value - true or false;
- **int**: stores an integer value;
- **real**: stores a floating point value;
- **str**: stores a UNICODE string;
- **enum**: stores an enumerated value within a fixed range;
- **abstime**: stores an absolute time value (timestamp);
- **reltime**: stores a relative time value (duration or time span);
- **date**: stores a specific date as day, month, and year;
- **time**: stores a time of day as hour, minutes, and seconds;
- **uri**: stores a Universal Resource Identifier;

Note that any value object can also contain sub-objects. There are also a couple of other special object types: **list, op, feed, ref** and **err**.
3.2 Encoding

3.2 Encodings

A necessary facet of eOBI is a set of simple syntax rules to represent the underlying object model. XML is a widely used language with well-defined and well-understood syntax that maps nicely to the eOBI object model. The rest of this document will use XML as the example encoding, because it is easily human-readable, and serves to clearly demonstrate the concepts presented. The syntax used is normative. Implementations using an XML encoding MUST conform to this syntax and representation of elements.

When encoding eOBI objects in XML, each of the object types map to one type of element. The value objects represent their data value using the val attribute (see Section 4.2.1, for a full description of Value Objects). All other aggregation is simply nesting of elements. A simple example to illustrate this concept is the Brady Bunch family from the TV show The Brady Bunch:

```xml
<obj href="http://bradybunch/people/Mike-Brady/">
  <str name="firstName" val="Mike"/>
  <str name="lastName" val="Brady"/>
  <int name="age" val="45"/>
  <ref name="spouse" href="/people/Carol-Brady/">
    <list name="children">
      <ref href="/people/Greg-Brady/">
        <ref href="/people/Peter-Brady/">
          <ref href="/people/Marsha-Brady/
            <ref href="/people/Bobby-Brady/
              <ref href="/people/Jan-Brady/
                <ref href="/people/Cindy-Brady/>
              </ref>
            </ref>
          </ref>
        </ref>
      </ref>
    </list>
  </ref>
</obj>
```

Note in this simple example how the href attribute specifies URI references which may be used to fetch more information about the object. Names and hrefs are discussed in detail in Section 6.

3.3 URIs

No architecture is complete without some sort of naming system. In eOBI everything is an object, so we need a way to name objects. Since eOBI is really about making information available over the web using XML, it makes sense to leverage the venerable URI (Uniform Resource Identifier), as defined in RFC3986. URIs are the standard way to identify "resources" on the web.

Since OBI is used to interact with control systems over the web, we use the URL to identify each resource. Just as we assume an XML encoding and a REST binding for all examples in this document, so too we assume a URI using the Hypertext Transfer Protocol (URLs beginning with http:) beginning with HTTP. This is not meant to forbid the use of secure transfer (https:) or of other protocols (ws:). Neither are the examples meant to forbid the use of alternate ports. The URIs in examples in this specification are for illustration only. Often URIs also provide information about how to fetch their resource - that's why they are often called URIs (Uniform Resource Locator). From a practical perspective if a vendor uses HTTP URIs to identify their objects, you can most likely just do a simple HTTP GET to fetch the eOBI document for that object. But technically, fetching the contents of a URI is a protocol binding issue discussed in later chapters.

The value of URIs are that they come with all sorts of nifty rules already have numerous defined and commonly understood rules for us manipulating them. For example URIs define which characters are legal and which are illegal. Of great value to eOBI is URI references which define a standard way to express and normalize relative URIs. PlusIn addition, most programming environments have libraries to manage URIs so developers don’t have to worry about nitty gritty managing the details of normalization details.
3.4 REST

Many savvy readers may be thinking that objects identified with URIs and passed around as XML documents is starting to sound a lot like REST— and you would be correct. This is intentional. REST stands for REpresentational State Transfer and is an architectural style for web services that mimics how the World Wide Web works. The WWW is basically a big web of HTML documents all hyperlinked together using URLs. Likewise, eOBIX is basically a big web of XML object documents hyperlinked together using URLs. Because REST is such a key concept in eOBIX, it is not surprising that a REST binding is a core part of the specification. The specification of this binding is defined in the OBIX REST document.

REST is really more of a design style, than a specification. REST is resource centric as opposed to method centric - resources being eOBIX objects. The methods actually used tend to be a very small fixed set of verbs used to work generically with all resources. In eOBIX all network requests boil down to four request types:

- Read: an object
- Write: an object
- Invoke: an operation
- Delete: an object

3.5 Contracts

In every software domain, patterns start to emerge where many different object instances share common characteristics. For example in most systems that model people, each person probably has a name, address, and phone number. In vertical domains we may attach domain specific information to each person. For example an access control system might associate a badge number with each person. In object oriented systems we capture these patterns into classes. In relational databases we map them into tables with typed columns. In eOBIX we capture OBIX these patterns are modeled using a concept called contracts, which are standard eOBIX objects used as a template. Contracts are more nimble and flexible provide greater flexibility than a strongly typed schema languages, without the overhead of introducing new syntax. A contract document is parsed just like any other eOBIX document. In geek speak contracts formal terms, Contracts are a combination of prototype based inheritance and mixins.

Why do we care about trying to capture these patterns? The most important use of contracts is by the eOBIX specification itself to define new standard abstractions. It is just as important for everyone to agree on normalized semantics as it is on syntax. Contracts also provide the definitions needed to map to the QQ guy’s classes in an object-oriented system or the tables in a relational database guy’s tables.

3.6 Extensibility

We want to use eOBIX as a foundation for developing new abstractions in vertical domains. We also want to provide extensibility for vendors who implement eOBIX across legacy systems and new product lines. Additionally, it is common for a device to ship as a blank slate and be completely programmed in the field. This leaves us with a mix of standards based, vendor based, and even project based extensions.

The principle behind eOBIX extensibility is that anything new is defined strictly in terms of eOBIX objects, URLs, and contracts. To put it another way - new abstractions should introduce any new XML syntax or functionality that client code is forced to care about. New abstractions are always modeled as standard trees of eOBIX objects, just with different semantics. That doesn’t mean that higher level application code never changes to deal with new abstractions. But the core stack that deals with networking and parsing shouldn’t have to change to accommodate a new type.

This extensibility model is similar to most mainstream programming languages such as Java or C#. The syntax of the core language is fixed with a built in mechanism to define new abstractions. Extensibility is achieved by defining new class libraries using the language’s fixed syntax. This means you don’t have to update the compiler need not be updated every time someone adds a new class.
The oBOIX specification is based on a small, fixed set of object types. The oBOIX object model is summarized in the following illustration. Each box represents a specific object type and includes 16 derived types. Section 4.1 describes the associated properties called Facets that each type may have. Section 4.2 describes each of the core OBOIX types, including the rules for their usage and interpretation of the oBOIX object model are defined in these subsections. Additional rules defining complex behaviors such as naming and eContract inheritance are described in Sections 6 and 7. These sections are essential to a full understanding of the object model.
4.1 obj

The root abstraction in oBIX is object, modeled in XML via the obj element Object. Every XML element type in oBIX is a derivative of the obj element Object. Any obj element Object or its derivatives can contain other obj elements Objects. The attributes properties supported on the obj element include Object, and therefore on any derivative type, are listed in Table 4-1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Property</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>name</strong></td>
<td>Defines the Object’s purpose in its parent Object (discussed in Section 6). Names of Objects SHOULD be in Camel case per Casing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>href</strong></td>
<td>Provides a URI reference for identifying the Object (discussed in Section 6).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>is</strong></td>
<td>Defines the Contracts the Object implements (discussed in Section 7).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>null</strong></td>
<td>Supports the concept of null Objects (discussed in Section 4.1.1 and in Section 4.1).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
7.4

| **val** | Stores the actual value of the object, used only with value-type Objects (bool, int, real, str, enum, abstime, reltime, date, time, and uri). The literal representation of values maps to XML Schema, indicated in the following sections via the "xs:" prefix. |
| **Facets** | A set of properties used to provide meta-data about the Object (discussed in Section 4.1.2). |

---

### Table 4-1. Base properties of OBIX Object type.

- **As stated in Section 0**, the expression of Objects in an XML encoding is through XML elements. The OBIX Object type is expressed through the `obj` element. The properties of an Object are expressed through XML attributes of the element. The full set of rules for encoding OBIX in XML is contained in the `OBIX Encodingsname`: defines the object's purpose in its parent object (discussed in the Section);
- **href**: provides a URI reference for identifying the object (discussed in the Section);
- **is**: defines the contracts the object implements (discussed in Section);
- **null**: support for null objects (discussed in Section and in Section);
- **facets**: a set of attributes used to provide meta-data about the object (discussed in Section);
- **val**: an attribute used only with value objects (bool, int, real, str, enum, abstime, reltime, date, time, and uri) to store the actual value. The literal representation of values maps to indicated in the following sections via the "xs:" prefix.

The contract document. The term `obj` as used in this specification represents an OBIX Object in general, regardless of how it is encoded.

The `Contract` definition of `⇌Object`, as expressed by an `obj` element is:

```xml
<obj href="obix:obj" null="false" writable="false" status="ok" />
```

### 4.1.1 Null

4.2 All Objects support the concept of null. Null is the absence of a value, meaning that this Object has no value, has not been configured or initialized, or is otherwise not defined. Null is indicated using the `null` attribute with a boolean value. `bool`

The All Objects default null to false with the exception of `enum, abstime, date, and time` (since any other default would be confusing). An example of a null `abstime` Object is:

```xml
<abstime name="startTime" displayName="Start Time"/>
```

Null is inherited from Contracts a little differently than other attributes. See Section 7.4.3 for details.

### 4.1.2 Facets

All Objects can be annotated with a predefined set of attributes called `Facets`. Facets provide additional meta-data about the Object. The set of available Facets is: `displayName, display, icon, min, max, precision, range, status, tz, unit, writable, of, in, and out`. Although OBIX predefines a number of Facets, vendors MAY add additional Facets. Vendors that wish to annotate Objects with additional Facets SHOULD use XML namespace qualified attributes.
4.1.3 displayName

The `displayName` Facet provides a localized human readable name of the Object stored as an `xs:string`:

```
<obj name="spaceTemp" displayName="Space Temperature"/>
```

Typically the `displayName` Facet SHOULD be a localized form of the `name` attribute. There are no restrictions on `displayName` overrides from the Contract (although it SHOULD be uncommon since `displayName` is just a human friendly version of `name`).

4.1.4 display

The `display` Facet provides a localized human readable description of the Object stored as an `xs:string`:

```
<bool name="occupied" val="false" display="Unoccupied"/>
```

There are no restrictions on `display` overrides from the Contract.

The `display` attribute serves the same purpose as Object.toStrin() in Java or C#. It provides a general way to specify a string representation for all Objects. In the case of value Objects (like `bool` or `int`) it SHOULD provide a localized, formatted representation of the `val` attribute.

4.1.5 icon

The `icon` Facet provides a URI reference to a graphical icon which may be used to represent the Object in an user agent:

```
<obj icon="/icons/equipment.png"/>
```

The contents of the `icon` attribute MUST be a URI to an image file. The image file SHOULD be a 16x16 PNG file, defined in the PNG specification. There are no restrictions on `icon` overrides from the Contract.

4.1.6 min

The `min` Facet is used to define an inclusive minimum value:

```
<int min="5" val="6"/>
```

The contents of the `min` attribute MUST match its associated `val` type. The `min` Facet is used with `int`, `real`, `abstime`, `date`, `time`, and `reltime` to define an inclusive lower limit of the value space. It is used with `str` to indicate the minimum number of Unicode characters of the string. It is used with `list` to indicate the minimum number of child Objects (named or unnamed). Overrides of the `min` Facet may only narrow the value space using a larger value. The `min` Facet MUST never be greater than the `max` Facet (although they MAY be equal).

4.1.7 max

The `max` Facet is used to define an inclusive maximum value:

```
<real max="70" val="65"/>
```

The contents of the `max` attribute MUST match its associated `val` type. The `max` Facet is used with `int`, `real`, `abstime`, `date`, `time`, and `reltime` to define an inclusive upper limit of the value space. It is used with `str` to indicate the maximum number of Unicode characters of the string. It is used with `list` to indicate the maximum number of child Objects (named or unnamed). Overrides of the `max` Facet may only narrow the value space using a smaller value. The `max` Facet MUST never be less than the `min` Facet (although they MAY be equal).

4.1.8 precision

The `precision` Facet is used to describe the number of decimal places to use for a `real` value:

```
<real precision="2" val="75.04"/>
```
The contents of the precision attribute MUST be xs:int. The value of the precision attribute equates to the number of meaningful decimal places. In the example above, the value of 2 indicates two meaningful decimal places: "75.04". Typically precision is used by client applications which do their own formatting of real values. There are no restrictions on precision overrides.

### 4.1.9 range

The range Facet is used to define the value space of an enumeration. A range attribute is a URI reference to an obix:Range Object (see section 11.2 for the definition). It is used with the bool and enum types:

```xml
<enum range="/enums/OffSlowFast" val="slow"/>
```

The override rule for range is that the specified range MUST inherit from the Contract's range.

Enumerations are unusual in that specialization of an enum usually involves adding new items to the range. Technically this is widening the enum's value space, rather than narrowing it. But in practice, adding items into the range is what we desire.

### 4.1.10 status

The status Facet is used to annotate an Object about the quality and state of the information:

```xml
<real val="67.2" status="alarm"/>
```

Status is an enumerated string value with one of the following values from Table 4-2 (ordered by priority):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>disabled</td>
<td>This state indicates that the Object has been disabled from normal operation (out of service). In the case of operations and feeds, this state is used to disable support for the operation or feed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fault</td>
<td>The fault state indicates that the data is invalid or unavailable due to a failure condition - data which is out of date, configuration problems, software failures, or hardware failures. Failures involving communications should use the down state.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>down</td>
<td>The down state indicates a communication failure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unackedAlarm</td>
<td>The unackedAlarm state indicates there is an existing alarm condition which has not been acknowledged by a user – it is the combination of the alarm and unacked states. The difference between alarm and unackedAlarm is that alarm implies that a user has already acknowledged the alarm or that no human acknowledgement is necessary for the alarm condition. The difference between unackedAlarm and unacked is that the Object has returned to a normal state.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>alarm</td>
<td>This state indicates the Object is currently in the alarm state. The alarm state typically means that an Object is operating outside of its normal boundaries. In the case of an analog point this might mean that the current value is either above or below its configured limits. Or it might mean that a digital sensor has transitioned to an undesired state. See Alarming (Section 15) for additional information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unacked</td>
<td>The unacked state is used to indicate a past alarm condition which remains unacknowledged.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>overridden</td>
<td>The overridden state means the data is ok, but that a local override is currently in effect. An example of an override might be the temporary override of a setpoint from its normal scheduled setpoint.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ok</td>
<td>The ok state indicates normal status. This is the assumed default state for all Objects.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.2 Status enumerations in OBIX.
Status MUST be one of the enumerated strings above. It might be possible in the native system to exhibit multiple status states simultaneously, however when mapping to OBIX the highest priority status SHOULD be chosen – priorities are ranked from top (disabled) to bottom (ok).

4.1.11 tz

The tz Facet is used to annotate an abstime, date, or time Object with a timezone. The value of a tz attribute is a zoneinfo string identifier, as specified in the IANA Time Zone (ZoneInfo DB) database. The zoneinfo database defines the current and historical rules for each zone including its offset from UTC and the rules for calculating daylight saving time. OBIX does not define a Contract for modeling timezones, instead it just references the zoneinfo database using standard identifiers. It is up to OBIX enabled software to map zoneinfo identifiers to the UTC offset and daylight saving time rules.

The following rules are used to compute the timezone of an abstime, date, or time Object:

1. If the tz attribute is specified, set the timezone to tz;
2. Otherwise, if the Contract defines an inherited tz attribute, set the timezone to the inherited tz attribute;
3. Otherwise, set the timezone to the server’s timezone as defined by the lobby's About.tz.

When using timezones, an implementation MUST specify the timezone offset within the value representation of an abstime or time Object. It is an error condition for the tz Facet to conflict with the timezone offset. For example, New York has a -5 hour offset from UTC during standard time and a -4 hour offset during daylight saving time:

```xml
<abstime val="2007-12-25T12:00:00-05:00" tz="America/New_York"/>
<abstime val="2007-07-04T12:00:00-04:00" tz="America/New_York"/>
```

4.1.12 unit

The unit Facet defines a unit of measurement in the SI Units system. A unit attribute is a URI reference to an obix:Unit Object (see section 11.5 for the Contract definition). It is used with the int and real types:

```xml
<real unit="obix:units/fahrenheit" val="67.2"/>
```

It is recommended that the unit Facet not be overridden if declared in a Contract. If it is overridden, then the override SHOULD use a Unit Object with the same dimensions as the Contract (it must measure the same physical quantity).

4.1.13 writable

The writable Facet specifies if this Object can be written by the client. If false (the default), then the Object is read-only. It is used with all types except op and feed:

```xml
<str name="userName" val="jsmith" writable="false"/>
<str name="fullName" val="John Smith" writable="true"/>
```

The writable Facet describes only the ability of clients to modify this Object’s value, not the ability of clients to add or remove children of this Object. Servers MAY allow addition or removal of child Objects independently of the writability of existing objects. If a server does not support addition or removal of Object children through writes, it MUST return an appropriate error response (see Section 10.2 for details).

4.1.14 of

The of Facet specifies the type of child Objects contained by this Object. This Facet is used with list and ref types. The use of this Facet for each case is explained with the definition of the type, in Section 4.2.2 for list and 4.2.3 for ref.
4.1.15 in

The in Facet specifies the input argument type used by this Object. This Facet is used with op and feed types. Its use is described with the definition of those types in Section 4.2.5 for op and 4.2.6 for feed.

4.1.16 out

The out Facet specifies the output argument type used by this Object. This Facet is used with the op type. Its use is described with the definition of that type in Section 4.2.5.

4.2 Core Types

OBIX defines a handful of core types which derive from Object. Certain types are allowed to have a val attribute and are called "value" types. This concept is expressed in object-oriented terms by using an "abstract" val type, and the value subtypes inheriting the val behavior from their supertype.

4.2.1 val

A special type of Object called a Value Object is used to store a piece of simple information. The val type is not directly used (it is "abstract"). It simply reflects that the type may contain a val attribute, as it is used to represent an object that has a specific value. The different Value Object types defined for OBIX are listed in Table 4-3.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type Name</th>
<th>Usage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>bool</td>
<td>stores a boolean value – true or false</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>int</td>
<td>stores an integer value</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>real</td>
<td>stores a floating point value</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>str</td>
<td>stores a UNICODE string</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>enum</td>
<td>stores an enumerated value within a fixed range</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>abstime</td>
<td>stores an absolute time value (timestamp)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reltime</td>
<td>stores a relative time value (duration or time span)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>date</td>
<td>stores a specific date as day, month, and year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>time</td>
<td>stores a time of day as hour, minutes, and seconds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>uri</td>
<td>stores a Universal Resource Identifier</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4-3. Value Object types.

Note that any Value Object can also contain sub-Objects.

4.2.1.1 bool

The bool type represents a boolean condition of either true or false. Its val attribute maps to xs:boolean defaulting to false. The literal value of a bool MUST be “true” or “false” (the literals “1” and “0” are not allowed). The eContract definition is:

```
<bool href="obix:bool" is="obix:obj" val="false" null="false"/>
```

An example:

```
<bool val="true"/>
```
4.3.4.2.1.2 int

The int type represents an integer number. Its val attribute maps to xs:long as a 64-bit integer with a default of 0. The eContract definition is:

```xml
<int href="obix:int" is="obix:obj" val="0" null="false"/>
```

An example:
```
<int val="52"/>
```

4.4.2.1.3 real

The real type represents a floating point number. Its val attribute maps to xs:double as a IEEE 64-bit floating point number with a default of 0. The eContract definition is:

```xml
<real href="obix:real" is="obix:obj" val="0" null="false"/>
```

An example:
```
<real val="41.06"/>
```

4.5.2.1.4 str

The str type represents a string of Unicode characters. Its val attribute maps to xs:string with a default of the empty string. The eContract definition is:

```xml
<str href="obix:str" is="obix:obj" val="" null="false"/>
```

An example:
```
<str val="hello world"/>
```

4.6.2.1.5 enum

The enum type is used to represent a value which must match a finite set of values. The finite value set is called the range. The val attribute of an enum is represented as a string key using xs:string. Enums default to null. The range of an enum is declared via Facets using the range attribute. The eContract definition is:

```xml
<enum href="obix:enum" is="obix:obj" val="" null="true"/>
```

An example:
```
<enum range="/enums/OffSlowFast" val="slow"/>
```

In this example, the val attribute is specified, so the null attribute is implied to be false. See Section 7.4.3 for details on the inheritance of the null attribute.

4.7.4.2.1.6 abstime

The abstime type is used to represent an absolute point in time. Its val attribute maps to xs:dateTime, with the exception that it MUST contain the timezone is required. According to XML Schema Part 2 section 3.2.7.1, the lexical space for abstime is:

```
'-'? yyyy '-'? mm '-'? dd 'T' hh ':' mm ':' ss ('.' s+)? (zzzzzz)
```

Abstimes default to null. The eContract definition is:

```xml
<abstime href="obix:abstime" is="obix:obj" val="1970-01-01T00:00:00Z" null="true"/>
```

An example for 9 March 2005 at 1:30PM GMT:
```
<abstime val="2005-03-09T13:30:00Z"/>
```

In this example, the val attribute is specified, so the null attribute is implied to be false. See Section 7.4.3 for details on the inheritance of the null attribute.

The timezone offset is required, so the abstime can be used to uniquely relate the abstime to UTC. The optional tz Facet is used to specify the timezone as a zoneinfo identifier. This provides additional context about the timezone, if available. The timezone offset of the val attribute MUST match the offset
4.84.2.1.7 reltime

The reltime type is used to represent a relative duration of time. Its val attribute maps to xs:duration with a default of 0sec0 seconds. The contract definition is:

```xml
<reltime href="obix:reltime" is="obix:obj" val="PT0S" null="false"/>
```

An example of 15 seconds:

```xml
<reltime val="PT15S"/>
```

4.94.2.1.8 date

The date type is used to represent a day in time as a day, month, and year. Its val attribute maps to xs:date. According to XML Schema Part 2 section 3.2.9.1, the lexical space for date is:

```xml
'-'? yyyy '-' mm '-' dd
```

Date values in oBIX MUST omit the timezone offset and MUST NOT use the trailing “Z”. Only the tz attribute SHOULD be used to associate the date with a timezone. Date objects default to null. The contract definition is:

```xml
<date href="obix:date" is="obix:obj" val="1970-01-01" null="true"/>
```

An example for 26 November 2007:

```xml
<date val="2007-11-26"/>
```

In this example, the val attribute is specified, so the null attribute is implied to be false. See Section 7.4.3 for details on the inheritance of the null attribute.

The tz facet is used to specify the timezone as a zoneinfo identifier. See the tz facet section for more information.

4.104.2.1.9 time

The time type is used to represent a time of day in hours, minutes, and seconds. Its val attribute maps to xs:time. According to XML Schema Part 2 section 3.2.8, the lexical space for time is the left truncated representation of xs:dateTime:

```xml
hh ':' mm ':' ss ('.' s+)?
```

Time values in oBIX MUST omit the timezone offset and MUST NOT use the trailing “Z”. Only the tz attribute SHOULD be used to associate the time with a timezone. Time objects default to null. The contract definition is:

```xml
<time href="obix:time" is="obix:obj" val="00:00:00" null="true"/>
```

An example for 4:15 AM:

```xml
<time val="04:15:00"/>
```

In this example, the val attribute is specified, so the null attribute is implied to be false. See Section 7.4.3 for details on the inheritance of the null attribute.

The tz facet is used to specify the timezone as a zoneinfo identifier. See the tz facet section for more information.

4.114.2.1.10 uri

The uri type is used to store a URI reference. Unlike a plain old str, a uri has a restricted lexical space as defined by RFC3986 and the XML Schema xs:anyURI type. oBIX servers MUST use the URI syntax described by RFC3986 for identifying resources. oBIX clients MUST be able to navigate this URI syntax. Most URLs will also be a URL, meaning that they identify a resource and how to retrieve it (typically via HTTP). The contract definition is:

```xml
<uri href="obix:uri" is="obix:obj" val="" null="false"/>
```
An example for the `eOBIX` home page:

```xml
<uri val="http://obix.org/"/>
```

### 4.124.2.2 list

The `list` object type is a specialized `eObject` type for storing a list of other `eObjects`. The primary advantage of using a `list` versus a generic `obj` is that lists can specify a common `contract` for their contents using the `of` attribute. If specified, the `of` attribute MUST be a list of URIs formatted as a `contract list`. The definition of `list` is:

```xml
<list href="obix:list" is="obix:obj" of="obix:obj"/>
```

An example list of strings:

```xml
<list of="obix:str">
  <str val="one"/>
  <str val="two"/>
</list>
```

Because lists typically have constraints on the URIs used for their child elements, they use special semantics for adding children. Lists are discussed in greater detail along with `contracts` in section 7.8.

### 4.134.2.3 ref

The `ref` object type is used to create an `out-of-document external` reference to another `eOBIX` object. It is the `eOBIX` equivalent of the HTML anchor tag. The `contract` definition is:

```xml
<ref href="obix:ref" is="obix:obj"/>
```

A `ref` element MUST always specify an `href` attribute. A `ref` element specifying a `list(is="obix:list")` SHOULD specify the type of the `eObjects` contained in the `list` using the `of` attribute. References are discussed in detail in section 9.2.

### 4.144.2.4 err

The `err` object type is a special `eObject` used to indicate an error. Its actual semantics are context dependent. Typically `err` `eObjects` SHOULD include a human readable description of the problem via the `display` attribute. The `contract` definition is:

```xml
<err href="obix:err" is="obix:obj"/>
```

### 4.154.2.5 op

The `op` object type is used to define an operation. All operations take one input `eObject` as a parameter, and return one `eObject` as an output. The input and output `contracts` are defined via the `in` and `out` attributes. The `contract` definition is:

```xml
<op href="obix:op" is="obix:obj" in="obix:Nil" out="obix:Nil"/>
```

Operations are discussed in detail in Section 8.

### 4.164.2.6 feed

The `feed` object type is used to define a topic for a feed of events. Feeds are used with `watches` to subscribe to a stream of events such as alarms. A feed SHOULD specify the event type it fires via the `of` attribute. The `in` attribute can be used to pass an input argument when subscribing to the feed (a filter for example).

```xml
<feed href="obix:feed" is="obix:obj" in="obix:Nil" of="obix:obj"/>
```

Feeds are subscribed via `watches`. This is discussed in Section 12.
5 Lobby

All OBIX servers MUST provide an Object which implements `obix:Lobby`. The Lobby Object serves as the central entry point into an OBIX server, and lists the URIs for other well-known Objects defined by the OBIX Specification. Theoretically, all a client needs to know to bootstrap discovery is one URI for the Lobby instance. By convention this URI is “http://<server-ip-address>/obix”, although vendors are certainly free to pick another URI. The Lobby Contract is:

```
<obj href="obix:Lobby">
  __ref name="about" is="obix:About"/>
  __op name="batch" in="obix:BatchIn" out="obix:BatchOut"/>
  __ref name="watchService" is="obix:WatchService"/>
  __list name="models" of="obix:uri" null="true"/>
  __list name="encodings" of="obix:str" null="true"/>
  __list name="bindings" of="obix:str" null="true"/>
</obj>
```

The Lobby instance is where implementers SHOULD place vendor-specific Objects used for data and service discovery. The standard Objects defined in the Lobby Contract are described in the following Sections.

5.1 About

The `obix:About` Object is a standardized list of summary information about an OBIX server. Clients can discover the About URI directly from the Lobby. The About Contract is:

```
<obj href="obix:About">
  __str name="obixVersion"/>
  __str name="serverName"/>
  __abstime name="serverTime"/>
  __abstime name="serverBootTime"/>
  __str name="vendorName"/>
  __uri name="vendorUrl"/>
  __str name="productName"/>
  __str name="productVersion"/>
  __uri name="productUrl"/>
  __str name="tz"/>
</obj>
```

The following children provide information about the OBIX implementation:
- **obixVersion**: specifies which version of the OBIX specification the server implements. This string MUST be a list of decimal numbers separated by the dot character (Unicode 0x2E). The current version string is “1.1”.

The following children provide information about the server itself:
- **servername**: provides a short localized name for the server.
- **serverTime**: provides the server’s current local time.
- **serverBootTime**: provides the server’s start time - this SHOULD be the start time of the OBIX server software, not the machine’s boot time.

The following children provide information about the server’s software vendor:
- **vendorName**: the company name of the vendor who implemented the OBIX server software.
- **vendorUrl**: a URL to the vendor’s website.
The following children provide information about the software product running the server:

- **productName**: with the product name of OBIX server software.
- **productUrl**: a URL to the product's website.
- **productVersion**: a string with the product's version number. Convention is to use decimal digits separated by dots.

The following children provide additional miscellaneous information:

- **tz**: specifies a zoneinfo identifier for the server's default timezone.

### 5.2 Batch

The Lobby defines a `batch` operation which is used to batch multiple network requests together into a single operation. Batching multiple requests together can often provide significant performance improvements over individual round-robin network requests. As a general rule, one big request will always out-perform many small requests over a network.

A batch request is an aggregation of read, write, and invoke requests implemented as a standard OBIX operation. At the protocol binding layer, it is represented as a single invoke request using the `Lobby.batch` URI. Batching a set of requests to a server MUST be processed semantically equivalent to invoking each of the requests individually in a linear sequence.

The batch operation inputs a `BatchIn` Object and outputs a `BatchOut` Object:

```
<list href="obix:BatchIn" of="obix:uri"/>
<list href="obix:BatchOut" of="obix:obj"/>
```

The `BatchIn` Contract specifies a list of requests to process identified using the Read, Write, or Invoke Contract:

```
<uri href="obix:Read"/>
<uri href="obix:Write">
  <obj name="in"/>
</uri>
<uri href="obix:Invoke">
  <obj name="in"/>
</uri>
```

The `BatchOut` Contract specifies an ordered list of the response Objects to each respective request. For example the first Object in `BatchOut` must be the result of the first request in `BatchIn`. Failures are represented using the `err` Object. Every `uri` passed via `BatchIn` for a read or write request MUST have a corresponding result `obj` in `BatchOut` with an `href` attribute using an identical string representation from `BatchIn` (no normalization or case conversion is allowed).

It is up to vendors to decide how to deal with partial failures. In general idempotent requests SHOULD indicate a partial failure using `err`, and continue processing additional requests in the batch. If a server decides not to process additional requests when an error is encountered, then it is still REQUIRED to return an `err` for each respective request not processed.

Let's look at a simple example:

```
<list is="obix:BatchIn">
  <uri is="obix:Read" val="/someStr"/>
  <uri is="obix:Read" val="/invalidUri"/>
  <uri is="obix:Write" val="/someStr">
    <str name="in" val="new string value"/>
  </uri>
</list>
```

```
<list is="obix:BatchOut">
  <str href="/someStr" val="old string value"/>
  <err href="/invalidUri" is="obix:BadUriErr" display="href not found"/>
  <str href="/someStr" val="new string value"/>
</list>
```
In this example, the batch request is specifying a read request for "/someStr" and "/invalidUri", followed by a write request to "/someStr". Note that the write request includes the value to write as a child named "in".

The server responds to the batch request by specifying exactly one Object for each request URI. The first read request returns a str Object indicating the current value identified by "/someStr". The second read request contains an invalid URI, so the server returns an err Object indicating a partial failure and continues to process subsequent requests. The third request is a write to "someStr". The server updates the value at "someStr", and returns the new value. Note that because the requests are processed in order, the first request provides the original value of "someStr" and the third request contains the new value. This is exactly what we would expect had we processed each of these requests individually.

5.3 WatchService

4.171.11 Null

All objects support the concept of null. Null is the absence of a value. Null is indicated using the null attribute with a boolean value. All objects default null to false with the exception of enum, abstime, date, and time (since any other default would be confusing). An example of a null abstime object is:

```
<abstime name="startTime" displayName="Start Time"/>
```

Null is inherited from contracts a little differently than other attributes. See Section for details.

4.18 Facets

All objects can be annotated with a predefined set of attributes called facets. Facets provide additional meta-data about the object. The set of available facets is: displayName, display, icon, min, max, precision, range, and unit. Although oBIX predefined a number of facets attributes, vendors MAY add additional facets. Vendors that wish to annotate objects with additional facets SHOULD consider using XML namespace qualified attributes.

4.18.11.1 displayName

The displayName facet provides a localized human readable name of the object stored as a xs:string:

```
<obj name="spaceTemp" displayName="Space Temperature"/>
```

Typically the displayName facet SHOULD be a localized form of the name attribute. There are no restrictions on displayName overrides from the contract (although it SHOULD be uncommon since displayName is just a human friendly version of name).

4.18.21.1 display

The display facet provides a localized human readable description of the object stored as a xs:string:

```
<bool name="occupied" val="false" display="Unoccupied"/>
```

There are no restrictions on display overrides from the contract.

The display attribute serves the same purpose as Object.toString() in Java or C#. It provides a general way to specify a string representation for all objects. In the case of value objects (like bool or int) it SHOULD provide a localized, formatted representation of the val attribute.

4.18.31.1 icon

The icon facet provides a URI reference to a graphical icon which may be used to represent the object in an user agent:

```
<object icon="/icons/equipment.png"/>
```
The contents of the `icon` attribute MUST be a URI to an image file. The image file SHOULD be a 16x16 PNG file. There are no restrictions on `icon` overrides from the contract.

### 4.18.41.1.1 min

The `min` facet is used to define an inclusive minimum value:

```xml
<int min="5" val="6"/>
```

The contents of the `min` attribute MUST match its associated `val` type. The `min` facet is used with `int`, `real`, `abstime`, `date`, `time`, and `reltime` to define an inclusive lower limit of the value space. It is used with `str` to indicate the minimum number of Unicode characters of the string. It is used with `list` to indicate the minimum number of child objects (named or unnamed). Overrides of the `min` facet may only narrow the value space using a larger value. The `min` facet MUST never be greater than the `max` facet (although they can be equal).

### 4.18.51.1.1 max

The `max` facet is used to define an inclusive maximum value:

```xml
<int max="6" val="7"/>
```

The contents of the `max` attribute MUST match its associated `val` type. The `max` facet is used with `int`, `real`, `abstime`, `date`, `time`, and `reltime` to define an inclusive upper limit of the value space. It is used with `str` to indicate the maximum number of Unicode characters of the string. It is used with `list` to indicate the maximum number of child objects (named or unnamed). Overrides of the `max` facet may only narrow the value space using a smaller value. The `max` facet MUST never be less than the `min` facet (although they MAY be equal).

### 4.18.61.1.1 precision

The `precision` facet is used to describe the number of decimal places to use for a `real` value:

```xml
<real precision="2" val="75.04"/>
```

The contents of the `precision` attribute MUST be a `xs:int`. The value of the `precision` attribute equates to the number of meaningful decimal places. In the example above, the value of 2 indicates two meaningful decimal places: "75.04". Typically precision is used by client applications which do their own formatting of `real` values. There are no restrictions on `precision` overrides.

### 4.18.71.1.1 range

The `range` facet is used to define the value space of an enumeration. A `range` attribute is a URI reference to an `obix:Range` object (see section for the definition). It is used with the `bool` and `enum` object types:

```xml
<enum range="/enums/OffSlowFast" val="slow"/>
```

The override rule for `range` is that the specified range MUST inherit from the contract’s range. Enumerations are funny beasts in that specialization of an enum usually involves adding new items to the range. Technically this is widening the enum’s value space, rather than narrowing it. But in practice, adding items into the range is what we desire.

### 4.18.81.1.1 status

The `status` facet is used to annotate an object about the quality and state of the information:

```xml
<real val="67.2" status="alarm"/>
```

Status is an enumerated string value with one of the following values (ordered by priority):

- `disabled`: This state indicates that the object has been disabled from normal operation (out of service). In the case of operations and feeds, this state is used to disable support for the operation or feed.
### 4.18.9 tz

The `tz` facet is used to annotate an `abstime`, `date`, or `time` object with a timezone. The value of a `tz` attribute is a `zoneinfo` string identifier. Zoneinfo is a standardized database sometimes referred to as the tz database or the Olsen database. It defines a set of time zone identifiers using the convention `“continent/city”`. For example “America/New_York” identifies the time zone rules used by the east coast of the United States. UTC is represented as “Etc/UTC”.

The zoneinfo database defines the current and historical rules for each zone including its offset from UTC and the rules for calculating daylight saving time. oBIX does not define a contract for modeling timezones, instead it just references the zoneinfo database using standard identifiers. It is up to oBIX-enabled software to map zoneinfo identifiers to the UTC offset and daylight saving time rules.

The following rules are used to compute the timezone of an `abstime`, `date`, or `time` object:

1. If the `tz` attribute is specified, use it;
2. If the contract defines an inherited `tz` attribute, use it;
3. Assume the server’s timezone as defined by the lobby’s `About:tz`.

When using timezones, it is still required to specify the timezone offset within the value representation of an `abstime`, `date`, or `time` object. It is an error condition for the `tz` facet to conflict with the timezone offset.

For example New York has a 5 hour offset from UTC during standard time and a 4 hour offset during daylight saving time:

```xml
<abstime val="2007-04-12T12:00:00+05:00" tz="America/New_York"/>
<abstime val="2007-07-04T12:00:00+04:00" tz="America/New_York"/>
```

### 4.18.101.1.1 unit

The `unit` facet defines a unit of measurement. A unit attribute is a URI reference to a `obix:Unit` object (see section for the contract definition). It is used with the `int` and `real` object types:
It is recommended that the unit facet not be overridden if declared in a contract. If it is overridden, then the override SHOULD use a Unit object with the same dimensions as the contract (it must measure the same physical quantity).

**4.18.1.1.1 writable**

The writable facet specifies if this object can be written by the client. If false (the default), then the object is read-only. It is used with all objects except operations and feeds:

```xml
ele name="operations" url="jsmith" writable="false"/
ele name="fullName" val="John Smith" writable="true"/
```

The WatchService is an important mechanism for providing data from a Server. As such, this specification devotes an entire Section to the description of Watches, and of the WatchService. Section 12 The writable facet describes only the ability of covers Watches in detail.

## 5.4 Server Metadata

Several components of the Lobby provide additional information about the server’s implementation of the OBIX specification. This is to be used by clients to modify allow them to tailor their interaction with the server based on mutually interoperable capabilities. The following subsections describe these components.

### 5.4.1 Models

Any semantic models, such as tag dictionaries, used by the Server for presenting metadata about its Objects MUST be identified in the Lobby in the models element, which is a list of uris. The name of each uri MUST be the name that is referenced by the server when presenting tags. A more descriptive name MAY be provided in the displayName Facet. The val of the uri MUST contain the reference location for this object’s value, not the ability of model or dictionary. For example,

```xml
<obj is="obix:Lobby">
  {... other lobby items ...}
  <list name="models" of="obix:uri">
    <uri name="d1" displayName="tagDict1" val="http://example.com/tagdict1"/>
  </list>
</obj>
```

One caveat to this behavior is that the presentation of the usage of a particular semantic model may divulge unwanted information about the server. For instance, a server that makes use of a medical tag dictionary and presents this in the Lobby may be undesirably advertising itself as an interesting target for individuals attempting to access confidential medical records. Therefore, it is recommended that servers SHOULD protect this section of the Lobby by only including it in communication to authenticated, authorized clients.

### 5.4.2 Encodings

Servers SHOULD include the encodings supported in the encodings Lobby Object. This is a list of uris. The name of each uri MUST be the MIME type of the encoding. The val of the uri SHOULD be a reference to the encoding specification. A more friendly name MAY be provided in the displayName attribute.

The discovery of which encoding to use for communication between a client and a server is a function of the specific binding used. Clients and servers MUST be able to support negotiation of the encoding to be used according to the binding’s error message rules. Clients SHOULD first attempt to request communication using the desired encoding, and then fall back to other encodings as required based on the encodings supported by the server.

For example, a server that supports both XML and JSON encoding as defined in the OBIX Encodings to add or remove children of this object. If a server does specification would have a Lobby that appeared as follows (note the displayNameS used are optional):
A server that receives a request for an encoding that is not supported MUST send an UnsupportedErr response (see Section 10.2 for details).

5.4.3 Bindings

Servers SHOULD include the available bindings supported in the bindings Lobby Object. This is a list of uris. The name of each uri SHOULD be the name of the binding as described by its corresponding specification document. The val of the uri SHOULD be a reference to the binding specification.

Servers that support multiple bindings and encodings MAY support only certain combinations of the available bindings and encodings. For example, a server may support XML encoding over the HTTP and SOAP bindings, but support JSON encoding only over the HTTP binding.

A server that receives a request for a binding/encoding pair that is not supported MUST send an UnsupportedErr response (see Section 10.2).

For example, a server that supports the SOAP and HTTP bindings as defined in the OBIX REST and OBIX SOAP specifications would have a Lobby that appeared as follows (note the displayName used are optional):

```xml
<obj is="obix:Lobby">
  [... other lobby items ...]
  <list name="encodings" of="obix:uri">
    <uri name="text/xml" displayName="XML" val="http://docs.oasis-open.org/obix/OBIX-Encodings/v1.0/csd01/OBIX-Encodings-v1.0-csd01.doc"/>
    <uri name="application/json" displayName="JSON" val="http://docs.oasis-open.org/obix/OBIX-Encodings/v1.0/csd01/OBIX-Encodings-v1.0-csd01.doc"/>
  </list>
</obj>
```

5.4.4 Versioning [non-normative]

Each of the subsequent subsections describes a set of uris that describe specifications to which a server is implemented. These specifications are expected to change over time, and the server implementation may not be updated at the same pace. Therefore, a server implementation MAY wish to provide versioning information with the uris that describes the date on which the specification was retrieved. This information SHOULD be included as a child element of the uri. It may be in the form of an abstime reflecting the retrieval date, or a str reflecting the version information. For example:

```xml
<obj is="obix:Lobby">
  [... other lobby items ...]
  <list name="bindings" of="obix:uri">
    <uri name="http" displayName="HTTP Binding" val="http://docs.oasis-open.org/obix/OBIX-REST/v1.0/csd01/OBIX-REST-v1.0-csd01.doc">
      <abstime name="fetchedOn" val="2013-11-26T3:14:15.926Z"/>
    </uri>
    <uri name="myBinding" displayNumber="My New Binding" val="http://example.com/my-new-binding.doc">
      <str name="version" val="1.2.34"/>
    </uri>
  </list>
</obj>
```
6. Naming
5-Naming

All eOXBIX objects have two potential identifiers: name and href. Name is used to define the role of an eObject within its parent. Names are programmatic identifiers only; the displayName facet SHOULD be used for human interaction. Naming convention is to use camel case with the first character in lowercase. The primary purpose of names is to attach semantics to sub-objects. Names are also used to indicate overrides from a contract. A good analogy to names is the field/method names of a class in Java or C#.

Hrefs are used to attach URIs to objects. An href is always a URI reference, which means it might be a relative URI that requires normalization against a base URI. The exception to this rule is the href of the root eObject in an eOXBIX document – this href MUST be an absolute URI, not a URI reference. This allows the root eObject’s href to be used as the effective base URI (xml:base) for normalization. A good analogy is hrefs in HTML or XLink.

Some eObjects may have both a name and an href, just a name, just an href, or neither. It is common for objects within a list to not use names, since most lists are unnamed sequences of objects. The eOXBIX specification makes a clear distinction between names and hrefs. From a practical perspective many vendors will likely build an href structure that mimics the name structure, but client software MUST never assume such a relationship.

5.46.1 Name

The name of an eObject is represented using the name attribute. Names are programmatic identifiers with restrictions on their valid character set. A name SHOULD contain only ASCII letters, digits, underline, or dollar signs. A digit MUST NOT be used as the first character. Convention is to Names SHOULD use camel lower Camel case per Casing with the first character in lower case, as in the examples “foo”, “fooBar”, “thisIsOneLongName”. Within a given eObject, all of its direct children MUST have unique names. Objects which don’t have a name attribute are called unnamed eObjects. The root eObject of an eOXBIX document SHOULD NOT specify a name attribute (but almost always has an absolute href URI).

5.26.2 Href

The href of an eObject is represented using the href attribute. If specified, the root eObject MUST have an absolute URI. All other hrefs within an eOXBIX document are treated as URI references which may be relative. Because the root href is always an absolute URI, it may be used as the base for normalizing relative URIs within the OBIX document. The formal rules for URI syntax and normalization are defined in RFC3986 eOXBIX. OBIX implementations MUST follow these rules. We consider a few common cases that serve as design patterns within eOXBIX in Section 1.1.

As a general rule every eObject accessible for a read MUST specify a URI. An eOXBIX document returned from a read request MUST specify a root URI. However, there are certain cases where the eObject is transient, such as a computed eObject from an operation invocation. In these cases there MAY not be a root URI, meaning there is no way to retrieve this particular eObject again. If no root URI is provided, then the server’s authority URI is implied to be the base URI for resolving relative URI references.

5.3 HTTP-Relative URIs

6.3 URI Normalization

Vendors are free to use any URI scheme, although the recommendation is to use HTTP URIs since they have well defined normalization semantics. This section provides a summary of how HTTP URI normalization should work within eOXBIX client agents. The general rules are:

- If the URI starts with “scheme:” then it is a globally absolute URI
- If the URI starts with a single slash, then it is a server absolute URI
If the URI starts with a “#”, then it is a fragment identifier (discussed in next section)

If the URI starts with “../”, then the path must backup from the base

Otherwise the URI is assumed to be a relative path from the base URI

Some examples:

- http://server/a + /x/y/z → http://server/x/y/z
- http://server/a/b + c → http://server/a/c
- http://server/a/b + c → http://server/a/b/c
- http://server/a/b + d → http://server/a/d
- http://server/a/b + c/d → http://server/a/b/c/d
- http://server/a/b + ../c → http://server/a/c
- http://server/a/b + ../c → http://server/a/c

Perhaps one of the trickiest issues is whether the base URI ends with a slash. If the base URI doesn’t end with a slash, then a relative URI is assumed to be relative to the base’s parent (to match HTML). If the base URI does end in a slash, then relative URIs can just be appended to the base. In practice, systems organized into hierarchical URIs SHOULD always specify the base URI with a trailing slash.

Retrieval with and without the trailing slash SHOULD be supported with the resulting OBIX document always adding the implicit trailing slash in the root eObject’s href.

5.46.4 Fragment URIs

It is not uncommon to reference an eObject internal to an OBIX document. This is achieved using fragment URI references starting with the “#”. Let’s consider the example:

```
<obj href="http://server/whatever/">
  <enum name="switch1" range="#onOff" val="on"/>
  <enum name="switch2" range="#onOff" val="off"/>
  <list is="/obix:Range" href="onOff">
    <obj name="on"/>
    <obj name="off"/>
  </list>
</obj>
```

In this example there are two eObjects with a range Facet referencing a fragment URI. Any URI reference starting with “#” MUST be assumed to reference an eObject within the same OBIX document. Clients SHOULD NOT perform another URI retrieval to dereference the eObject. In this case the eObject being referenced is identified via the href attribute.

In the example above the eObject with a href of “onOff” is both the target of the fragment URI, but also has the absolute URI “http://server/whatever/onOff”. But suppose we had an eObject that was the target of a fragment URI within the document, but could not be directly addressed using an absolute URI? In that case the href attribute SHOULD be a fragment identifier itself. When an href attribute starts with “#” that means the only place it can be used is within the document itself:

```
... <list is="/obix:Range" href="#onOff">
...```
6.7 Contracts

OBIX Contracts are a mechanism to harness the inherit patterns used to define inheritance in modeling OBIX data sources. What are OBIX Objects? A Contract is a contract? Well basically it is just a normal OBIX object. What makes a contract object special, is that it is an OBIX Object, that is referenced by other objects reference it as a “template object”. These templates are referenced using the is attribute.

So what does OBIX use contracts for? Contracts solve many important problems in OBIX:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semantics</th>
<th>Contracts are used to define “types” within OBIX. This lets us collectively agree on common Object definitions to provide consistent semantics across vendor implementations. For example the Alarm Contract ensures that client software can extract normalized alarm information from any vendor’s system using the exact same Object structure.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Defaults</td>
<td>Contracts also provide a convenient mechanism to specify default values. Note that when serializing Object trees to XML (especially over a network), we typically don’t allow defaults to be used in order to keep client processing simple.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type Export</td>
<td>It is likely that many vendors will have a system built using a statically typed language like Java or C#. Contracts provide a standard mechanism to export type information in a format that all OBIX clients can consume.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

### Table 7.1 Semantics

- **Contracts** are used to define “types” within OBIX. This lets us collectively agree on common Object definitions to provide consistent semantics across vendor implementations. For example the Alarm Contract ensures that client software can extract normalized alarm information from any vendor’s system using the exact same Object structure.

### Defaults

- **Contracts** also provide a convenient mechanism to specify default values. Note that when serializing Object trees to XML (especially over a network), we typically don’t allow defaults to be used in order to keep client processing simple.

### Type Export

- It is likely that many vendors will have a system built using a statically typed language like Java or C#. Contracts provide a standard mechanism to export type information in a format that all OBIX clients can consume.

**Why use contracts versus other approaches?** There are certainly lots of ways to solve the above problems. **Problems addressed by Contracts.**

The benefit of the eContract design is its flexibility and simplicity. Conceptually eContracts provide an elegant model for solving many different problems with one abstraction. From a specification perspective, we can define new abstractions using the OBIX XML syntax itself. And from an implementation perspective, contracts give us a machine readable format that clients already know how to retrieve and parse — to use OO lingo, the exact same syntax is used to represent both a class and an instance.

6.17.1 Contract Terminology

In order to discuss contracts, it is useful to define a couple of terms:

- **Contract**: is a reusable object definition expressed as a standard OBIX XML document.

- **Contract List**: is a list of one or more URIs to contract objects. It is used as the value of the is defined in and out attributes. The list of URIs is separated by the space character. You can think of a contract list as a type declaration in the following Table.
### Term | Definition
--- | ---
**Contract** | Contracts are the templates or prototypes used as the foundation of the OBIX type system. They may contain both syntactical and semantic behaviors.

**Contract Definition** | A reusable Object definition expressed as a standard OBIX Object.

**Contract List** | A list of one or more URIs to Contract Objects. It is used as the value of the is, of, in and out attributes. The list of URIs is separated by the space character. You can think of a Contract List as a type declaration.

**Implements** | When an Object specifies a Contract in its Contract List, the Object is said to implement the Contract. This means that the Object is inheriting both the structure and semantics of the specified Contract.

**Implementation** | An Object which implements a Contract is said to be an implementation of that Contract.

---

#### 6.27.2 Contract List

The syntax of a contract list attribute is a list of URI references to other OBIX objects. It is used as the value of the is, of, in and out attributes. The URIs within the list are separated by the space character (Unicode 0x20). Just like the href attribute, a Contract URI can be an absolute URI, server relative, or even a fragment reference. The URIs within a Contract List may be scoped with an XML namespace prefix (see “Namespace Prefixes in Contract Lists” in the OBIX Encodings document).

#### 6.37.3 Is Attribute

An Object defines the Contracts it implements via the is attribute. The value of the is attribute is a contract list. If the is attribute is unspecified, then the following rules are used to determine the implied contract list:

- If the Object is an item inside a list or feed, then the contract list specified by the of attribute is used.
- If the Object overrides (by name) an Object specified in one of its Contracts, then the contract list of the overridden Object is used.
- If all the above rules fail, then the respective primitive Contract is used.

Note that element names such as bool, int, or str are syntactic sugar abbreviations for an implied Contract. However if an Object implements one of the primitive types, then it MUST use the correct XML element name. For example if an Object implements obix:int, then it MUST be expressed as <int/>, rather than <obj is="obix:int"/>. Therefore it is invalid to implement multiple value types such as implementing both obix:bool and obix:int.
### 6.4.4.4 Contract Inheritance

### 6.4.17.4.1 Structure vs Semantics

Contracts are a mechanism of inheritance – they establish the classic “is a” relationship. In the abstract sense a Contract allows us to inherit a type. We can further distinguish between the explicit and implicit eContract:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Explicit Contract</th>
<th>Defines an object structure which all implementations must conform with. This can be evaluated quantitatively by examining the Object data structure.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Implicit Contract</td>
<td>Defines semantics associated with the Contract. The implicit Contract is typically documented using natural language prose. It is qualitatively interpreted, rather than quantitatively interpreted.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7:3 **Explicit Contract:** defines an object structure which all implementations must conform with.

Table 3:4 **Implicit Contract:** defines semantics associated with the contract. Usually the implicit contract is documented using natural language prose. It isn’t mathematical, but rather subject to human interpretation.

#### 6.4.27.4.2 Overriding Defaults

A contract’s named children are automatically applied to implementations. An implementation may choose to override or default each of its contract’s children. If the implementation omits the child, then it is assumed to default to the contract’s value. If the implementation declares the child (by name), then it is overridden, and the implementation’s value should be used. Let’s look at an example:

```xml
<obj href="/def/television">
  <bool name="power" val="false"/>
  <int name="channel" val="2" min="2" max="200"/>
</obj>

<obj href="/livingRoom/tv" is="/def/television">
  <int name="channel" val="8"/>
  <int name="volume" val="22"/>
</obj>
```

In this example we have a `contract.objectContract Object` identified with the URI “/def/television”. It has two children to store power and channel. Then we specify a living room TV instance that includes “/def/television” in its contract list via the `is` attribute. In this `object`, channel is overridden to 8 from its default value of 2. However since power was omitted, it is implied to default to false.

An override is always matched to its eContract via the `name` attribute. In the example above we knew we were overriding channel, because we declared an object with a name of “channel”. We also declared an object with a name of “volume”. Since volume wasn’t declared in the eContract, we assume it’s a new definition specific to this eObject.
### 6.4.37.4.3 Attributes and Facets

Also note that the eContract's channel eObject declares a min and max fFacet. These two fFacets are also inherited by the implementation. Almost all attributes are inherited from their eContract including fFacets, val, of, in, and out. The href attribute is never inherited. The null attribute inherits as follows:

1. If the null attribute is specified, then its explicit value is used;
2. If a val attribute is specified and null is unspecified, then null is implied to be false;
3. If neither a val attribute or a null attribute is specified, then the null attribute is inherited from the eContract;
4. If the null attribute is specified and is true, then the val attribute is ignored.

This allows us to implicitly override a null eObject to non-null without specifying the null attribute.

### 6.57.5 Override Rules

Contract overrides are required to obey the implicit and explicit eContract. Implicit means that the implementation eObject provides the same semantics as the eContract it implements. In the example above it would be incorrect to override channel to store picture brightness. That would break the semantic eContract.

Overriding the explicit eContract means to override the value, fFacets, or contract list. Contract List. However we can never override the eObject to be an man incompatible value type. For example if the eContract specifies a child as real, then all implementations must use real for that child. As a special case, obj may be narrowed to any other element type.

We also have to be careful when overriding attributes to never break restrictions the eContract has defined. Technically this means we can specialize or narrow the value space of a eContract, but never generalize or widen it. This concept is called covariance. Let's take our example from above:

```
<int name="channel" val="2" min="2" max="200"/>
```

In this example the eContract has declared a value space of 2 to 200. Any implementation of this eContract must meet this restriction. For example it would an error to override min to −100 since that would widen the value space. However we can narrow the value space by overriding min to a number greater than 2 or by overriding max to a number less than 200. The specific override rules applicable to each fFacet are documented in section 4.1.2.

### 6.67.6 Multiple Inheritance

An object's contract list may specify multiple cContract URIs to implement. This is actually quite common - even required in many cases. There are two topics associated with the implementation of multiple cContracts:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Flattening</th>
<th>Contract Lists SHOULD always be flattened when specified. This comes into play when a Contract has its own Contract List (Section 7.6.1).</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mixins</td>
<td>The mixin design specifies the exact rules for how multiple Contracts are merged together. This section also specifies how conflicts are handled when multiple Contracts contain children with the same name (Section 7.6.2).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Table 7.4 Flattening**: contract lists SHOULD always be flattened when specified. This comes into play when a contract has its own contract list (Section ).
- **Mixins**: the mixin design specifies the exact rules for how multiple contracts are merged together. This section also specifies how conflicts are handled when multiple contracts contain children with the same name (Section ).
6.6.1 Flattening

It is common for contract objects themselves to implement contracts, just like it is common in OO languages to chain the inheritance hierarchy. However due to the nature of accessing oOBIX documents over a network, we wish to minimize round trip network requests which might be required to "learn" about a complex contract hierarchy. Consider this example:

```xml
<obj href="/A" />
<obj href="/B" is="/A" />
<obj href="/C" is="/B" />
<obj href="/D" is="/C"/>
```

In this example if we were reading object D for the first time, it would take three more requests to fully learn what contracts are implemented (one for C, B, and A). Furthermore, if our client was just looking for objects that implemented B, it would difficult to determine this just by looking at D.

Because of these issues, servers are REQUIRED to flatten their contract inheritance hierarchy into a list when specifying the is, of, in, or out attributes. In the example above, the correct representation would be:

```xml
<obj href="/A" />
<obj href="/B" is="/A" />
<obj href="/C" is="/B/A" />
<obj href="/D" is="/C/B/A"/>
```

This allows clients to quickly scan D's contract list to see that D implements C, B, and A without further requests.

Because complex servers often have a complex contract hierarchy of object types, the requirement to flatten the contract hierarchy can lead to a verbose contract list. Often many of these contracts are from the same namespace. For example:

```xml
<obj name="VSD1" href="acme:VSD-1" is="acmeObixLibrary:VerySpecificDevice1 acmeObixLibrary:VerySpecificDeviceBase acmeObixLibrary:SpecificDeviceType acmeObixLibrary:BaseDevice acmeObixLibrary:BaseObject"/>
```

To save space, servers MAY choose to combine the contracts from the same namespace and present the contract list with the namespace followed by a colon, then a brace-enclosed list of contract names:

```xml
<real name="writableReal" is="obix:{Point WritablePoint}"/>
<obj name="VSD1" href="acme:VSD-1" is="acmeObixLibrary:{VerySpecificDevice1 VerySpecificDeviceBase SpecificDeviceType BaseDevice BaseObject}"/>
```

Clients MUST be able to consume this form of the contract list and expand it to the standard form.

6.6.2 Mixins

Flattening is not the only reason a contract list might contain multiple contracts. oOBIX also supports the more traditional notion of multiple inheritance using a mixin metaphor. Consider the following example:

```xml
<obj href="acme:Device">
  <str name="serialNo"/>
</obj>

<obj href="acme:Clock" is="acme:Device">
  <op name="snooze"/>
  <int name="volume" val="0"/>
</obj>

<obj href="acme:Radio" is="acme:Device">
  <real name="station" min="87.0" max="107.5"/>
  <int name="volume" val="5"/>
</obj>

<obj href="acme:ClockRadio" is="acme:Radio acme:Clock acme:Device"/>
```
In this example ClockRadio implements both Clock and Radio. Via flattening of Clock and Radio, ClockRadio also implements Device. In oBIX this is called a mixin – Clock, Radio, and Device are mixed into (merged into) ClockRadio. Therefore ClockRadio inherits four children: serialNo, snooze, volume, and station. Mixins are a form of multiple inheritance akin to Java/C# interfaces (remember oBIX is about the type inheritance, not implementation inheritance).

Note that Clock and Radio both implement Device – the classic diamond inheritance pattern. This inheritance pattern where two types both inherit from a base, and are themselves both inherited by a single type, is called a “diamond” pattern from the shape it takes when the class hierarchy is diagrammed.

From Device, ClockRadio inherits a child named serialNo. Furthermore notice that both Clock and Radio declare a child named volume. This naming collision could potentially create confusion for what serialNo and volume mean in ClockRadio.

In oBIX we solve this problem by flattening the eContract’s children using the following rules:

1. Process the eContract definitions in the order they are listed
2. If a new child is discovered, it is mixed into the eObject’s definition
3. If a child is discovered we already processed via a previous eContract definition, then the previous definition takes precedence. However it is an error if the duplicate child is not eContract compatible with the previous definition (see Section 7.7).

In the example above this means that Radio.volume is the definition we use for ClockRadio.volume, because Radio has a higher precedence than Clock (it is first in the contract list Contract List). Thus ClockRadio.volume has a default value of “5”. However it would be invalid if Clock.volume were declared as int, since it would not be eContract compatible with Radio’s definition as an int – in that case ClockRadio could not implement both Clock and Radio. It is the server vendor’s responsibility not to create incompatible name collisions in eContracts.

The first eContract in a list is given specific significance since its definition trumps all others. In oBIX this eContract is called the primary contract Primary Contract. It is recommended that the primary contract Primary Contract implement all the other eContracts specified in the contract list Contract List (this actually happens quite naturally by itself in many programming languages). This makes it easier for clients to bind the eObject into a strongly typed class if desired. Contracts MUST NOT implement themselves nor have circular inheritance dependencies.

### 6.7.7 Contract Compatibility

A contract list Contract List which is covariantly substitutable with another contract list Contract List is said to be eContract compatible. Contract compatibility is a useful term when talking about mixin rules and overrides for lists and operations. It is a fairly common sense notion similar to previously defined override rules – however, instead of the rules applied to individual Facet attributes, we apply it to an entire contract list Contract List.

A contract list Contract List X is compatible with contract list Contract List Y, if and only if X narrows the value space defined by Y. This means that X can narrow the set of eObjects which implement Y, but never expand the set. Contract compatibility is not commutative (X is compatible with Y does not imply Y is compatible with X). If that definition sounds too highfalutin, you can boil it down to this practical rule: Practically, this can be expressed as: X can add new URIs to Y’s list, but never take any away.

### 6.8.7 Lists (and Feeds)

Implementations derived from list or feed eContracts inherit the of attribute. Like other attributes we can override the of attribute, but only if eContract compatible - a server SHOULD include all of the URIs in the eContract’s of attribute, but it MAY add additional ones (see Section 7.7).

Lists and feeds also have the special ability to implicitly define the contract list Contract List of their contents. In the following example it is implied that each child element has a contract list Contract List of /def/MissingPerson without actually specifying the is attribute in each list item:

```xml
<list of="/def/MissingPerson">
  <obj> <str name="fullName" val="Jack Shephard"/> </obj>
</list>
```
If an element in the list or feed does specify its own `is` attribute, then it MUST be contract compatible with the `of` attribute.

If an implementer wishes to specify that a list should contain references to a given type, then the server SHOULD include `obix:ref` in the `of` attribute. This MUST be the first URI in the `of` attribute. For example, to specify that a list should contain references to `obix:History` objects (as opposed to inline `obix:History` objects):

```xml
<list name="histories" of="obix:ref obix:History"/>
```

In many cases a server will implement its own management of the URI scheme of the child elements of a list. For example, the `href` attribute of child elements may be a database key, or some other string defined by the server when the child is added. Servers will not, in general, allow clients to specify this URI during addition of child elements through a direct write to a list's subordinate URI.

Therefore, in order to add child elements to a list which supports client addition of list elements, servers MUST support adding list elements by writing to the list URI with an object of a type that matches the list's contract. Servers MUST return the written resource (including any server-assigned `href`) upon successful completion of the write.

For example, given a list of `<real>` elements, and presupposing a server-imposed URI scheme:

```xml
<list href="/a/b" of="obix:real" writable="true"/>
```

Writing to the list URI itself will replace the entire list if the server supports this behavior:

```http
WRITE /a/b
```

returns:

```xml
<list of="obix:real">
  <real name="foo" val="10.0"/>
  <real name="bar" val="20.0"/>
</list>
```

Writing a single element of type `<real>` will add this element to the list.

```http
WRITE /a/b
```

returns:

```xml
<real name="baz" val="30.0"/>
```

while the list itself is now:

```xml
<list href="/a/b" of="obix:real">
  <real name="foo" href="/a/b/1" val="10.0"/>
  <real name="bar" href="/a/b/2" val="20.0"/>
  <real name="baz" href="/a/b/3" val="30.0"/>
</list>
```

Note that if a client has the correct URI to reference a list child element, this can still be used to modify the value of the element directly:

```http
WRITE /a/b/3
```

returns:

```xml
<real name="baz2" href="/a/b/3" val="33.0"/>
```

and the list has been modified to:

```xml
<list href="/a/b" of="obix:real">
  <real name="foo" href="/a/b/1" val="10.0"/>
  <real name="bar" href="/a/b/2" val="20.0"/>
  <real name="baz" href="/a/b/3" val="33.0"/>
</list>
```
Operations

OBIX Operations are the exposed actions that an OBIX Object can be commanded to take, i.e., they are things that you can invoke to "do" to an OBIX something to the Object. Typically they are accessible methods on the object. They are akin to methods in traditional OO-oriented languages. Typically they express this concept as the publically continuous state. Unlike value objects, they represent an Object and its current state, the op element merely represents the definition of an operation you can invoke.

All operations take exactly one Object as a parameter and return exactly one Object as a result. The in and out attributes define the contract list for the input and output Objects. If you need multiple input or output parameters, then wrap them in a single Object using a CContract as the signature. For example:

```
<op href="/addTwoReals" in="/def/AddIn" out="obix:real"/>
<obj href="/def/AddIn">
  <real name="a"/>
  <real name="b"/>
</obj>
```

Objects can override the operation definition from one of their CContracts. However the new in or out contract list MUST be CContract compatible (see Section 7.7) with the CContract's definition.

If an operation doesn't require a parameter, then specify in as obix:Nil. If an operation doesn't return anything, then specify out as obix:Nil. Occasionally an operation is inherited from a CContract which is unsupported in the implementation. In this case set the status attribute to disabled.

Operations are always invoked via their own href attribute (not their parent's href). Therefore operations SHOULD always specify an href attribute if you wish clients to invoke them. A common exception to this rule is CContract definitions themselves.
Object Composition

A good metaphor for comparison with oBIX is Object Composition describes how multiple OBIX Objects representing individual pieces are combined to form a larger unit. The individual pieces can be as small as the various data fields in a simple thermostat, as described in Section 2, or as large as entire buildings, each themselves composed of multiple networks of devices. All of the OBIX Objects are linked together via URIs, similar to the way that the World Wide Web. If you ignore all the fancy stuff like JavaScript and Flash, basically the WWW is a web of HTML documents hyperlinked together with URIs. If you dive down one more level, you could say the WWW is a web of HTML elements such as <p>, <table>, and <div>.

What the WWW does for HTML documents, oBIX does for objects. The logical model for OBIX is a global web of OBIX objects linked together via through URIs. Some of these OBIX objects are. These OBIX Objects may be static documents like eContracts or device descriptions. Other OBIX objects expose or they may be real-time data or services. But they all are linked together via URIs to create the oBIX Web.

Individual eObjects are composed together in two ways to define this web. Objects may be composed together via containment or via reference.

8.19.1 Containment

Any OBIX Object may contain zero or more children eObjects. This even includes eObjects which might be considered primitives such as bool or int. All eObjects are open ended and free to specify new eObjects which may not be in the object’s contract Object’s Contract. Containment is represented in the XML syntax by nesting the XML elements:

```xml
<obj href="/a/">
  <list name="b" href="b"/>
  <obj href="/b/c"/>
</list>
</obj>
```

In this example the eObject identified by "/a" contains "/a/b", which in turn contains "/a/b/c". Child eObjects may be named or unnamed depending on if the name attribute is specified (Section 6.1). In the example, "/a/b" is named and "/a/b/c" is unnamed. Typically named children are used to represent fields in a record, structure, or class type. Unnamed children are often used in lists.

8.29.2 References

Let’s go back To discuss references, let’s return to our WWW World Wide Web metaphor. Although the WWW is a web of individual HTML elements like <p> and <div>, we don’t actually pass individual <p> elements around over the network. Rather we “chunk” them into HTML documents and always pass the entire document over the network. To tie it all together, we create links between documents using the <a> anchor element. These anchors serve as place holders, referencing outside documents via a URI.

An OBIX reference is basically just like an HTML anchor. It serves as placeholder to “link” to another OBIX Object via a URI. While containment is best used to model small trees of data, references may be used to model very large trees or graphs of objects. As a matter fact, with Objects. With references we can link together all OBIX Objects on the Internet to create the OBIX Web.

As a clue to clients consuming OBIX references, the server SHOULD specify the type of the referenced eObject using the is attribute. In addition, for the list element type, the server SHOULD use the of attribute to specify the type of eObjects contained by the list. This allows the client to prepare the proper visualizations, data structures, etc. for consuming the eObject when it accesses the actual eObject. For example, a server might provide a reference to a list of available points:

```xml
<ref name="points" is="obix:list" of="obix:Point"/>
```
8.39.3 Extents

When oBIX is applied to a problem domain, we have to decide whether to the intra-model relationships can be expressed by using either containment or references. These decisions have a direct impact on how your model is represented in XML and accessed over the network. The choice changes the semantics of both the model expression as well as the method for accessing the elements within the model. The containment relationship is imbued with special semantics regarding XML encoding and eventing. In fact, oBIX coins a term for event management. If the model is expressed through containment—called an object’s extent. An object’s extent is its. Then we use the term Extent to refer to the tree of children contained within that Object, down to references. Only eObjects which have an href have an eExtent. Objects without an href are always included within the Extent of one or more of their ancestors extent-referenceable Objects which we term its Ancestors. This is demonstrated in the following example.

```
<obj href="/a/">
  <obj name="b" href="/b/">
    <obj name="c"/>
    <ref name="d" href="/d/>
  </obj>
  <ref name="e" href="/e/">
  </ref>
</obj>
```

In the example above, we have five eObjects named ‘a’ to ‘e’. Because ‘a’ includes an href, it has an associated extent, which encompasses ‘b’ and ‘c’ by containment and ‘d’ and ‘e’ by reference. Likewise, ‘b’ has an href which results in an extent encompassing ‘c’ by containment and ‘d’ by reference. Object ‘c’ does not provide a direct href, but exists in both the ‘a’ and ‘b’ eObjects’ extents. Note an eObject with an href has exactly one extent, but can be nested inside multiple extents.

8.4 XML

9.3.1 Inlining Extents

When marshaling eObjects into an XML oBIX document, it is required that an extent always be fully inlined into the XML document. The only valid eObjects which may be referenced are ref element themselves. In order to allow conservation of bandwidth usage, processing time, and storage requirements, servers SHOULD use non-ref Objects only for representing primitive children which have no further extent. Refs SHOULD be used for all complex children that have further structure under them. Clients MUST be able to consume the refs and then request the referenced object if it is needed for the application. As an example, consider a server which has the following object tree, represented here with full extent:

```
<obj name="MyBuilding" href="/building/">
  <str name="address" val="123 Main Street"/>
  <obj name="Floor1">
    <obj name="Zone1"/>
    <obj name="Room1"/>
  </obj>
</obj>
```

When marshaled into an OBIX document to respond to a client Read request of the /building/ URI, the server SHOULD inline only the address, and use a ref for Floor1:

```
<obj name="MyBuilding" href="/building/">
  <str name="address" val="123 Main Street"/>
  <ref name="Floor1" href="/floor1/">
  </ref>
</obj>
```

If the eObject implements a cContract, then it is required that the extent defined by the cContract be fully inlined into the document (unless the cContract itself defined a child as a ref element). An example of a cContract which specifies a child as a ref is Lobby.about (Section 5.1).
### 8.59.4 Alternate Hierarchies

An OBIX Server MAY present Tags that reference additional information about each OBIX Object. If these Tags are part of a formal semantic model, e.g., Haystack, BIM, etc., then the Tags will be identified by reference to its source semantic model. The identifier for such Tags, along with the URI for the semantic model it represents, MUST be declared in the Lobby (see Section 5 for a description of the Lobby Object). A server MUST use the semicolon character (:) to indicate an alternate hierarchy. For example, a server might present tag metadata from tag dictionary d1 in presenting a particular object in its system:

```
<real href="/bldg/floor1/room101/" name="Room101" val="70.0">
  <ref name="tags" href="/bldg/room101/meta/>
</real>
```

Servers SHOULD only provide this information to clients that are properly authenticated and authorized, to avoid providing a vector for attack if usage of a particular model identifies the server as an interesting target.

The metadata SHOULD be presented using the `ref` element, so this additional information can be skipped during normal encoding. If a client is able to consume the metadata, it SHOULD ask for the metadata by requesting the metadata hierarchy.

**OBIX Clients SHALL ignore information that they do not understand.** In particular, a conformant client that is presented with Tags that it does not understand MUST ignore those Tags. No OBIX Server may require understanding of these Tags for interoperation.
910 Networking

The heart of oOBIX is its object model and associated encoding. However, the primary use case for oOBIX is to access information and services over a network. The oOBIX architecture is based on a client/server network model, described below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Server</th>
<th>An entity containing OBIX enabled data and services. Servers respond to requests from client over a network.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Client</td>
<td>An entity which makes requests to servers over a network to access OBIX enabled data and services.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There is nothing to prevent software a device or system from being both an oOBIX client and server. However, a key tenet of oOBIX is that a client is NOT REQUIRED to implement server functionality which might require a server socket to accept incoming requests.

9.1 Request / Response

10.1 Service Requests

All network access is boiled down into service requests made against an OBIX server can be distilled to 4 atomic operations, expressed in the following request / response types Table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Request</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Read</td>
<td>Return the current state of an object at a given URI as an OBIX Object.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Write</td>
<td>Update the state of an existing object at a URI. The state to write is passed over the network as an OBIX Object. The new updated state is returned in an OBIX Object.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Invoke</td>
<td>Invoke an operation identified by a given URI. The input parameter and output result are passed over the network as an OBIX Object.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delete</td>
<td>Delete the object at a given URI.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Exactly how these requests and responses are implemented between a client and server is called a protocol binding. The oOBIX specification defines two standard protocol bindings: HTTP Binding (see) and SOAP Binding (see). However all in separate companion documents. All protocol bindings must follow the same read, write, invoke, and delete semantics discussed next.
9.1.10.1.1 Read

The read request specifies an object’s URI and the read response returns the current state of the object as an obIX document. The response MUST include the object’s complete extent (see Section 9.3). Servers may return an err object to indicate the read was unsuccessful – the most common error is obix:BadUriErr (see Section 10.2 for standard error contracts).

9.1.210.1.2 Write

The write request is designed to overwrite the current state of an existing object. The write request specifies the URI of an existing object and its new desired state. The response returns the updated state of the object. If the write is successful, the response MUST include the object’s complete extent (see Section 9.3). If the write is unsuccessful, then the server MUST return an err object indicating the failure.

The server is free to completely or partially ignore the write, so clients SHOULD be prepared to examine the response to check if the write was successful. Servers may also return an err object to indicate the write was unsuccessful.

Clients are not required to include the object’s full extent in the request. Objects explicitly specified in the request object tree SHOULD be overwritten or “overlaid” over the server’s actual object tree. Only the val attribute should be specified for a write request (outside of identification attributes such as name). The null attribute MAY also be used to set an object to null. If the null attribute is not specified and the val attribute is specified, then it is implied that null is false. A write operation that provides Facets has unspecified behavior. When writing int or reals with units, the write value MUST be in the same units as the server specifies in read requests – clients MUST NOT provide a different unit facet and expect the server to auto-convert (in fact the unit facet SHOULD NOT be included in the request).

9.1.310.1.3 Invoke

The invoke request is designed to trigger an operation. The invoke request specifies the URI of an operation object and the input argument object. The response includes the output object. The response MUST include the output object’s complete extent (see Section 9.3). Servers MAY instead return an err object to indicate the invoke invocation was unsuccessful.

9.1.410.1.4 Delete

The delete request is designed to remove an existing object from the server. The delete request specifies the URI of an existing object. If the delete is successful, the server MUST return an empty response. If the delete is unsuccessful, the server MUST return an err object indicating the failure.

9.210.2 Errors

Request errors are conveyed to clients with the err element. Any time an obIX server successfully receives a request and the request cannot be processed, then the server SHOULD return an err object to the client. Returning a valid obIX document with err SHOULD be used when feasible rather than protocol specific error handling (such as an HTTP response code). Such a design allows for consistency with batch request partial failures and makes protocol binding more pluggable by separating data transport from application level error handling.

A few contracts are the following Table describes the base Contracts predefined for representing common errors:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Err Contract</th>
<th>Usage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BadUriErr</td>
<td>Used to indicate either a malformed URI or a unknown URI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UnsupportedErr</td>
<td>Used to indicate an a request which isn’t supported by the server implementation (such as an operation defined in a Contract, which the server doesn’t support)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
PermissionErr | Used to indicate that the client lacks the necessary security permission to access the object or operation
---|---

- **BadUriErr**: used to indicate either a malformed URI or a unknown URI;
- **UnsupportedErr**: used to indicate a request which isn’t supported by the server implementation (such as an operation defined in a contract, which the server doesn’t support);
- **PermissionErr**: used to indicate that the client lacks the necessary security permission to access the object or operation.

### OBIX Error Contracts

Table 10-3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Error Contract</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><code>&lt;err href=&quot;obix:BadUriErr&quot;/&gt;</code></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><code>&lt;err href=&quot;obix:UnsupportedErr&quot;/&gt;</code></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><code>&lt;err href=&quot;obix:PermissionErr&quot;/&gt;</code></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If one of the above contracts makes sense for an error, then it SHOULD be included in the `err` element’s `is` attribute. It is strongly encouraged to also include a useful description of the problem in the `display` attribute.

### 10.3 Localization

Servers SHOULD localize appropriate data based on the desired locale of the client agent. Localization SHOULD include the `display` and `displayName` attributes. The desired locale of the client SHOULD be determined through authentication or through a mechanism appropriate to the binding used. A suggested algorithm is to check if the authenticated user has a preferred locale configured in the server’s user database, and if not then fallback to the locale derived from the binding.

Localization MAY include auto-conversion of units. For example if the authenticated user has configured a preferred unit system such as English versus Metric, then the server might attempt to convert values with an associated unit facet to the desired unit system.
### 9.3.1 Lobby

All oBIX servers MUST provide an object which implements `obix:Lobby`. The Lobby object serves as the central entry point into an oBIX server, and lists the URIs for other well-known objects defined by the oBIX specification. Theoretically all a client needs to know to bootstrap discovery is one URI for the Lobby instance. By convention this URI is “http://server/obix”, although vendors are certainly free to pick another URI. The Lobby contract is:

```xml
<obj href="obix:Lobby">
  <ref name="about" is="obix:About"/>
  <op name="batch" in="obix:BatchIn" out="obix:BatchOut"/>
  <ref name="watchService" is="obix:WatchService"/>
</obj>
```

The Lobby instance is where vendors SHOULD place vendor specific objects used for data and service discovery. The discovery of which encoding to use for communication between a client and a server is a function of the specific binding used. Clients and servers MUST be able to support negotiation of the encoding to be used according to the binding’s error message rules. Clients SHOULD first attempt to request communication using the desired encoding, and then fall back to other encodings as required based on the encodings supported by the server.

### 9.4.1.1 About

The `obix:About` object is a standardized list of summary information about an oBIX server. Clients can discover the `About` URI directly from the Lobby. The About contract is:

```xml
<obj href="obix:About">
  <str name="obixVersion"/>
  <str name="serverName"/>
  <abstime name="serverTime"/>
  <abstime name="serverBootTime"/>
  <str name="vendorName"/>
  <uri name="vendorUrl"/>
  <str name="productName"/>
  <str name="productVersion"/>
  <uri name="productUrl"/>
  <str name="tz"/>
</obj>
```

The following children provide information about the oBIX implementation:

- **obixVersion**: specifies which version of the oBIX specification the server implements. This string MUST be a list of decimal numbers separated by the dot character (Unicode 0x2E). The current version string is “1.1”.

The following children provide information about the server itself:

- **serverName**: provides a short localized name for the server.
- **serverTime**: provides the server’s current local time.
- **serverBootTime**: provides the server’s start time — this SHOULD be the start time of the oBIX server software, not the machine’s boot time.

The following children provide information about the server’s software vendor:

- **vendorName**: the company name of the vendor who implemented the oBIX server software.
The following children provide information about the software product running the server:

- **vendorUrl**: a URI to the vendor’s website.
- **productName**: with the product name of oBIX server software.
- **productUrl**: a URI to the product’s website.
- **productVersion**: a string with the product’s version number. Convention is to use decimal digits separated by dots.

The following children provide additional miscellaneous information:

- **tz**: specifies a zoneinfo identifier for the server’s default timezone.

### 9.51.1 Batch

The Lobby defines a batch operation which is used to batch multiple network requests together into a single operation. Batching multiple requests together can often provide significant performance improvements over individual round-robin network requests. As a general rule, one big request will always out-perform many small requests over a network.

A batch request is an aggregation of read, write, and invoke requests implemented as a standard oBIX operation. At the protocol binding layer, it is represented as a single invoke request using the Lobby.batch URI. Batching a set of requests to a server MUST be processed semantically equivalent to invoking each of the requests individually in a linear sequence.

The batch operation inputs a **BatchIn** object and outputs a **BatchOut** object:

```xml
<list href="obix:BatchIn" of="obix:obj"/>
<list href="obix:BatchOut" of="obix:obj"/>
```

The **BatchIn** contract specifies a list of requests to process identified using the Read, Write, or Invoke contract:

```
<uri href="obix:Read"/>
<uri href="obix:Write">
  <obj name="in"/>
</uri>
<uri href="obix:Invoke">
  <obj name="in"/>
</uri>
```

The **BatchOut** contract specifies an ordered list of the response objects to each respective request. For example the first object in **BatchOut** must be the result of the first request in **BatchIn**. Failures are represented using the **err** object. Every uri passed via **BatchIn** for a read or write request MUST have a corresponding result obj in **BatchOut** with an **err** attribute using an identical string representation from **BatchIn** (no normalization or case conversion is allowed).

It is up to vendors to decide how to deal with partial failures. In general idempotent requests SHOULD indicate a partial failure using **err**, and continue processing additional requests in the batch. If a server decides not to process additional requests when an error is encountered, then it is still REQUIRED to return an **err** for each respective request not processed.

Let’s look at a simple example:

```xml
<list is="obix:BatchIn">
  <uri is="obix:Read" val="/someStr"/>
  <uri is="obix:Read" val="/invalidUri"/>
  <uri is="obix:Write" val="/someStr">
    <str name="in" val="new string value"/>
  </uri>
</list>
```

```xml
<list is="obix:BatchOut">
  <str href="/someStr" val="old string value"/>
  <err href="/invalidUri" is="obix:BadUriErr" display="href not found"/>
</list>
```
In this example, the batch request is specifying a read request for "/someStr" and "/invalidUri", followed by a write request to "/someStr". Note that the write request includes the value to write as a child named "in".

The server responds to the batch request by specifying exactly one object for each request URI. The first read request returns a `str` object indicating the current value identified by "/someStr". The second read request contains an invalid URI, so the server returns an `err` object indicating a partial failure and continues to process subsequent requests. The third request is a write to "someStr". The server updates the value at "someStr", and returns the new value. Note that because the requests are processed in order, the first request provides the original value of "someStr" and the third request contains the new value. This is exactly what we would expect had we processed each of these requests individually.
10.11 Core Contract Library

This chapter defines some fundamental object contracts that serve as building blocks for the OASIS specification.

10.11.1 Nil

The obix:Nil contract defines a standardized null object. Nil is commonly used for an operation's in or out attribute to denote the absence of an input or output. The definition:

```xml
<obj href="obix:Nil" null="true"/>
```

10.211.2 Range

The obix:Range contract is used to define a bool or enum's range. Range is a list of objects called the range items. Each item's name attribute specifies the identifier used as the literal value of an enum. Item ids are never localized, and MUST be used only once in a given range. You may use the optional displayName attribute to specify a localized string to use in a user interface. The definition of Range:

```xml
<list href="obix:Range" of="obix:obj"/>
```

An example:

```xml
<list href="/enums/OffSlowFast" is="obix:Range">
  <obj name="off" display="Off"/>
  <obj name="slow" display="Slow Speed"/>
  <obj name="fast" display="Fast Speed"/>
</list>
```

The range facet may be used to define the localized text of a bool value using the ids of "true" and "false":

```xml
<list href="/enums/OnOff" is="obix:Range">
  <obj name="true" display="On"/>
  <obj name="false" display="Off"/>
</list>
```

10.311.3 Weekday

The obix:Weekday contract is a standardized enum for the days of the week:

```xml
<enum href="obix:Weekday" range="#Range">
  <list href="#Range" is="obix:Range">
    <obj name="sunday"/>
    <obj name="monday"/>
    <obj name="tuesday"/>
    <obj name="wednesday"/>
    <obj name="thursday"/>
    <obj name="friday"/>
    <obj name="saturday"/>
  </list>
</enum>
```

10.411.4 Month

The obix:Month contract is a standardized enum for the months of the year:

```xml
<enum href="obix:Month" range="#Range">
  <list href="#Range" is="obix:Range">
    <obj name="january"/>
    <obj name="february"/>
    <obj name="march"/>
    <obj name="april"/>
    <obj name="may"/>
  </list>
</enum>
```
10.511.5 Units

Representing units of measurement in software is a thorny issue. eOBIX provides a unit framework for mathematically defining units within the object model. An extensive database of predefined units is also provided.

All units measure a specific quantity or dimension in the physical world. Most known dimensions can be expressed as a ratio of the seven fundamental dimensions: length, mass, time, temperature, electrical current, amount of substance, and luminous intensity. These seven dimensions are represented in the SI Units SI system respectively as kilogram (kg), meter (m), second (sec), Kelvin (K), ampere (A), mole (mol), and candela (cd).

The obix:Dimension contract defines the ratio of the seven SI units using a positive or negative exponent:

```xml
<obj href="obix:Dimension">
  <int name="kg" val="0"/>
  <int name="m" val="0"/>
  <int name="sec" val="0"/>
  <int name="K" val="0"/>
  <int name="A" val="0"/>
  <int name="mol" val="0"/>
  <int name="cd" val="0"/>
</obj>
```

A Dimension object contains zero or more ratios of kg, m, sec, K, A, mol, or cd. Each of these ratios maps to the exponent of that base SI unit. If a ratio is missing then the default value of zero is implied. For example acceleration is m/s², which would be encoded in eOBIX as:

```xml
<obj is="obix:Dimension">
  <int name="m" val="1"/>
  <int name="sec" val="-2"/>
</obj>
```

Units with equal dimensions are considered to measure the same physical quantity. This is not always precisely true, but is good enough for practice. This means that units with the same dimension are convertible. Conversion can be expressed by specifying the formula required to convert the unit to the dimension’s normalized unit. The normalized unit for every dimension is the ratio of SI units itself. For example the normalized unit of energy is the joule m²•kg•s⁻². The kilojoule is 1000 joules and the watt-hour is 3600 joules. Most units can be mathematically converted to their normalized unit and to other units using the linear equations:

```
unit = dimension • scale + offset

toDouble = scalar • scale + offset

fromNormal = (scalar - offset) / scale

toUnit = fromUnit.toNormal( toUnit.toNormal(scalar) )
```

There are some units which don’t fit this model including logarithm units and units dealing with angles. But this model provides a practical solution for most problem spaces. Units which don’t fit this model SHOULD use a dimension where every exponent is set to zero. Applications SHOULD NOT attempt conversions on these types of units.

The obix:Unit contract defines a unit including its dimension and its toNormal equation:

```xml
<obj href="obix:Unit">
  <str name="symbol"/>
  <obj name="dimension" is="obix:Dimension"/>
  <real name="scale" val="1"/>
</obj>
```
The unit element contains a symbol, dimension, scale, and offset sub-object objects, as described in the following Table:

| symbol  | The symbol element defines a short abbreviation to use for the unit. For example "°F" would be the symbol for degrees Fahrenheit. The symbol element SHOULD always be specified. |
| dimension | The dimension Object defines the dimension of measurement as a ratio of the seven base SI units. If omitted, the dimension Object defaults to the obix:Dimension contract, in which case the ratio is the zero exponent for all seven base units. |
| scale | The scale element defines the scale variable of the toNormal equation. The scale Object defaults to 1. |
| offset | The offset element defines the offset variable of the toNormal equation. If omitted then offset defaults to 0. |

OBIX Unit composition.

The display attribute SHOULD be used to provide a localized full name for the unit based on the client's locale. If the display attribute is omitted, clients SHOULD use symbol for display purposes.

An example for the predefined unit for kilowatt:

```xml
<obj href="obix:units/kilowatt" display="kilowatt">
  <str name="symbol" val="kW"/>
  <obj name="dimension">
    <int name="m" val="2"/>
    <int name="kg" val="1"/>
    <int name="sec" val="-3"/>
  </obj>
  <real name="scale" val="1000"/>
</obj>
```

Automatic conversion of units is considered a localization issue.
Watches

A key requirement of OBIX is access to real-time information. We wish to enable clients to efficiently receive access to rapidly changing data. However, we don’t want to require clients to implement web servers or expose a well-known IP address. In order to address this problem, OBIX provides a model for client polled eventing called watches. The watch lifecycle is as follows:

The Implicit Contract for Watch is described in the following lifecycle:

- The client creates a new watch object Watch Object with the make operation on the server’s WatchService URI. The server defines a new Watch Object and provides a URI to access the new Watch.
- The client registers (and unregisters) Objects to watch using operations on the Watch Object.
- The server tracks events that occur on the Objects in the Watch.
- The client receives events from the server about changes to Objects in the Watch. The events can be polled by the client (see 12.1) or pushed by the server (see 12.2).
- The client may invoke the pollRefresh operation at any time to obtain a full list of the current value of each Object in the Watch.
- The Watch is freed, either by the explicit request of the client using the delete operation, or when the server determines the Watch is no longer being used. See Sections 12.1 and 12.2 for details on the criteria for server removal of Watches. When the Watch is freed, the Objects in it are no longer tracked by the server and the server may return any resources used for it to the system.

Watches allow a client to maintain a real-time cache of the current state of one or more Objects. They are also used to access an event stream from a feed Object. Watches also serve as the standardized mechanism for managing per-client state on the server via leases.

12.1 Client Polled Watches

When the underlying binding does not allow the server to send unsolicited messages, the Watch must be periodically polled by the client. The Implicit Contract for Watch in this scenario is extended as follows:

- The client SHOULD periodically poll the Watch URI using the pollChanges operation to obtain the events which have occurred since the last poll.
- The server frees the Watch under two conditions. The server may explicitly free the Watch using the delete operation. Or the server may automatically free the Watch because the client fails to poll after a predetermined amount of time (called greater than the lease time of the Watch). See the lease property in Section 12.4.5.

12.2 Server Pushed Watches

Some bindings, for example the OBIX WebSockets binding, may allow a-unolicited transmission by either the client or the server. If this is possible the standard Implicit Contract for Watch behavior is extended as follows:

- Change events are sent by the server directly to maintain a real-time stream of updates.
- The lease time cache for the current state of one or more Objects to watch using operations on the Watch Object.
- The Watch MUST be removed by the server upon termination of the underlying session between the client and server, in addition to the normal removal upon explicit client request.
The server MUST return an empty list upon invocation of the pollChanges operation.

Watches used in servers that can push events MUST provide three additional properties for configuring the Watch behavior:

- **bufferDelay**: The implicit contract for bufferDelay is the period of time for which any events on watched objects. They are will be buffered before being sent by the server in an update. Clients must be able to regulate the flow of messages from the server. A common scenario is an OBIX client application on a mobile device where the bandwidth usage is important; for example, a server sending updates every 50 milliseconds as a sensor value jitters around will cause problems. On the other hand, server devices may be constrained in terms of the available space for buffering changes. Servers are free to set a maximum value on bufferDelay through the max. Facet to constrain the maximum delay before the server will report events.

- **maxBufferedEvents**: Servers may also used to access an or use the maxBufferedEvents property to indicate the maximum number of events that can be retained before the buffer must be sent to the client to avoid missing events.

- **bufferPolicy**: This enum property defines the handling of the buffer on the server side when further events occur while the buffer is full. A value of violate means that the bufferDelay property is violated and the events are sent, allowing the buffer to be emptied. A value of LIFO (last-in-first-out) means that the most recently added buffer event stream from a feed object. Plus, watches serve as the standardized mechanism for managing per-client state on the server via leases; is replaced with the new event. A value of FIFO (first-in-first-out) means that the oldest buffer event is dropped to make room for the new event.

### 11.11.1 WatchService

- **NOTE**: A server using a bufferPolicy of either LIFO or FIFO will not send events when a buffer overrun occurs, and this means that some events will not be received by the client. It is up to the client and server to negotiate appropriate values for these three properties to ensure that events are not lost, if that is important to the application.

Note that bufferDelay MUST be writable by the client, as the client capabilities typically constrain the bandwidth usage. Server capabilities typically constrain maxBufferedEvents, and thus this is generally not writable by clients.

### 12.3 WatchService

The WatchService eObject provides a well-known URI as the factory for creating new wWatches. The WatchService URI is available directly from the Lobby eObject. The eContract for WatchService:

```
<obj href="obix:WatchService">
  <op name="make" in="obix:Nil" out="obix:Watch"/>
</obj>
```

The make operation returns a new empty Watch eObject as an output. The href of the newly created Watch eObject can then be used for invoking operations to populate and poll the data set.

### 11.212.4 Watch

The Watch eObject is used to manage a set of aObjects which are subscribed and periodically polled by clients to receive the latest events. The contract is The Explicit Contract definitions are:

```
<obj href="obix:Watch">
  <reltime name="lease" min="PT0S" writable="true"/>
  <reltime name="bufferDelay" min="PT0S" writable="true" null="true"/>
  <int name="maxBufferedEvents" null="true"/>
  <enum name="bufferPolicy" is="obix:WatchBufferPolicy" null="true"/>
  <op name="add" in="obix:WatchIn" out="obix:WatchOut"/>
  <op name="remove" in="obix:WatchIn"/>
```
Many of the Watch operations use two contracts: `obix:WatchIn` and `obix:WatchOut`. The client identifies objects to add and remove from the poll list via `WatchIn`. This object contains a list of URIs.

Typically these URIs SHOULD be server relative.

The server responds to `add`, `pollChanges`, and `pollRefresh` operations via the `WatchOut` contract. This object contains the list of subscribed objects - each object MUST specify an href URI using the exact same string as the URI identified by the client in the corresponding `WatchIn`. Servers are not allowed to MUST NOT perform any case conversions or normalization on the URI passed by the client.

This allows client software to use the URI string as a hash key to match up server responses.

### 11.2.112.4.1 Watch.add

Once a Watch has been created, the client can add new objects to watch the Watch using the `add` operation. This operation inputs a list of URIs and outputs the current value of the objects referenced. The objects returned are required to specify an href using the exact string representation input by the client. If any object cannot be processed, then a partial failure SHOULD be expressed by returning an err object with the respective href. Subsequent URIs MUST NOT be affected by the failure of one invalid URI. The add operation MUST never return objects not explicitly included in the input URIs (even if there are already existing objects in the watch list). No guarantee is made that the order of objects in `WatchOut` matches the order in of URIs in `WatchIn` – clients must use the URI as a key for matching.

Note that the URIs supplied via `WatchIn` may include an optional `in` parameter. This parameter is only used when subscribing a `Watch` to a feed object. Feeds also differ from other objects in that they return a list of historic events in `WatchOut`. Feeds are discussed in detail in Section12.6.

It is invalid to add an object's href to a `Watch` if the server MUST report an err.

If an attempt is made to add a URI to a `Watch` which was previously already added, then the server SHOULD return the current object's value in the `WatchOut` result, but treat poll operations as if the URI was only added once – polls SHOULD only return the object once. If an attempt is made to add the same URI multiple times in the same `WatchIn` request, then the server SHOULD only return the object once.

### 12.4.1.1 Note: the Watch Object URIs

The lack of a trailing slash in watched Object URIs can cause problems with `Watch`es. Consider a client which adds a URI to a `Watch` without a trailing slash. The client will use this URI as a key in its local hashtable for the `Watch`. Therefore the server MUST use the URI exactly as the client specified.
However, if the eObject’s extent includes child eObjects they will not be able to use relative URIs. It is RECOMMENDED that servers fail fast in these cases and return a BadUriErr when clients attempt to add a URI without a trailing slash to a wWatch (even though they may allow it for a normal read request).

11.2.212.4.2 Watch.remove

The client can remove eObjects from the watch list using the remove operation. A list of URIs is input to remove, and the Nil eObject is returned. Subsequent pollChanges and pollRefresh operations MUST cease to include the specified URIs. It is possible to remove every URI in the watch list; but this scenario MUST NOT automatically free the Watch, rather normal poll and lease rules still apply. It is invalid to use the WatchInItem.in parameter for a remove operation.

11.2.312.4.3 Watch.pollChanges

Clients SHOULD periodically poll the server using the pollChanges operation. This operation returns a list of the subscribed eObjects which have changed. Servers SHOULD only return the eObjects which have been modified since the last poll request for the specific Watch. As with add, every eObject MUST specify an href using the exact same string representation the client passed in the original add operation. The entire extent of the eObject SHOULD be returned to the client if any one thing inside the extent has changed on the server side.

Invalid URIs MUST never be included in the response (only in add and pollRefresh). An exception to this rule is when an eObject which is valid is removed from the URI space. Servers SHOULD indicate an eObject has been removed via an err with the BadUriErr cContract.

11.2.412.4.4 Watch.pollRefresh

The pollRefresh operation forces an update of every eObject in the watch list. The server MUST return every eObject and it’s full extent in the response using the href with the exact same string representation passed by the client in the original add. Invalid URIs in the poll list SHOULD be included in the response as an err element. A pollRefresh resets the poll state of every eObject, so that the next pollChanges only returns eObjects which have changed state since the pollRefresh invocation.

11.2.512.4.5 Watch.lease

All Watches have a lease time, specified by the lease child. If the lease time elapses without the client initiating a request on the Watch, and the Watch is a client-pollled Watch, then the server is free to MAY expire the wWatch. Every new poll request resets the lease timer. So as long as the client polls at least as often as the lease time, the server SHOULD maintain the Watch. The following requests SHOULD reset the lease timer: read of the Watch URI itself or invocation of the add, remove, pollChanges, or pollRefresh operations.

Clients may request a different lease time by writing to the lease eObject (requires servers to assign an href to the lease child). The server is free to honor the request, cap the lease within a specific range, or ignore the request. In all cases the write request will return a response containing the new lease time in effect.

Servers SHOULD report expired wWatches by returning an err eObject with the BadUriErr cContract. As a general principle servers SHOULD honor wWatches until the lease runs out (for client-polled Watches) or the client explicitly invokes delete. However, servers are free to cancel wWatches as needed (such as power failure) and the burden is on clients to re-establish a new wWatch.

11.2.612.4.6 Watch.delete

The delete operation can be used to cancel an existing wWatch. Clients SHOULD always delete their wWatch when possible to be good eOBIX citizens. However servers MUST always cleanup correctly without an explicit delete when the lease expires or the session is terminated.
11.3.12.5 Watch Depth

When a `wWatch` is put on an `eObject` which itself has `children objects childObjects`, how does a client know how "deep" the subscription goes? `eOBIX` requires `wWatch` depth to match an `eObject`'s extent (see Section 9.3). When a `wWatch` is put on a target `eObject`, a server MUST notify the client of any changes to any of the `eObjects` within that target `eObject`'s extent. If the extent includes `feed eObjects`, they are not included in the `wWatch` – feeds have special `wWatch` semantics discussed in Section 12.6. This means a `wWatch` is inclusive of all descendents within the extent except `refs` and `feeds`.

11.4.12.6 Feeds

Servers may expose event streams using the `feed eObject`. The event instances are typed via the feed's `of attribute`. Clients subscribe to events by adding the feed's `href` to a `wWatch`, optionally passing an input parameter which is typed via the feed's `in attribute`. The `eObject` returned from `Watch.add` is a list of historic events (or the empty list if no event history is available). Subsequent calls to `pollChanges` returns the list of events which have occurred since the last poll.

Let's consider a simple example for an `eObject` which fires an event when its geographic location changes:

```
<obj href="/car/">
  <feed href="moved" of="/def/Coordinate"/>
  <obj>
  </obj>
</obj>
```

We subscribe to the moved event feed by adding "/car/moved" to a `wWatch`. The `WatchOut` will include the list of any historic events which have occurred up to this point in time. If the server does not maintain an event history this list will be empty:

```
<obj is="obix:WatchIn">
  <list names="hrefs">
    <uri val="/car/moved"/>
  </list>
</obj>
```

```
<obj is="obix:WatchOut">
  <list names="values">
    <feed href="/car/moved" of="/def/Coordinate"/> <!-- empty history -->
  </list>
</obj>
```

```
<obj is="obix:WatchOut">
  <list names="values">
    <feed href="/car/moved" of="/def/Coordinate"/>
    <obj>
      <real name="lat" val="37.645022"/>
      <real name="long" val="-77.575851"/>
    </obj>
    <obj>
      <real name="lat" val="37.639046"/>
      <real name="long" val="-77.61872"/>
    </obj>
  </list>
</obj>
```

Now every time we call `pollChanges` for the `wWatch`, the server will send us the list of event instances which have accumulated since our last poll:

```
<obj is="obix:WatchOut">
  <list names="values">
    <feed href="/car/moved" of="/def/Coordinate"/>
    <obj>
      <real name="lat" val="37.645022"/>
      <real name="long" val="-77.575851"/>
    </obj>
    <obj>
      <real name="lat" val="37.639046"/>
      <real name="long" val="-77.61872"/>
    </obj>
  </list>
</obj>
```

Note the feed's `of attribute` works just like the list's `of attribute`. The children event instances are assumed to inherit the `cContract` defined by `of` unless explicitly overridden. If an event instance does override the `of cContract`, then it MUST be `cContract` compatible. Refer to the rules defined in Section 7.8.
Invoking a `pollRefresh` operation on a `WWatch` with a feed that has an event history, SHOULD return all the historical events as if the `pollRefresh` was an `add` operation. If an event history is not available, then `pollRefresh` SHOULD act like a normal `pollChanges` and just return the events which have occurred since the last poll.
Points

Anyone familiar with automation systems immediately identifies with the term *point* (sometimes called *tags* in the industrial space). Although there are many different definitions, generally points map directly to a sensor or actuator (called *hard points*). Sometimes the concept of a point is mapped to a configuration variable such as a software setpoint (called *soft points*). In some systems point is an atomic value, and in others it encapsulates a whole truckload of status and configuration information.

The goal of OBIX is to capture a normalization representation of points without forcing an impedance mismatch on vendors trying to make their native system OBIX accessible. To meet this requirement, OBIX defines a low level abstraction for point—simply one of the primitive value types with associated status information. Point is basically just a marker contract used to tag an object as exhibiting “point” semantics:

```
<obj href="obix:Point"/>
```

This contract MUST only be used with the value primitive types: bool, real, enum, str, abstime, and reltime. Points SHOULD use the status attribute to convey quality information. The following table specifies how to map common control system semantics to a value type:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Point type</th>
<th>OBIX Object</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>digital Point</td>
<td>bool digital point</td>
<td>&lt;bool is=&quot;obix:Point&quot; val=&quot;true&quot;/&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>real analog Point</td>
<td>analog real</td>
<td>&lt;real is=&quot;obix:Point&quot; val=&quot;22&quot; unit=&quot;obix:units/celsius&quot;/&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>multi-state Point</td>
<td>multi-state enum</td>
<td>&lt;enum is=&quot;obix:Point&quot; val=&quot;slow&quot;/&gt;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 13.1 Base Point types.

Writable Points

Different control systems handle point writes using a wide variety of semantics. Sometimes we write a point at a specific priority level. Sometimes we override a point for a limited period of time, after which the point falls back to a default value. The OBIX specification does not attempt to impose a specific model on vendors. Rather OBIX provides a standard WritablePoint contract which may be extended with additional mixins to handle special cases. WritablePoint defines write as an operation which takes a WritePointIn structure containing the value to write. The contracts are:

```
<obj href="obix:WritablePoint" is="obix:Point">
  <op name="writePoint" in="obix:WritePointIn" out="obix:Point"/>
</obj>
```

It is implied that the value passed to writePoint MUST match the type of the point. For example if WritablePoint is used with an enum, then writePoint MUST pass an enum for the value.
Most automation systems have the ability to persist periodic samples of point data to create a historical archive of a point’s value over time. This feature goes by many names including logs, trends, or histories.

In eOBIX, a history is defined as a list of time stamped point values. The following features are provided by eOBIX histories:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>History Object</td>
<td>A normalized representation for a history itself</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History Record</td>
<td>A record of a point sampling at a specific timestamp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History Query</td>
<td>A standard way to query history data as Points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History Rollup</td>
<td>A standard mechanism to do basic rollups of history data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History Append</td>
<td>The ability to push new history records into a history</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 14.1 History Object

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Property</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>count</td>
<td>The number of history records contained by the history</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>start</td>
<td>Provides the timestamp of the oldest record. The timezone of this abstime MUST match History.tz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>end</td>
<td>Provides the timestamp of the newest record. The timezone of this abstime MUST match History.tz</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Let’s look at each of the child properties of History’s sub-objects:

- count: this field stores the number of history records contained by the history;
- start: this field provides the timestamp of the oldest record. The timezone of this abstime MUST match History.tz;
- end: this field provides the timestamp of the newest record. The timezone of this abstime MUST match History.tz.
### Table 14.2

| **tz** | A standardized timezone identifier for the history data (see Section 4.1.11) |
| **formats** | Provides a list of strings describing the formats in which the server can provide the history data |
| **query** | The operation used to query the history to read history records |
| **feed** | The operation used to subscribe to a real-time feed of history records |
| **rollup** | The operation used to perform history rollups (it is only supported for numeric history data) |
| **append** | The operation used to push new history records into the history |

- **tz**: standardized timezone identifier for the history data (see Section 4.1.11)
- **formats**: this field provides a list of strings describing the formats in which the server can provide the history data.
- **query**: the query object is used to query the history to read history records;
- **feed**: used to subscribe to a real-time feed of history records;
- **rollup**: this object is used to perform history rollups (it is only supported for numeric history data);
- **append**: operation used to push new history records into the history.

An example of a history which contains an hour of 15 minute temperature data:

```xml
<object href="http://x/outsideAirTemp/history/" is="obix:History">
  <int name="count" val="5"/>
  <abstime name="start" val="2005-03-16T14:00:00-05:00" tz="America/New_York"/>
  <abstime name="end" val="2005-03-16T15:00:00-05:00" tz="America/New_York"/>
  <str name="tz" val="America/New_York"/>
  <list name="formats" of="obix:str">
    <str val="text/csv"/>
  </list>
  <op name="query" href="query"/>
  <op name="rollup" href="rollup"/>
</object>
```

### 13.2.14.2 History Queries

Every History object contains a query operation to query the historical data. A client MAY invoke the query operation to request the data from the server as an `obix:HistoryQueryOut`. Alternatively, if the server is able to provide the data in a different format, such as CSV, it SHOULD list these additionally supported formats in the `formats` field. A client MAY then supply one of these defined formats in the HistoryFilter input query.

### 13.2.14.2.1 HistoryFilter

The `History.query` input `Contract`:

```xml
<object href="obix:HistoryFilter">
  <int name="limit" null="true"/>
  <abstime name="start" null="true"/>
  <abstime name="end" null="true"/>
  <str name="tz" null="true"/>
  <bool name="compact" val="false"/>
</object>
```

These fields are described in detail in this Table:
### Field Description

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>limit</strong></td>
<td>An integer indicating the maximum number of records to return. Clients can use this field to throttle the amount of data returned by making it non-null. Servers MUST never return more records than the specified limit. However servers are free to return fewer records than the limit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>start</strong></td>
<td>If non-null this field indicates an inclusive lower bound for the query’s time range. This value SHOULD match the history’s timezone, otherwise the server MUST normalize based on absolute time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>end</strong></td>
<td>If non-null this field indicates an inclusive upper bound for the query’s time range. This value SHOULD match the history’s timezone, otherwise the server MUST normalize based on absolute time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>format</strong></td>
<td>If non-null this field indicates the format that the client is requesting for the returned data. If the client uses this field the server MUST return a HistoryQueryOut with a non-null dataRef URI, or return an error if it is unable to supply the requested format. A client SHOULD use one of the formats defined in the History’s formats field when using this field in the filter.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>compact</strong></td>
<td>If non-null and true, this field indicates the client is requesting the data in the compact format described below. If false or null, the server MUST return the data in the standard format compatible with the 1.0 specification.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

13.2.2.214.2.2 HistoryQueryOut

The History.query output cContract:

```xml
<obj href="obix:HistoryQueryOut">
  <int name="count" min="0" val="0"/>
  <abstime name="start" null="true"/>
  <abstime name="end" null="true"/>
  <list name="data" of="obix:HistoryRecord" null="true"/>
  <uri name="dataRef" null="true"/>
</obj>
```

Just like History, every HistoryQueryOut returns count, start, and end. But unlike History, these values are for the query result, not the entire history. The actual history data is stored as a list of HistoryRecords in the data field. Remember that child order is not guaranteed in oBIX, therefore it
might be common to have count after data. The start, end, and data HistoryRecord timestamps MUST have a timezone which matches History.tz.

When using a client-requested format, the server MUST provide a URI that can be followed by the client to obtain the history data in the alternate format. The exact definition of this format is out of scope of this specification, but SHOULD be agreed upon by both the client and server.

13.2.3 HistoryRecord

The HistoryRecord contract specifies a record in a history query result:

```xml
<obj href="obix:HistoryRecord">
  <abstime name="timestamp" null="true"/>
  <obj name="value" null="true"/>
</obj>
```

Typically the value SHOULD be one of the value types used with obix:Point.

13.2.4 History Query Examples

Let's examine an example query from the "outsideAirTemp/history" example above.

13.2.4.1 History Query as eBIX objects

First let's see how a client and server interact using the standard history query mechanism:

Client invoke request:

```xml
INVOKE http://x/outsideAirTemp/history/query
<obj name="in" is="obix:HistoryFilter">
  <int name="limit" val="5"/>
  <abstime name="start" val="2005-03-16T14:00:00-05:00" tz="America/New_York"/>
</obj>
```

Server response:

```xml
<obj href="http://x/outsideAirTemp/history/query" is="obix:HistoryQueryOut">
  <int name="count" val="5"/>
  <abstime name="start" val="2005-03-16T14:00:00-05:00" tz="America/New_York"/>
  <abstime name="end" val="2005-03-16T15:00:00-05:00" tz="America/New_York"/>
  <reltime name="interval" val="PT15M"/>
  <list name="data" of="#RecordDef obix:HistoryRecord">
    <obj>
      <abstime name="timestamp" val="2005-03-16T14:00:00-05:00"/>
      <real name="value" val="40"/>
    </obj>
    <obj>
      <abstime name="timestamp" val="2005-03-16T14:15:00-05:00"/>
      <real name="value" val="42"/>
    </obj>
    <obj>
      <abstime name="timestamp" val="2005-03-16T14:30:00-05:00"/>
      <real name="value" val="43"/>
    </obj>
    <obj>
      <abstime name="timestamp" val="2005-03-16T14:45:00-05:00"/>
      <real name="value" val="47"/>
    </obj>
    <obj>
      <abstime name="timestamp" val="2005-03-16T15:00:00-05:00"/>
      <real name="value" val="44"/>
    </obj>
  </list>
</obj>
```

Note in the example above how the data list uses a document local contract to define facets common to all the records (although we still have to flatten the contract list).

13.2.4.2 History Query as Preformatted List

Now let's see how this might be done in a more compact format. The server in this case is able to return the history data as a CSV list.

Client invoke request:

```xml
INVOKE http://myServer/obix/outsideAirTemp/history/query
<obj name="in" is="obix:HistoryFilter">
```

```
```

obix-v1.1-csprd02
Standards Track Work Product Copyright © OASIS Open 2013. All Rights Reserved. 19 December 2013
Server response:

```xml
<obj href="http://myServer/obix/outsideAirTemp/history/query" is="obix:HistoryQueryOut">
  <int name="count" val="5"/>
  <abstime name="start" val="2005-03-16T14:00:00-05:00" tz="America/New_York"/>
  <abstime name="end" val="2005-03-16T15:00:00-05:00" tz="America/New_York"/>
  <uri name="dataRef" val="http://x/outsideAirTemp/history/query?text/csv"/>
</obj>
```

Client then reads the dataRef URI specified and gets:

```
GET http://x/outsideAirTemp/history/query?text/csv
```

Server response:

```
2005-03-16T14:00:00-05:00,40
2005-03-16T14:15:00-05:00,42
2005-03-16T14:30:00-05:00,43
2005-03-16T14:45:00-05:00,47
2005-03-16T15:00:00-05:00,44
```

Note that the client’s second request is NOT an OBIX request, and the subsequent server response is NOT an aOBIX document, but just arbitrarily formatted data as requested by the client – in this case text/csv. Also it is important to note that this is simply an example. While the usage of the format and dataRef properties is normative, the usage of the text/csv MIME type and how the data is actually presented is purely non-normative. It is not intended to suggest CSV as a mechanism for how the data should be formatted, as that is an agreement to be made between the client and server. The server and client are free to use any agreed-upon format, for example, one where the timestamps are inferred rather than repeated, for maximum brevity.

### 13.2.5 14.2.5 Compact Histories

When a server contains a large number of history records, it is important to be as concise as possible when retrieving the records. The HistoryRecord format is fine for small histories, but it is not uncommon for servers to contain thousands, or tens of thousands, of data points, or even more. To allow a more concise representation of the historical data, a client MAY request that the server provide the query output in a “compact” format. This is done by setting the compact attribute of the HistoryFilter contract to true. The server MUST then respond with a CompactHistoryQueryOut if it supports compact history reporting for the referenced History, or an error if it does not.

The CompactHistoryQueryOut contract is:

```xml
<obj href="obix:CompactHistoryQueryOut" is="obix:HistoryQueryOut">
  <reltime name="interval" null="true"/>
  <str name="delimiter"/>
  <list name="data" of="obix:CompactHistoryRecord" null="true"/>
</obj>
```

Note that the data element is narrowed to require the CompactHistoryRecord type, which is defined as:

```xml
<str href="obix:CompactHistoryRecord" is="obix:HistoryRecord"/>
```

The CompactHistoryRecord contract narrows the HistoryRecord contract to the str element type. The semantic requirements of the contract allow for a more compact representation of the record as an eBIX object, although with some restrictions:

- The timestamp and value child elements MUST be null when encoded. These are determined from the val attribute.
- The val attribute of the CompactHistoryRecord MUST be a string containing a delimited list of entities matching the record definition. The delimiter MUST be included using the delimiter element of the CompactHistoryQueryOut.
The record definition MUST be provided in an accessible URI to the client. The record definition SHOULD be provided in a document-local eContract defining the type of each item in the record, as well as any facets that apply to every record's fields.

The CompactHistoryRecord MUST be interpreted by inserting each item in the delimited list contained in the val attribute into the respective child element's val attribute.

For histories with regular collection intervals, the timestamp field MAY be left empty, if it can be inferred by the consumer. If the timestamp field is left empty on any record, the server MUST include the interval element in the HistoryQueryOut. Consumers MUST be able to handle existence or non-existence of the timestamp field. Note that this only applies when the timestamp matches the expected value based on the collection interval of the history. If a record exists at an irregular time interval, such as for skipped records or COV histories, the timestamp MUST be included in the record.

The interpretation of the CompactHistoryRecord MUST be identical to the interpretation of a HistoryRecord with the same list of values described as child elements.

A consumer of the CompactHistoryRecord MAY skip the actual internal conversion of the CompactHistoryRecord into its expanded form, and use a 'smart' decoding process to consume the list as if it were presented in the HistoryRecord form.

### 13.2.5.14.2.5.1 CompactHistoryRecord Example

Let's look at the same scenario as in 13.2.4, our previous example, this time expressed using CompactHistoryRecords. The server is providing additional information with certain elements; this is reflected in the record definition at the end.

**Client invoke request:**

```xml
INVOKE http://x/outsideAirTemp/history/query

<obj name="in" is="obix:HistoryFilter">
  <int name="limit" val="5"/>
  <abstime name="start" val="2005-03-16T14:00:00-05:00" tz="America/New_York"/>
  <bool name="compact" val="true"/>
</obj>
```

**Server response:**

```xml
<obj href="http://x/outsideAirTemp/history/query" is="obix:CompactHistoryQueryOut">
  <int name="count" val="5"/>
  <abstime name="start" val="2005-03-16T14:00:00-05:00" tz="America/New_York"/>
  <abstime name="end" val="2005-03-16T15:00:00-05:00" tz="America/New_York"/>
  <reltime name="interval" val="PT15M"/>
  <str name="delimiter" val="",/>
  <list name="data" of="#RecordDef obix:CompactHistoryRecord">
    <str val="03"/>
    <str val="40,44"/> <!-- may be inferred from start -->
    <str val="42,45"/> <!-- regular collection, inferred -->
    <str val="2005-03-16T14:30:02-05:00,43,48"/> <!-- irregular timestamp -->
    <str val="47,"/> <!-- inferred, dischgTemp not available -->
    <str val="44,47"/> <!-- inferred -->
  </list>
</obj>
```

### 13.3.14.3 History Rollups

Control systems collect historical data as raw time sampled values. However, most applications wish to consume historical data in a summarized form which we call rollups. The rollup operation is used to summarize an interval of time. History rollups only apply to histories which store numeric information. Attempting to query a rollup on a non-numeric history SHOULD result in an error.

#### 13.3.14.3.1 HistoryRollupIn

The History.rollup input eContract extends HistoryFilter to add an interval parameter:
13.3.2.14.3.2 HistoryRollupOut

The History.rollup output Contract:

```
<obj href="obix:HistoryRollupOut">
  <int name="count" min="0" val="0"/>
  <abstime name="start" null="true"/>
  <abstime name="end" null="true"/>
  <list name="data" of="obix:HistoryRollupRecord"/>
</obj>
```

The HistoryRollupOut object looks very much like HistoryQueryOut except it returns a list of HistoryRollupRecords, rather than HistoryRecords. Note: unlike HistoryQueryOut, the start for HistoryRollupOut is exclusive, not inclusive. This issue is discussed in greater detail next. The start, end, and data HistoryRollupRecord timestamps MUST have a timezone which matches History.tz.

13.3.3.14.3.3 HistoryRollupRecord

A history rollup returns a list of HistoryRollupRecords:

```
<obj href="obix:HistoryRollupRecord">
  <abstime name="start"/>
  <abstime name="end"/>
  <int name="count"/>
  <real name="min"/>
  <real name="max"/>
  <real name="avg"/>
  <real name="sum"/>
</obj>
```

The children are defined as in the Table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Property</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>start</td>
<td>The exclusive start time of the record’s rollup interval</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>end</td>
<td>The inclusive end time of the record’s rollup interval</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>count</td>
<td>The number of records used to compute this rollup interval</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>min</td>
<td>The minimum value of all the records within the interval</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>max</td>
<td>The maximum value of all the records within the interval</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>avg</td>
<td>The arithmetic mean of all the values within the interval</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sum</td>
<td>The summation of all the values within the interval</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **start**: the exclusive start time of the record’s rollup interval;
- **end**: the inclusive end time of the record’s rollup interval;
- **count**: the number of records used to compute this rollup interval;
- **min**: specifies the minimum value of all the records within the interval;
- **max**: specifies the maximum value of all the records within the interval;
- **avg**: specifies the mathematical average of all the values within the interval;
- **sum**: specifies the summation of all the values within the interval;

Properties of obix:HistoryRollupRecord.
The best way to understand how rollup calculations work is through an example. Let’s consider a history of meter data where we collected two hours of 15 minute readings of kilowatt values:

If we were to query the rollup using an interval of 1 hour with a start time of 12:00 and end time of 14:00, the result should be:

If you whip out your calculator, the first thing you will note is that the first raw record of 80kW was never used in the rollup. This is because start time is always exclusive. The reason start time has to be exclusive is because we are summarizing discrete samples into a contiguous time range. It would be incorrect to include a record in two different rollup intervals! To avoid this problem we always...
make start time exclusive and end time inclusive. The following Table illustrates how the raw records were applied to rollup intervals:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interval Start (exclusive)</th>
<th>Interval End (inclusive)</th>
<th>Records Included</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2005-03-16T12:00</td>
<td>2005-03-16T13:00</td>
<td>82 + 90 + 85 + 81 = 338</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005-03-16T13:00</td>
<td>2005-03-16T14:00</td>
<td>84 + 91 + 83 + 78 = 336</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 14.5. Calculation of OBIX History rollup values.

### 13.4.14.4 History Feeds

The History contract specifies a feed for subscribing to a real-time feed of the history records. History.feed reuses the same HistoryFilter input contract used by History.query — the same semantics apply. When adding a History feed to a Watch, the initial result SHOULD contain the list of HistoryRecords filtered by the input parameter (the initial result should match what History.query would return). Subsequent calls to Watch.pollChanges SHOULD return any new HistoryRecords which have been collected since the last poll that also satisfy the HistoryFilter.

### 13.5.14.5 History Append

The History.append operation allows a client to push new HistoryRecords into a History log (assuming proper security credentials). This operation comes in handy when bi-direction HTTP connectivity is not available. For example if a device in the field is behind a firewall, it can still push history data on an interval basis to a server using the append operation.

#### 13.5.14.5.1 HistoryAppendIn

The History.append input contract:

```xml
<obj href="obix:HistoryAppendIn">
  <list name="data" of="obix:HistoryRecord"/>
</obj>
```

The HistoryAppendIn is a wrapper for the list of HistoryRecords to be inserted into the History. The HistoryRecords SHOULD use a timestamp which matches History.tz. If the timezone doesn’t match, then the server MUST normalize to its configured timezone based on absolute time. The HistoryRecords in the data list MUST be sorted by timestamp from oldest to newest, and MUST not include a timestamp equal to or older than History.end.

#### 13.5.214.5.2 HistoryAppendOut

The History.append output contract:

```xml
<obj href="obix:HistoryAppendOut">
  <int name="numAdded"/>
  <int name="newCount"/>
  <abstime name="newStart" null="true"/>
  <abstime name="newEnd" null="true"/>
</obj>
```

The output of the append operation returns the number of new records appended to the History and the new total count, start time, and end time of the entire History. The newStart and newEnd timestamps MUST have a timezone which matches History.tz.
Alarming

The oBIX alarming feature specifies a normalized model to query, watch, and acknowledge alarms. In oBIX, an alarm indicates a condition which requires notification of either a user or another application. In many cases an alarm requires acknowledgement, indicating that someone (or something) has taken action to resolve the alarm condition. The typical lifecycle of an alarm is:

1. Source Monitoring: algorithms in a server monitor an alarm source. An alarm source is an object with an href which has the potential to generate an alarm. Example of alarm sources might include sensor points (this room is too hot), hardware problems (disk is full), or applications (building is consuming too much energy at current energy rates).

2. Alarm Generation: if the algorithms in the server detect that an alarm source has entered an alarm condition, then an alarm record is generated. Every alarm is uniquely identified using an href and represented using the obix:Alarm contract. Sometimes we refer to the alarm transition as off-normal.

3. To Normal: many alarm sources are said to be stateful - eventually the alarm source exits the alarm state, and is said to return to-normal. Stateful alarms implement the obix:StatefulAlarm contract. When the source transitions to normal, we update normalTimestamp of the alarm.

4. Acknowledgement: often we require that a user or application acknowledges that they have processed an alarm. These alarms implement the obix:AckAlarm contract. When the alarm is acknowledged, we update ackTimestamp and ackUser.

14.115.1 Alarm States

Alarm state is summarized with two variables:

| In Alarm | Is the alarm source currently in the alarm condition or in the normal condition? This variable maps to the alarm status state. |
| Acknowledged | Is the alarm acknowledged or unacknowledged? This variable maps to the unacked status state. |

 Either of these states may transition independent of the other. For example an alarm source can return to normal before or after an alarm has been acknowledged. Furthermore it is not uncommon to transition between normal and off-normal multiple times generating several alarm records before any acknowledgements occur.

Note not all alarms have state. An alarm which implements neither StatefulAlarm nor the AckAlarm contracts is completely stateless – these alarms merely represent event. An alarm which implements StatefulAlarm but not AckAlarm will have an in-alarm state, but not acknowledgement state. Conversely an alarm which implements AckAlarm but not StatefulAlarm will have an acknowledgement state, but not in-alarm state.
14.1.1 Alarm Source

The current alarm state of an alarm source is represented using the `status` attribute. This attribute is discussed in Section 4.1.10. It is recommended that alarm sources always report their status via the `status` attribute.

14.1.2.1 StatefulAlarm and AckAlarm

An `Alarm` record is used to summarize the entire lifecycle of an alarm event. If the alarm implements `StatefulAlarm` it tracks transition from off-normal back to normal. If the alarm implements `AckAlarm`, then it also summarizes the acknowledgement. This allows for four discrete alarm states, which are described in terms of the `Alarm` Contract properties:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alarm State</th>
<th>alarm</th>
<th>acked</th>
<th>normalTimestamp</th>
<th>ackTimestamp</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>new unacked alarm</td>
<td>true</td>
<td>false</td>
<td>null</td>
<td>null</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>acknowledged alarm</td>
<td>true</td>
<td>true</td>
<td>null</td>
<td>non-null</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unacked returned alarm</td>
<td>false</td>
<td>false</td>
<td>non-null</td>
<td>null</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>acked returned alarm</td>
<td>false</td>
<td>true</td>
<td>non-null</td>
<td>non-null</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 15-2: Alarm lifecycle states in OBIX.

14.2 Alarm Contracts

14.2.1 Alarm

The core `Alarm` contract is:

```
<obj href="obix:Alarm">
  <ref name="source"/>
  <abstime name="timestamp"/>
</obj>
```

The child objects are:

- `source`: the URI which identifies the alarm source. The source SHOULD reference an `OBIX Object` which models the entity that generated the alarm.
- `timestamp`: this is the time at which the alarm source transitioned from normal to off-normal and the `Alarm` record was created.

14.2.2 StatefulAlarm

Alarms which represent an alarm state which may transition back to normal SHOULD implement the `StatefulAlarm` contract:

```
<obj href="obix:StatefulAlarm" is="obix:Alarm">
  <abstime name="normalTimestamp" null="true"/>
</obj>
```

The child object is:

- `normalTimestamp`: if the alarm source is still in the alarm condition, then this field is null. Otherwise this indicates the time of the transition back to the normal condition.

14.2.3 AckAlarm

Alarms which support acknowledgement SHOULD implement the `AckAlarm` contract:

```
<obj href="obix:AckAlarm" is="obix:Alarm">
  <abstime name="ackTimestamp" null="true"/>
  <str name="ackUser" null="true"/>
</obj>
```
The child objects are:

- **ackTimestamp**: if the alarm is unacknowledged, then this field is null. Otherwise this indicates the time of the acknowledgement.
- **ackUser**: if the alarm is unacknowledged, then this field is null. Otherwise this field should provide a string indicating who was responsible for the acknowledgement.

The ack operation is used to programmatically acknowledge the alarm. The client may optionally specify an ackUser string via AckAlarmIn. However, the server is free to ignore this field depending on security conditions. For example a highly trusted client may be allowed to specify its own ackUser, but a less trustworthy client may have its ackUser predefined based on the authentication credentials of the protocol binding. The ack operation returns an AckAlarmOut which contains the updated alarm record.

Use the Lobby.batch operation to efficiently acknowledge a set of alarms.

### 14.2.4.15.2.4 PointAlarms

It is very common for an alarm source to be an obix:Point. A respective PointAlarm cContract is provided as a normalized way to report the value which caused the alarm condition:

```xml
<obj href="obix:PointAlarm" is="obix:Alarm">
  <obj name="alarmValue"/>
</obj>
```

The alarmValue object SHOULD be one of the value types defined for obix:Point in Section 13.

### 14.3.15.3 AlarmSubject

Servers which implement eOBIX alarming MUST provide one or more eObjects which implement the AlarmSubject cContract. The AlarmSubject cContract provides the ability to categorize and group the sets of alarms a client may discover, query, and watch. For instance a server could provide one AlarmSubject for all alarms and other AlarmSubjects based on priority or time of day. The cContract for AlarmSubject is:

```xml
<obj href="obix:AlarmSubject">
  <int name="count" min="0" val="0"/>
  <op name="query" in="obix:AlarmFilter" out="obix:AlarmQueryOut"/>
  <feed name="feed" in="obix:AlarmFilter" of="obix:Alarm"/>
</obj>
```

The AlarmSubject follows the same design pattern as History. The AlarmSubject specifies the active count of alarms; however, unlike History it does not provide the start and end bounding timestamps. It contains a query operation to read the current list of alarms with an AlarmFilter to filter by time bounds. AlarmSubject also contains a feed object which may be used to subscribe to the alarm events.
### 14.4.15.4 Alarm Feed Example

The following example illustrates how a feed works with this `AlarmSubject`:

```xml
<obj is="obix:AlarmSubject" href="/alarms/">
  <int name="count" val="2"/>
  <op name="query" href="query"/>
  <feed name="feed" href="feed"/>
</obj>

The server indicates it has two open alarms under the specified `AlarmSubject`. If a client were to add the `AlarmSubject`'s feed to a watch:

```xml
<obj is="obix:WatchIn">
  <list names="hrefs"/>
  <uri val="/alarms/feed">
    <obj name="in" is="obix:AlarmFilter">
      <int name="limit" val="25"/>
    </obj>
  </uri>
</list>
</obj>
```

The `Watch` returns the historic list of alarm events which is two open alarms. The first alarm indicates an out of bounds condition in AirHandler-2's return temperature. The second alarm indicates that the system has detected that the front door has been propped open.

Now let's fictionalize that the system detects the front door is closed, and alarm point transitions to the normal state. The next time the client polls the `Watch` the alarm would show up in the feed list (along with any additional changes or new alarms not shown here):

```xml
<obj is="obix:WatchOut">
  <list names="values">
    <feed href="/alarms/feed" of="obix:Alarm">
      <obj href="/alarmdb/527" is="obix:StatefulAlarm obix:PointAlarm obix:Alarm">
        <ref name="source" href="/doors/frontDoor"/>
        <abstime name="timestamp" val="2006-05-18T14:18:00Z"/>
        <abstime name="normalTimestamp" null="true"/>
        <real name="alarmValue" val="true"/>
      </obj>
    </feed>
  </list>
</obj>
```

## Security

Security is a broad topic, that covers many issues. Some of the main concepts are listed below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Authentication</th>
<th>Verifying a user (client) is who they claim to be</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Encryption</td>
<td>Protecting OBIX documents from viewing by unauthorized entities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permissions</td>
<td>Checking a user's permissions before granting access to read/write Objects or invoke operations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>User Management</td>
<td>Managing user accounts and permissions levels</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Table 16-1 Authentication | verifying a user (client) is who he says he is; |
| Encryption | protecting OBIX documents from prying eyes; |
| Permissions | checking a user's permissions before granting access to read/write objects or invoke operations; |
| User Management | managing user accounts and permissions levels; |

The basic philosophy of eOBIX is to leave these issues outside of the specification. Authentication and encryption is left as a protocol binding issue. Privileges and user management is left as a vendor implementation issue. Although it is entirely possible to define a publicly exposed user management model through eOBIX, this specification does not define any standard eContracts for user management.

### 15.16.1 Error Handling

It is expected that an eOBIX server will perform authentication and utilize those user credentials for checking permissions before processing read, write, and invoke requests. As a general rule, servers SHOULD return `err` with the `obix:PermissionErr eContract` to indicate a client lacks the permission to perform a request. In particularly sensitive applications, a server may instead choose to return `BadUriErr` so that an untrustworthy client is unaware that a specific object even exists.

### 15.216.2 Permission-based Degradation

Servers SHOULD strive to present their object model to a client based on the privileges available to the client. This behavior is called permission based degradation. The following rules summarize effective permission based degradation:

1. If an `eObject` cannot be read, then it SHOULD NOT be discoverable through `eObjects` which are available.
2. Servers SHOULD attempt to group standard `eContracts` within the same privilege level – for example don’t split `obix:History`’s `start` and `end` into two different security levels such that a client might be able to read `start`, and not `end`.
3. Servers SHOULD NOT include a `cContract` in an `eObject`’s `is` attribute if the `cContract`’s children are not readable to the client.
4. If an `eObject` isn’t writable, then the `writable` attribute SHOULD be set to false (either explicitly or through a `eContract` default).
5. If an `op` inherited from a visible `eContract` cannot be invoked, then the server SHOULD set the `null` attribute to true to disable it.
16.17 Conformance

An implementation is conformant with this specification if it satisfies all of the MUST and REQUIRED level requirements defined herein for the functions implemented. Normative text within this specification takes precedence over normative outlines, which in turn take precedence over the XML Schema and WSDL descriptions, which in turn take precedence over examples.

An implementation is a conforming oOBIX Server if it meets the conditions described in Section 17.1. An implementation is a conforming oOBIX Client if it meets the conditions described in Section 17.2. An implementation is a conforming oOBIX Server and a conforming oOBIX Client if it meets the conditions of both Section 17.1 and Section 17.2.

16.1.17.1 Conditions for a Conforming oOBIX Server

An implementation conforms to this specification as an oOBIX Server if it meets the conditions described in the following subsections. oOBIX servers MUST implement the oOBIX Lobby oObject.

16.1.17.1.1 Lobby

A conforming oOBIX server MUST meet the following conditions to satisfy the Lobby Conformance Clause:

1. oOBIX Servers MUST have an accessible oObject which implements the obix:Lobby eContract.
2. The Lobby MUST provide a <ref> to an oObject which implements the obix:About eContract.
3. The Lobby MUST provide a <ref> to an oObject which implements the obix:WatchService eContract.
4. The Lobby MUST provide an <op> to invoke batch operations using the obix:BatchIn and obix:BatchOut eContracts.
5. The Lobby MUST provide a list of the encodings supported.
6. The Lobby MUST provide a list of the bindings supported.

16.1.17.1.2 Bindings

An implementation MUST support one of the bindings defined in the companion specifications to this specification that describe oOBIX Bindings.

16.1.17.1.3 Encodings

An implementation MUST support one of the encodings defined in the companion specification OBIX Encodings. An implementation SHOULD support the XML encoding, as this encoding is used by the majority of oOBIX implementations. An implementation MUST support negotiation of the encoding to be used with a client according to the mechanism defined for the specific binding used.

An implementation MUST return values according to the rules defined in Section 4. For example, an implementation MUST encode bool oObjects' val attribute using the literals "true" and "false" only.

16.1.17.1.4 Contracts

An implementation MUST flatten eContract hierarchies when reporting them in an oOBIX document, according to Section 7.6.16.
16.217.2 Conditions for a Conforming eOBIX Client

An implementation conforms to this specification as an eOBIX Client if it meets the conditions described in the following subsections.

16.2.17.2.1 Encoding

An implementation MUST support one of the encodings defined in this specification. An implementation SHOULD support the XML encoding, as this encoding is used by the majority of eOBIX implementations. An implementation MUST support negotiation of which encoding to use in communicating with an eOBIX server using the mechanism defined for the binding being used.

17.2.2 Naming
16.2.2.1 Naming

An implementation MUST be able to interpret and navigate URI schemes according to the general rules described in section 1.15.3. An implementation SHOULD be able to interpret and navigate HTTP URIs, as this is used by the majority of oBIX Server implementations.

16.2.3.2.3 Contracts

An implementation MUST be able to consume and use oBIX contracts defined by oBIX Server implementations with which it interacts.
Appendix A. Acknowledgments

The following individuals have participated in the creation of this specification and are gratefully acknowledged:

Participants:

- Ron Ambrosio, IBM
- Brad Benson, Trane
- Ron Bernstein, LonMark International*
- Ludo Bertsch, Continental Automated Buildings Association (CABA)
- Chris Bogen, US Department of Defense
- Rich Blomseth, Echelon Corporation
- Anto Budiardjo, Clasma Events, Inc.
- Jochen Burkhardt, IBM
- JungIn Choi, Kyungwon University
- David Clute, Cisco Systems, Inc.*
- Toby Considine, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
- William Cox, Individual
- Robert Dolin, Echelon Corporation
- Marek Dziedzic, Treasury Board of Canada, Secretariat
- Brian Frank, SkyFoundry
- Craig Gemmill, Tridium, Inc.
- Matthew Giannini, Tridium, Inc.
- Harald Hofstätter, Institute of Computer Aided Automation
- Markus Jung, Institute of Computer Aided Automation
- Markus Jung, Vienna University of Technology
- Christopher Kelly, Cisco Systems
- Wonsuk Ko, Kyungwon University
- Perry Krol, TIBCO Software Inc.
- Corey Leong, Individual
- Ulf Magnusson, Schneider Electric
- Brian Meyers, Trane
- Jeremy Roberts, LonMark International
- Thorsten Roggendorf, Echelon Corporation
- Anno Scholten, Individual
- John Sublett, Tridium, Inc.
- Dave Uden, Trane
- Ron Zimmer, Continental Automated Buildings Association (CABA)*
- Robert Zach, Institute of Computer Aided Automation
- Rob Zivney, Hirsch Electronics Corporation
- Markus Jung, Vienna University of Technology
## Appendix B. Revision History

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<td>14 Jan 03</td>
<td>Brian Frank</td>
<td>Initial version</td>
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<td>11 July 2013</td>
<td>Paul Knight</td>
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<td>16 Sep 2013</td>
<td>Craig Gemmill</td>
<td>Addressed some comments from PR01: Section 4 rework</td>
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<td>Craig Gemmill</td>
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<td>4 Dec 2013</td>
<td>Craig Gemmill</td>
<td>WebSockets support for Watches</td>
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<td>13 Dec 2013</td>
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<td>intermediate revision</td>
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<td>17 Dec 2013</td>
<td>Craig Gemmill</td>
<td>More cleanup from JIRA, general Localization added</td>
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<tr>
<td>18 Dec 2013</td>
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<td>Replaced UML diagram</td>
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<tr>
<td>19 Dec 2013</td>
<td>Toby Considine</td>
<td>Minor error in Conformance, added bindings to conformance, swapped UML diagram</td>
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