

Legix.info Repository

Applying Akoma Ntoso to California Legislation

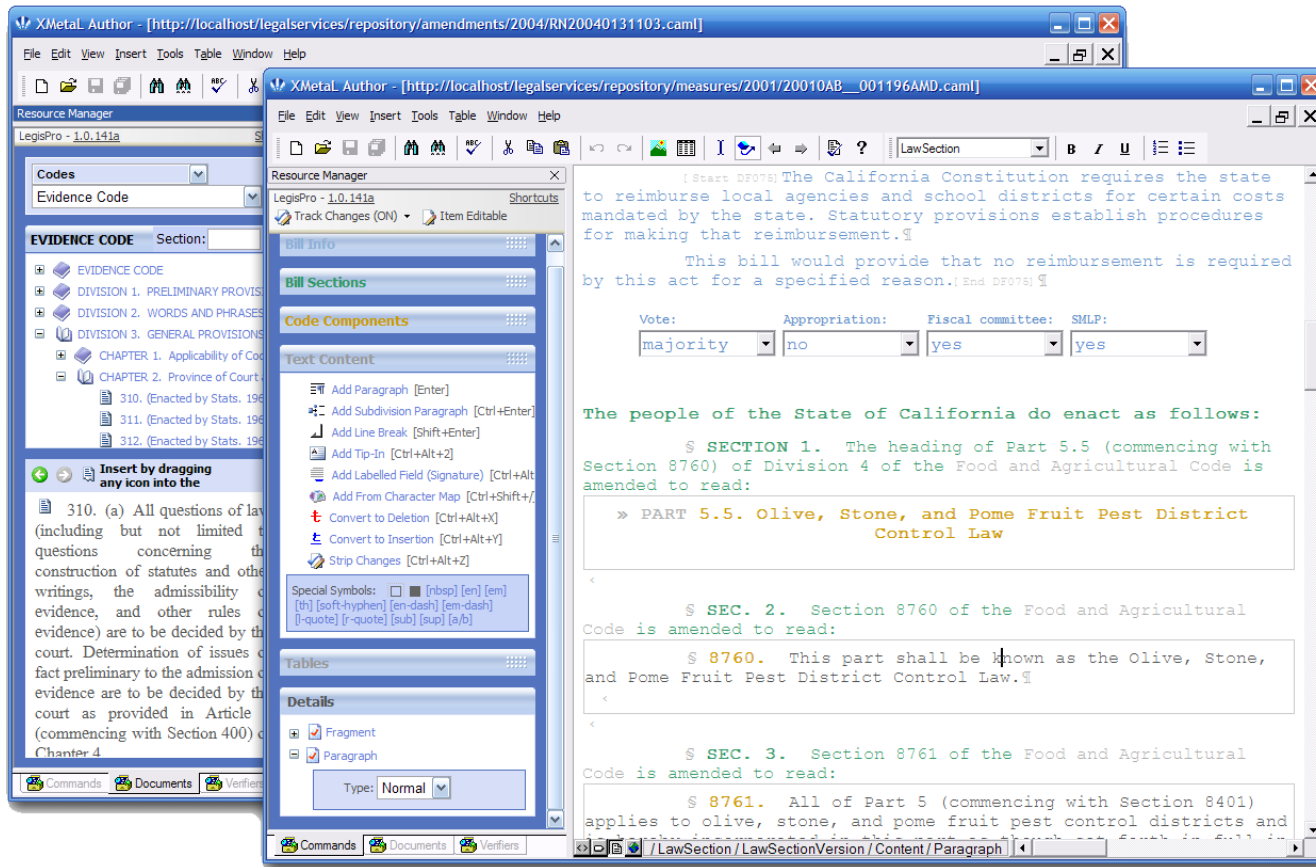
Grant Vergottini - Xcential Group
Sept 15, 2012

A Bit about Me

- ▶ **Background in Computer Aided Engineering**
 - ▶ Design and Product Data Management
 - ▶ Workflow Systems
- ▶ **Legal Informatics since 2001**
 - ▶ Designed the schema for California's Legislature
 - ▶ Designed and built the California Bill Drafting Tool
 - ▶ Designed and built the LegisWeb.com Bill Tracking Website
 - ▶ Xcential also built the conversion tools and publishing system used by California



LegisPro – XML Bill Drafting



LegisWeb.com – Bill Tracking

The screenshot displays the LegisWeb.com dashboard for the 2011-12 session. The interface is organized into several sections:

- Navigation:** Includes 'Explore' with links for Measures, Statutes, Codes, Video, and News. A 'Filter Tracked Bills' sidebar on the left offers various filters like 'Recent Events' (Introduced, Amended, Vetoed, etc.) and 'Assigned' categories.
- Search and Filter:** A search bar at the top allows filtering by 'bill names'. A 'Filter' dropdown is set to 'None'.
- Bill List:** A table lists tracked bills with columns for Bill Number, Status, Last Update, Author, and Topic/Subject. Bills are color-coded by status: green for active, yellow for pending, and grey for inactive.
- Bill Details:** Each bill entry provides a summary of its legislative history, including assigned members, positions, and key actions. For example, AB 52 is highlighted in yellow, indicating it is active and has passed the Senate (SEN Third Reading - Item #139).
- Footer:** The bottom of the page shows a Windows taskbar with various application icons and a system clock indicating 3:21 PM on 9/1/2011.

CAML & SLIM

▶ First Generation – CAML

- ▶ In use by the California Legislature since 2004
- ▶ Built to accommodate the needs and limitations of the XMetaL XML editor and Oracle's XDB database
- ▶ Very specialized to California's data and process

▶ Second Generation – SLIM

- ▶ 1st Iteration – Simplified and Generalized CAML
- ▶ 2nd Iteration – Mature and used by LegisWeb.com
- ▶ 3rd Iteration – Being harmonized to provide a path to Akoma Ntoso



Similar Ideas Continents Away

- ▶ **Our CAML/SLIM model is very similar to Akoma Ntoso**
 - ▶ Similar metadata strategy
 - ▶ Similar referencing strategy using URNs and URLs
 - ▶ Similar versioning ideas
 - ▶ Similar amendment strategy
 - ▶ Similar incorporation of HTML for basic content
- ▶ **Consistency in thinking gives us an easy path to Akoma Ntoso**
- ▶ **Looking to Akoma Ntoso as a more universally accepted replacement/alternative to CAML/SLIM.**



California Legislation

- ▶ Very well defined processes
- ▶ All statutes were codified between 1920's and the 1950's
- ▶ Amendment process defined in the 1950's happens to work nicely with modern automation
 - ▶ All amendments specified to codes are very consistently specified
 - ▶ Entire levels of the codes can be added or repealed as a set, but never amended.
 - ▶ Amendments always applied to individual sections



California Legislation

- ▶ **Still there are difficulties**
 - ▶ Plenty of errors and/or inconsistencies
 - ▶ Duplicate numbers, varying numbering schemes, misplaced sections
 - ▶ Inconsistent specification of operational conditions
 - ▶ Statutes other than Codes
 - ▶ Areas of the law that have not been consolidated into Codes
 - ▶ Missing data
 - ▶ Earlier statutes are being translated now, but problem gets difficult prior to the late 1950s.



Applying Akoma Ntoso to CA

- ▶ Akoma Ntoso is a much broader and more ambitious initiative than is needed for California Legislation
- ▶ Nonetheless, the mapping is fairly straight forward
- ▶ Not clear how change tracking should be handled
- ▶ Some of the Legislative workflow implied by Akoma Ntoso is not public information in California



Applying Akoma Ntoso Elsewhere

▶ US Code

- ▶ US House of Representatives released prototype XML
 - ▶ Partial representation of US Code
- ▶ Akoma Ntoso translation of XML accomplished
- ▶ XSLT Transform - XML => SLIM => Akoma Ntoso

▶ Hong Kong Basic Law

- ▶ English and Traditional Chinese
- ▶ XSLT Transform – XML => SLIM => Akoma Ntoso

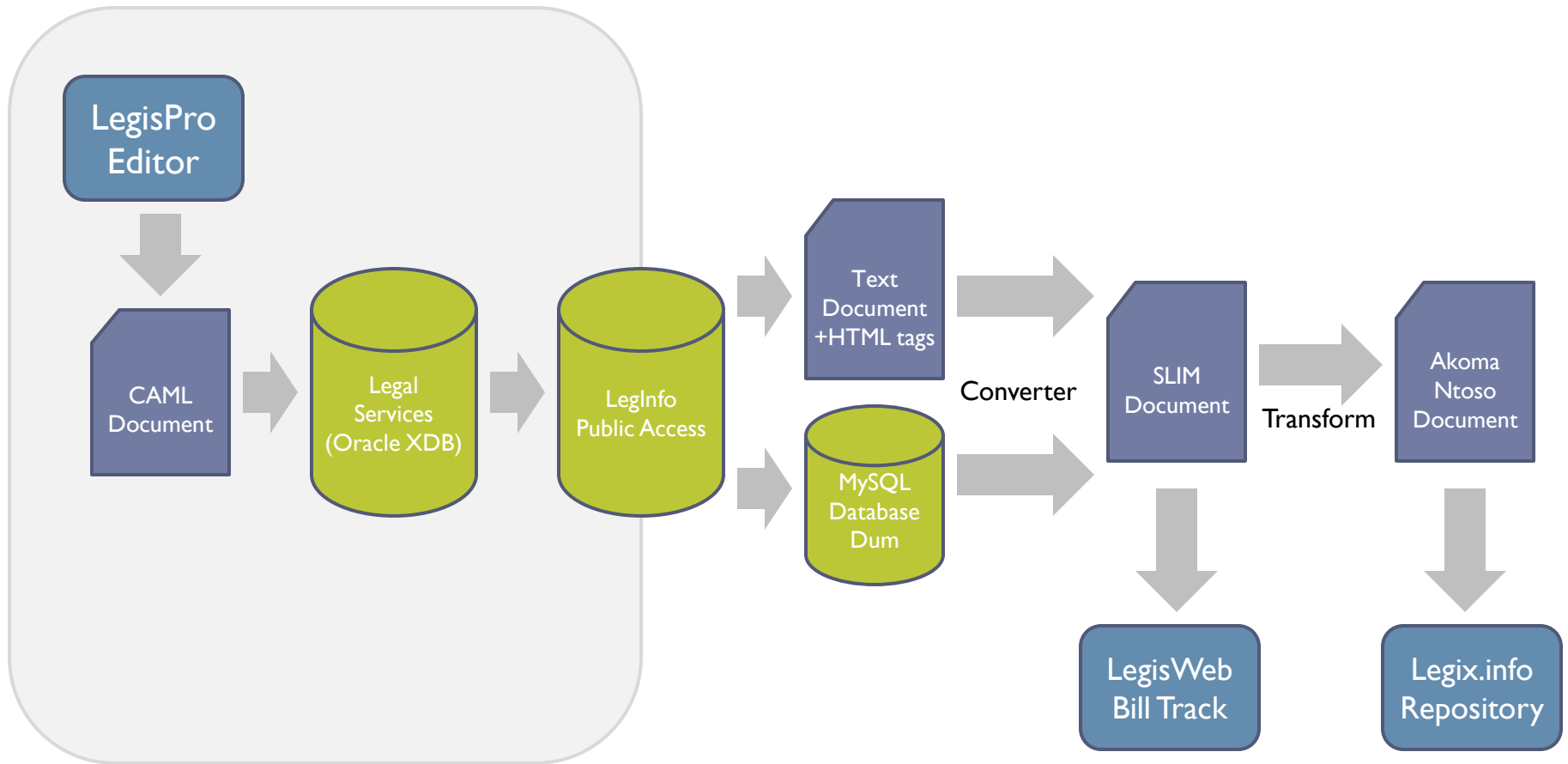


Akoma Ntoso Integration Status

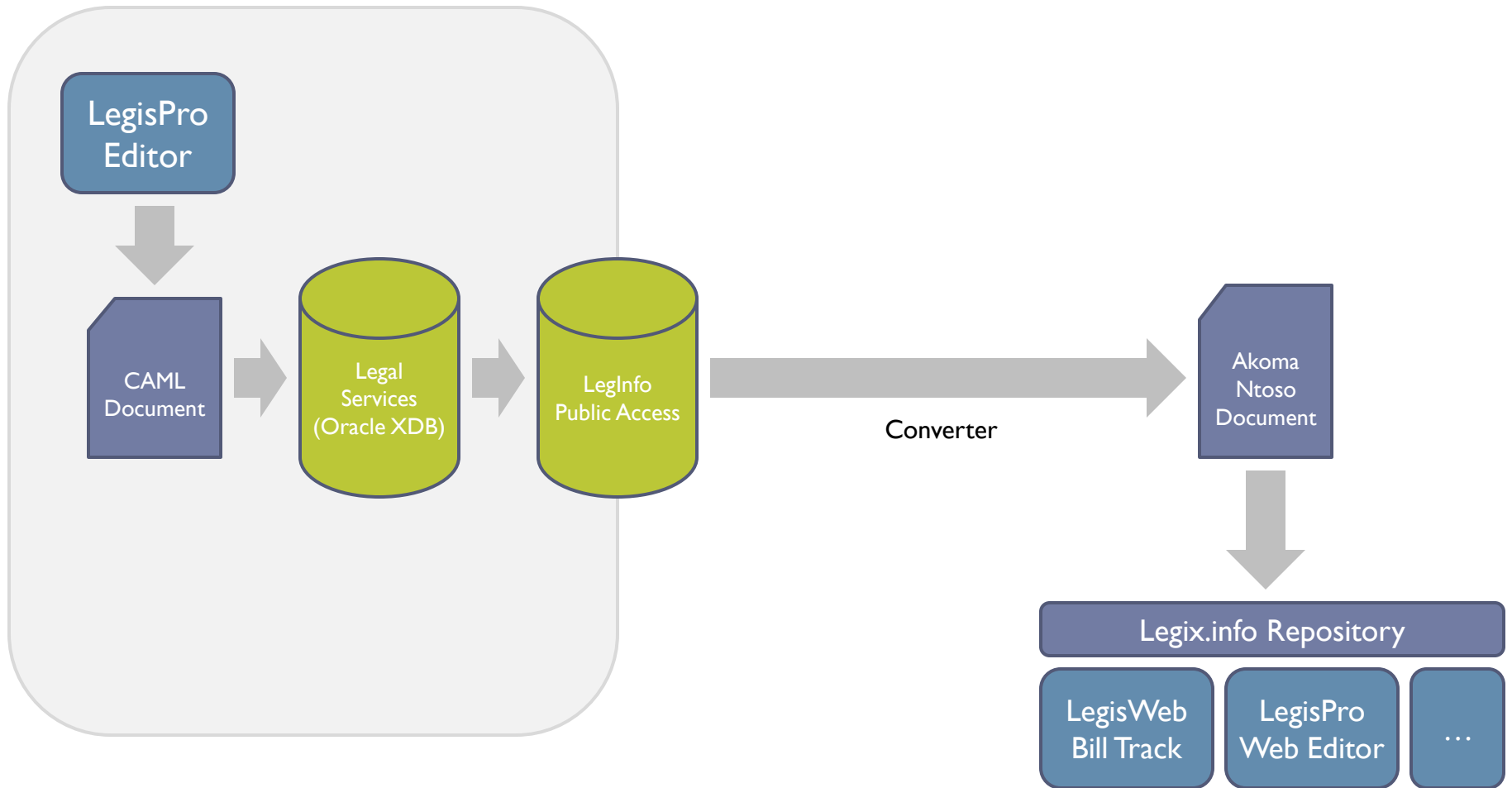
- ▶ 200,000+ documents available now!
 - ▶ Measure prototype available
 - ▶ Refinement to change tracking still needed
 - ▶ Referencing mechanism still needs harmonization
 - ▶ Identify mechanism still need harmonization
 - ▶ Interpretation of some areas still unclear
 - ▶ Statute prototype available
 - ▶ Code prototype in development
- ▶ Other documents (History, Votes, etc.)



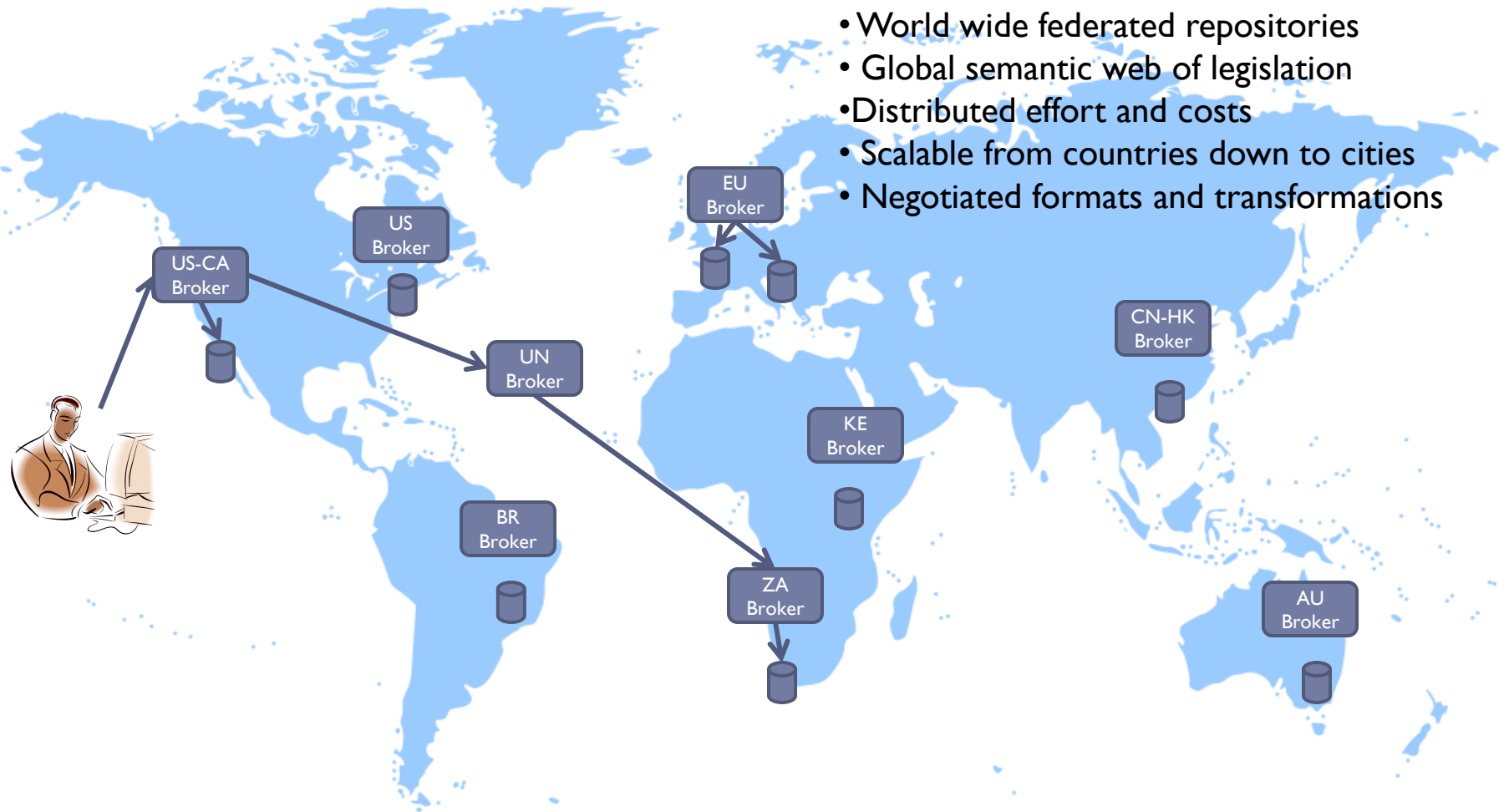
Current Conversion to Akoma Ntoso



Future Plans



Vision for the Future



LegisPro Web Editor

- ▶ **HTML5 Based XML Editor**
- ▶ **Designed around Akoma Ntoso**
 - ▶ Applicable to other XML models
- ▶ **Browser neutral**
 - ▶ Runs on latest versions of IE, Chrome, Firefox, and Safari
 - ▶ Opera possible but buggy
- ▶ **WebDAV repository**
- ▶ **Integration with Workflows**
- ▶ **Selected by Library of Congress in Chile**
 - ▶ Debate and Debate Record – Akoma Ntoso

