

(Compressed) GUIDs

Original question by VA

- **One of our objectives is to simplify rather than complicate the use of GUIDs.**
- **The VA is planning to use a variety of locations, assets, and pick lists that will use unique identifiers. It is desirable to be consistent in the generation, storage, and display of the GUIDs across these pick lists and other identifiers.**

Why compressed GUIDs

- The original need for the compressed version (i.e. the one used by IFC) was a legitimate one reduce file transfer size and to conserve storage and memory use.
- However, given the current speed of data transfers and the cost of storage and memory, that is no longer a driving reason and should not be a justification for taking on the added complexity.
- That leads to the question as to which format to choose.
- Since generating a compressed GUID requires the two step process of first generating the UUID GUID, then compressing it to the IFC-GUID, it only seems to make sense to come together around the UUID GUID.

Respons by Peter Muigg

- Originally made the proposal to "compress" the GUID to save space in an IFC file
- But it was actually only intended for this very purpose - to save space in an ASCII file, but not to use this form as the GUID as a key in a database.
- As we are now switching to a new database this would be the perfect moment to also to eliminate the compressed version of the GUID and switch to the "standard representation" of it, because this might also help eliminate an obstacle for people to use the bSDD.
- The compressed version of the GUID is never used as a key in the IFC model so I do not see that any changes in the IFC model are necessary.

Addition by Tim Chipman

- IFC uses GUIDs for IfcRoot-based object, as those are designed to be authored independently and merged over time.
- It does not use GUIDs for other objects that don't need to be directly retrieved and/or are already qualified by some other identifier
- However, if people are adding/removing/renaming the metadata behind such information granularly in a disconnected environment (e.g. IfcPropertyTemplate), then there is a need.
- Changing the format of IfcGloballyUniqueId in IFC would break most existing applications when reading ".ifc" format from a file or internet communication, however applications are free to display, store, or transform such data as needed - there is no reason why a spreadsheet or database would need to use the IfcGloballyUniqueId format.

Resolution by bSDD Product Room

- **Resolution from product room:**
- **bSDD TWG 2013 Munich 3**
- **After discussion on the subject of GUIDs TWG came to the conclusion a detailed description has to be written on how GUIDs are set up and can be used.**
- **IFC people need to be invited on the GUID discussion on how implementation is done and view on possible future and consequences.**
- **Conclusion was to stay with the current solution. Further discussion within bSI. Item needs to be put on the agenda of ITM TechCom.**

Next Steps

- **Need for resolution by ITM to move discussion forward.**