

FIMA Functional Definition of IM Interoperability

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Two IM systems (System A and System B) are said to be mutually interoperable if:

- a) Users of System A must not be required to have System B's client application installed or register for an account on System B in order to exchange messages with users on System B.
- b) Users of System A must be able to see the presence of users on System B – and use that presence information to initiate an exchange of messages.
- c) The body of instant messages (in plain text) originating from a user of System A must be displayable, unaltered, within System B.
- d) The privacy of individual presence information on System A must remain under the control of that individual as that information moves between IM networks to System B..
- e) Changes in presence status and transmission of messages between Systems A and B must occur with sufficient speed such that there are little to no perceptible delivery delays.

Additional Key Concerns of FIMA members include:

- a) Users of both systems should have the ability to create a multi-party IM conversation comprised of users of either system.
- b) If both systems have “chat” (persistent, multi-user forum) functionality, they should be able to participate on channels hosted on each other's systems.
- c) Rich content (i.e. attachments, fonts, etc.) should be displayed similarly on both Systems, regardless of which system or IM client they originated from.
- d) Presence information or message which moves between IM systems should be encryptable such that they can only be read by the intended recipient and/or any duly recognized administrative authority.
- e) Attachments to messages which move between IM Systems should be scannable for content intended to attack or compromise computer operations or security.
- f) The identity of the originator of an instant message should be preserved and traceable to a bona fide individual as messages move across networks.
- g) An enterprise should be able to create and separately administer any number of unique namespaces.
- h) An enterprise should be able to specify which of its namespaces are externally discoverable and resolvable.
- i) An enterprise should be able to control the policies under which information within any namespace it administers may be accessed.
- j) Presence information and messages should be globally routable and locally blockable across different IM Systems.
- k) Appropriately authorized users of System A should be able to browse/search System B's directory and add System B users to their buddy lists.