

those imported from other operating systems, but will at least be able to keep them when transferring data.

Higher-level support is still subject to broad discussion about which semantic level to achieve. Also, the proposed higher-level xattr transformations do not consider the possible lack of synchronization between the original metadata and their converted form attached to the same file, i.e., a file could end up with both a BEOS:TYPE and user.mime_type xattr with different values.

A centralized registry, like the one used for MIME types (IANA), should be designated to attribute vendor names into the uxa namespace, and mangling schemes should be publicly disclosed and agreed upon, through RFCs for example, to be successfully usable. Finally it is also unlikely that proprietary software vendors will ever conform to such a scheme without a strong standardization effort, but implementation by most OpenSource projects could help the process.

4. Conclusion

The purpose of this early work was to raise the concern about extended attributes interoperability, propose a possible solution using an idempotent mangling scheme of a common namespace allowing further processing at higher layers, and foster discussion between involved parties, possibly leading to a standardized document like an IETF Request For Comment, with vendors defining the global namespace mapping to their own filesystems and protocols. Both OpenSource and proprietary projects would benefit from standardized extended attribute interoperability schemes allowing platforms to maintain each other's metadata across file transfers, making them more useful. Additionally, applications would benefit from having a standardized view on existing foreign extended attributes.

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