
Subject: Customer FAQ (Attention: hard stuff!)

Posted by on Mon, 26 Mar 2012 16:28:53 GMT

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Do we have a FAQ area? We have one at the Wiki main page (<http://wiki.railml.org/index.php?title=Hauptseite#FAQ>) but it seems to be intended for the developer. Do we want to have one also for the customer at www.railml.org?

It's only that I've had some questions of that kind (see below). I don't know whether it's worth making a FAQ at www.railml.org. Maybe the problem with a general FAQ is that most of the questions of the customers refer to a certain software. Maybe, if we get a more 'timeless' statement at the forum, we could move it to the FAQ.

I translate my answers also that nobody thinks this is a quiz game. (I have also the German questions and answers but... they are hard enough in English.)

Q: In the scheme file, it is written `<?xml version="1.0" encoding="UTF-8"?>`. This means that it is RailML version 1.0, right?

A: No. That is a pure XML line, RailML only starts one line further down.. It means that it is XML 1.0 and as far as I know there is no other XML version.

Q: Can you tell me where in the scheme can I find the RailML version?

A: Yes. There are several places where one can recognise that it is RailML 2.0 - but unfortunately very indirectly only.

(1) Officially (by XML) this follows from `"xsi:schemaLocation='http://www.railml.org/schemas/2009 railml.xsd'"` where you indeed will have to know that 2.0 belongs to 2009 - if it would be 2.1 there would be written "2011".

(3) In the second line `<railml version='2.0'...>` if this attribute is written there (which is not mandatory by RailML) and the writing software keeps to the rule to put the release version there.

(2) There are also the values `infrastructure version='1.1.99'`
`rollingstock version='2.0'`
`timetable version='2.0'`
where the real RailML versions are written. But as you can see they are different for the sub-schemes (infrastructure was then not yet at 2.0).

(4) If the RailML files uses the DC metadata as recommended, in the field
<dc:format>2.0.2</dc:format>

This is actually the scheme instance version which shall be a sub-version of (or identical to) the RailML release version. So, normally it should start with the expected RailML version.

There are some more questions which are candidates for such a user-FAQ. I simply translate the questions here only. (It's not a tombola - you can win nothing if you know the answers. Well, ok, you can win an entrance ticket to the next RailML meeting.)

It's only to get an impression about which kind of questions we should talk about:

- What is the advantage of a RailML interface compared with VDV451/452 interface? Why should I use RailML?

- After ordering the slots for my trains at DB Netz via their TPN, I still have to have a second interface to publish my trains (e. g. into HAFAS) because the TPN format of DB Netz does not support train coupling and sharing. Is RailML usable for that?

- I've got a xml file from DB Netz about timetable changes (Fplo, ZvF). It looks like a RailML file (because it starts with the same line). Why can't I use it with my RailML interface?

- Is RailML compatible with Pathfinder?

Well, I stop here. We will get bloody eyes if I wouldn't. However this FAQ will do, he must be tough.

;-)

With best regards,
Dirk.
