



# Common Vehicle Interface Initiative Community info – December

Version 1.2, Dec. 2020



***Is it time to discuss the implication of having a common language to describe **data** and **function** interaction between all automotive technology companies ?***

*Is it time to commit to selected technologies, such as **open W3C protocols**, to build interoperable solutions for vehicle data and service invocation ?*

***Is it finally time to define the industry-wide standard vehicle data model***

**...and then do the same for service APIs ?**

**After recognizing industry trends across many conferences, and after two OEM Roundtable discussions and W3C project activities, the prevailing answer to these questions is "YES".**

# Recent History



- In May of 2020, a number of companies initiated a conversation about the **Common Vehicle Interface Initiative (CVII)** in a panel discussion held at the GENIVI Virtual Tech Summit
- The initiative is answering the question:  
“Is it time to define *the* industry-wide standard vehicle data and service model, complemented by industry-wide standard data/service catalogs”?
- The idea of a **wide initiative** was based on a number of **industry trends**, a clear request for a similar activity from specific companies, and a natural **extension of collaboration already in place** between different industry organizations.



# Recent History (2)



After the positive response a number of activities were set in place:

- We defined the initiative to be *starting a conversation* beyond the boundaries of individual industry consortia, to build a fully global conversation around **standard interfaces, data models** and other similar agreements.
- A renewed collaboration has been established between **W3C** and **GENIVI** around important parts of the CVII initiative. W3C and GENIVI are as a first step *initiating the conversation*, and collecting feedback on how it may be best organized **across the whole industry**.
- Two individual **OEM round-table** meetings established the initial needs among car manufacturers.
- Strategic first-level discussions have been had with industry organizations involved in definitions of vehicle data catalogs and data transfer technologies, including **SENSORiS, OmniAir, eSync alliance**. A request to **JASPAR** and others is pending.
- After the OEM-only discussions, outreach to the whole industry supplier ecosystem is now under way with information, workshops and individual meetings.

# Ongoing and future Industry Collaboration



CVII is not just another *competitive* technology proposal to either accept or reject.

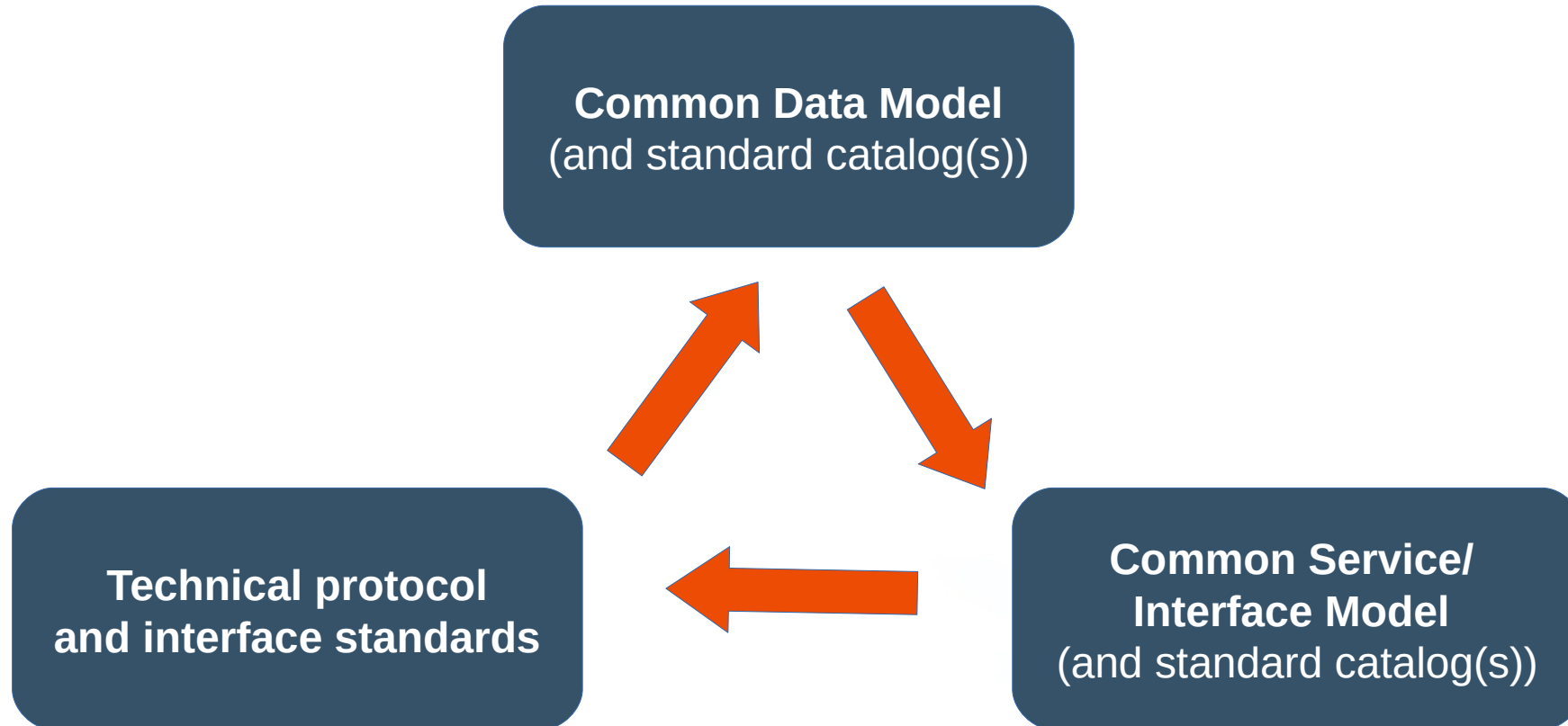
CVII is different:

- 1. The goal of CVII requires a *wide* industry collaboration**
- 2. Several projects, interest groups, and standards organizations should be part of a shared movement.**



# What is the Common Vehicle Interface Initiative?

*Deliverables:*



# Ongoing and future Industry Collaboration (continued)

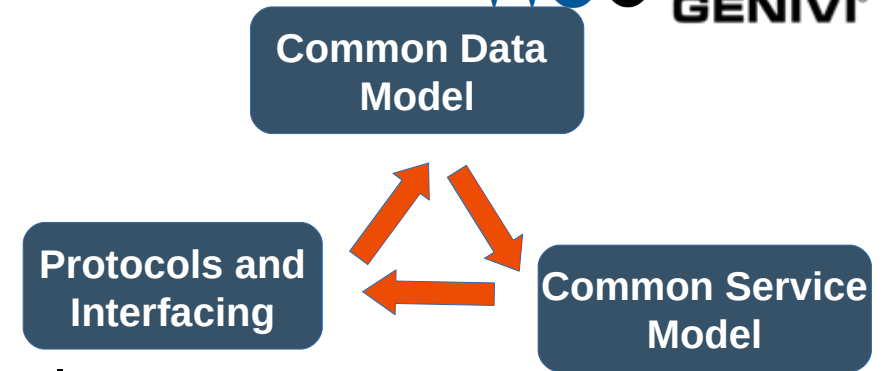


- **W3C and GENIVI** have a long history of producing industry-wide connectivity standards.
- GENIVI has produced technologies that connect to **AUTOSAR® Adaptive** platform, and has ongoing leadership-level discussion about future collaboration
- **W3C** has a strong liaison tradition, and the Automotive and Transportation groups are in contact with the working groups for **ISO TC 204 Intelligent Transportation Systems** and the working group for **ISO 27008 Extended Vehicle**
- The existing **GENIVI Cloud and Connected Services (CCS)** project studies and coordinates with previous work in the area of data standards, including several government funded projects (**Automat/CVIM**, **NEVADA** from **VDA**) and industry-initiatives (**SENSORiS**, **ISO 27008**)
- As part of the **CVII** initiative, contacts are in place with **SENSORiS**, **eSync Alliance** and **OmniAir**
- GENIVI & W3C recognizes that the execution of CVII needs to be widely connected.
- **CVII** thus includes outreach for collaboration with **additional industry partners** to form a single joint *initiative* to define a single data/service model & organize corresponding catalogs
- Starting with the workshop on October 29<sup>th</sup> we also hope to ramp up alignment discussions with **JASPAR** and **others**

# What is the Common Vehicle Interface Initiative?



- An *invitation* to the automotive industry to discuss fundamental standards-related issues that will accelerate development and business value
- A *continuation* of the existing movement towards “**A common data model**”, where **Vehicle Signal Specification (VSS)** is a driving example
- An *extension* to define a standard model also for services & interfaces
- A *collaboration* to define associated protocols (e.g. **W3C VISS v2.0**) and interfacing technologies to *make use of* the data/service model in real systems
- A *discussion* on *where* **standard interfaces** are most useful for *vehicle and cloud*
- A *movement* towards unification of **fragmented ecosystems** that inadequately address only *part of* the vehicle-data and services problem, and not in concert.
- The initiative includes *in-vehicle*: Standardized software components, and well-defined interfaces between ECUs, and *off-board*: Remotely-accessible vehicle functions in the car-to-cloud infrastructure



# Recap of OEM Roundtables



- First GENIVI/W3C Joint OEM Roundtable on Common Vehicle Interface Initiative (CVII) held on 16 July w/ 10 OEMs present
  - Intent was to launch an industry-wide, OEM-led dialog on the benefits of joint development of common vehicle data models, access protocols and standard interfaces in the **entire inter-connected system of vehicle plus cloud.**
  - Supportive statements for the initiative provided by **Ford, BMW and JLR**  
Additional support voiced by **Volvo Cars**
- Second OEM Roundtable was held 24 September
  - The RT raised questions about scoping the initiative to each OEM
  - A full document that delves into the main ideas of the initiative has been created, using the outcome from the roundtables.  
(to be distributed to all interested parties)
  - This document combines illustrations with open questions for OEM feedback
- The initiative content does NOT define specific potential business value, only general opportunities

# Background: Automotive development trends

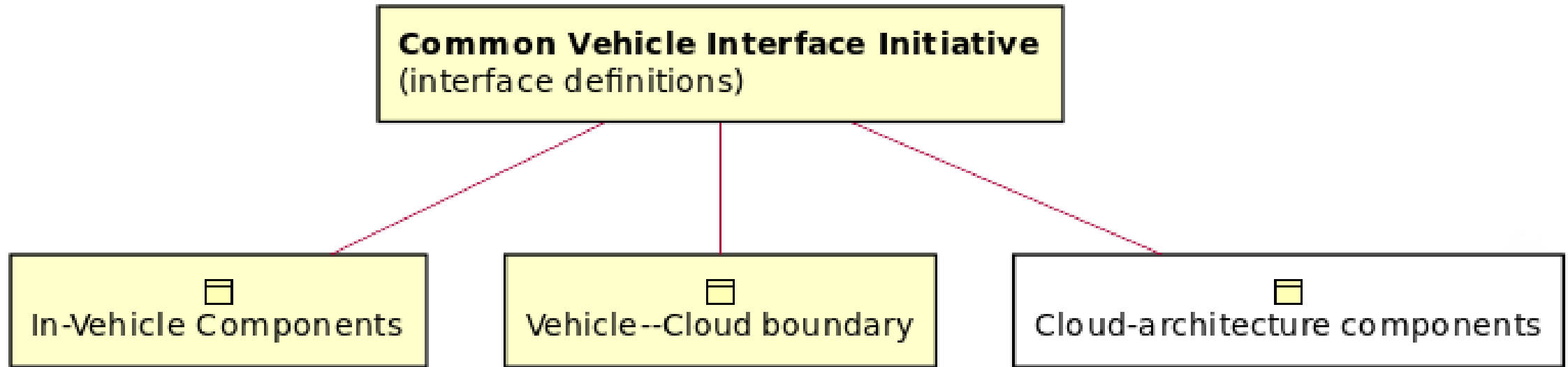


- The **software market place** = interoperable components are as important as ever!
- OEMs, Tier1s and platform providers need interoperable standards for data-model and APIs
- The **Service Oriented Architecture** trend enables very useful agility and flexibility, but does *not* eliminate integration work. Standard interfaces do.
- Consolidation trends (Virtualization / Central ECU / Compute ECU) might require diverse systems to work even more closely together
- Investment into **shared infrastructure** (Smart City, V2X) drives the need for standards
- We see the “**CVII**” desire clearly (multiple companies, multiple similar conference talks), but not coordinated yet
- Tech partners including *non-automotive* data and *cloud-oriented* companies (**Amazon**, **Microsoft** and **start-ups**) need interoperability standards for data and cloud solutions
- Business opportunities for vehicle data can only **reach its full potential** by leveraging common and scalable data standards.
- **We believe as a conclusion that CVII is a necessary conversation in our industry!**

# Detailed aspects and considerations

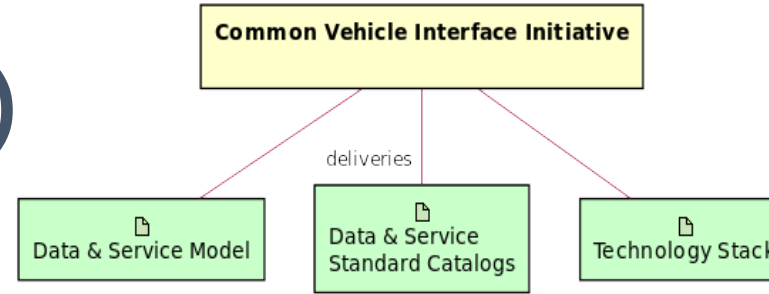


# CVII Scopes



- Ongoing discussion points:
  - Are all these aspects are in scope?
  - Which is the primary interest (if any) for each company?
  - Is it better to explore the decomposition of cloud-architecture, including standard APIs, as a separate topic?

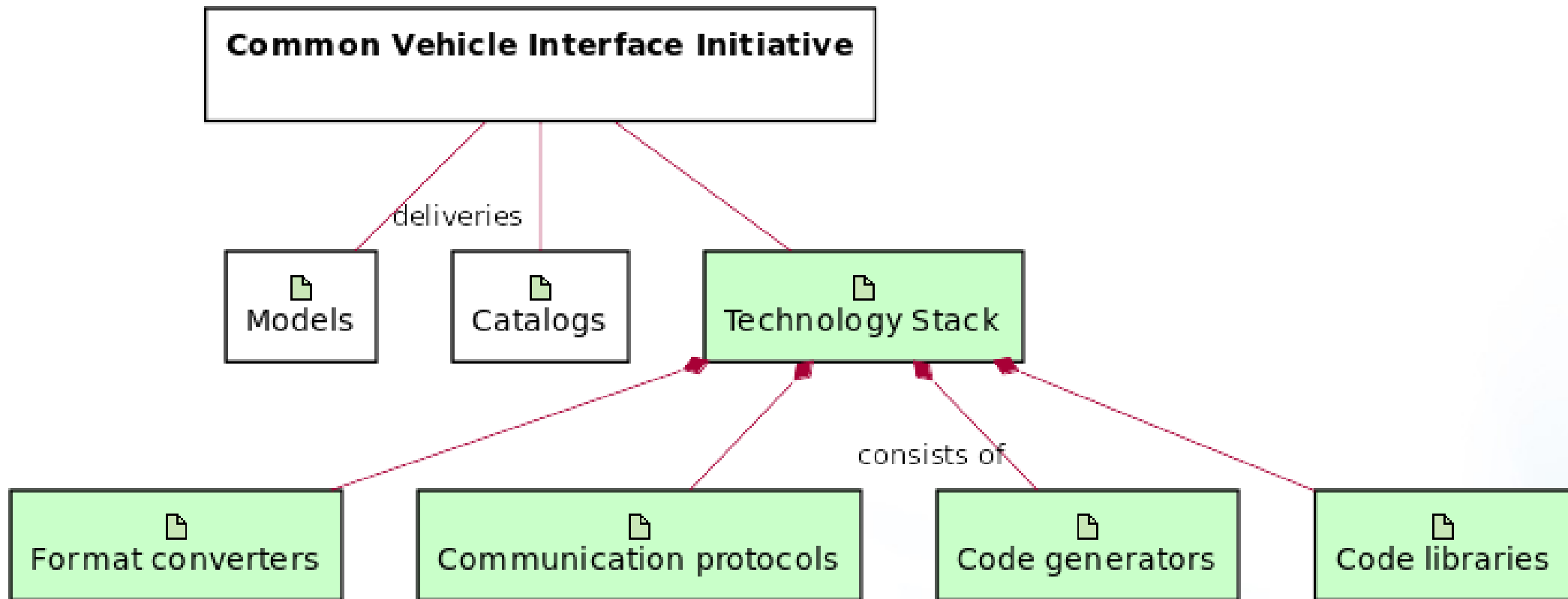
# Initial definition of terms (1)



- **Model** = Rules for how to write a data or service definition. The model defines the syntax/format of expressions and their meaning (expected behavior). It specifies a set of metadata that is required to be included in any conformant list of data/interfaces. It defines the available datatypes to be used, and other similar rules.
- **Catalog** = An actual instance – a list of definitions. It is a collection of specified data items and Service APIs. The definition must follow the rules of the Model.
  - Sidenote: The word **Taxonomy** has been used when focusing more on the hierarchical nature and organization of data or services. The **Catalog** is however our name generic name for any (model-conformant) “list” of items.\*\*
- **Standard Catalog** = A specific common and industry-shared catalog of items\*\* expected to be provided by all implementations
- **\*\*Items** may here refer to definitions of data, **or** definitions of services and interfaces (APIs). Both data and interfaces are *separately* in-scope for CVII activities.

# Initial definition of terms (2)

## – Technology stack examples



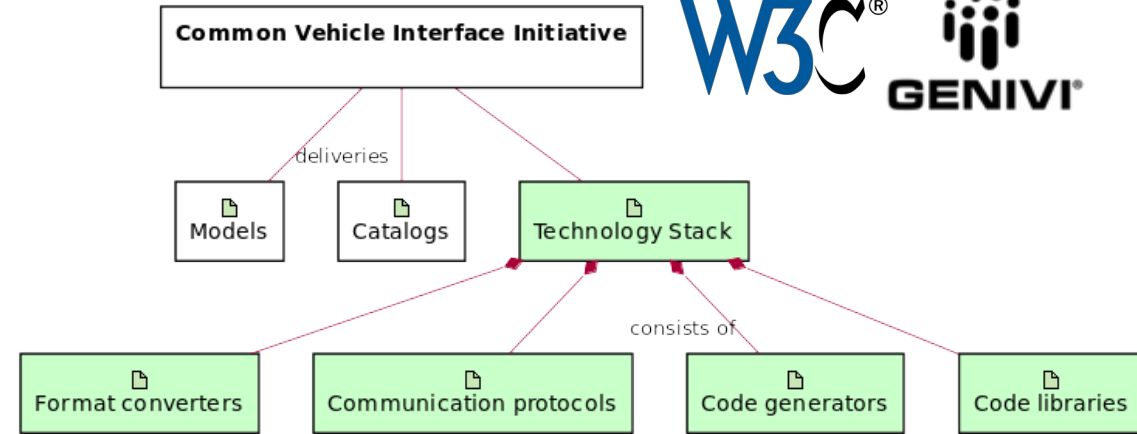
# Initial definition of terms (3)



By “Technology Stack”, we mean:

Any technology items involved in processing the agreed common data and interface models.

- This is primarily software definitions. Hardware is not explicitly excluded, but likely not the primary focus.
- It includes: **translators, bindings, tools, protocols, components, code-libraries** and other implementations.

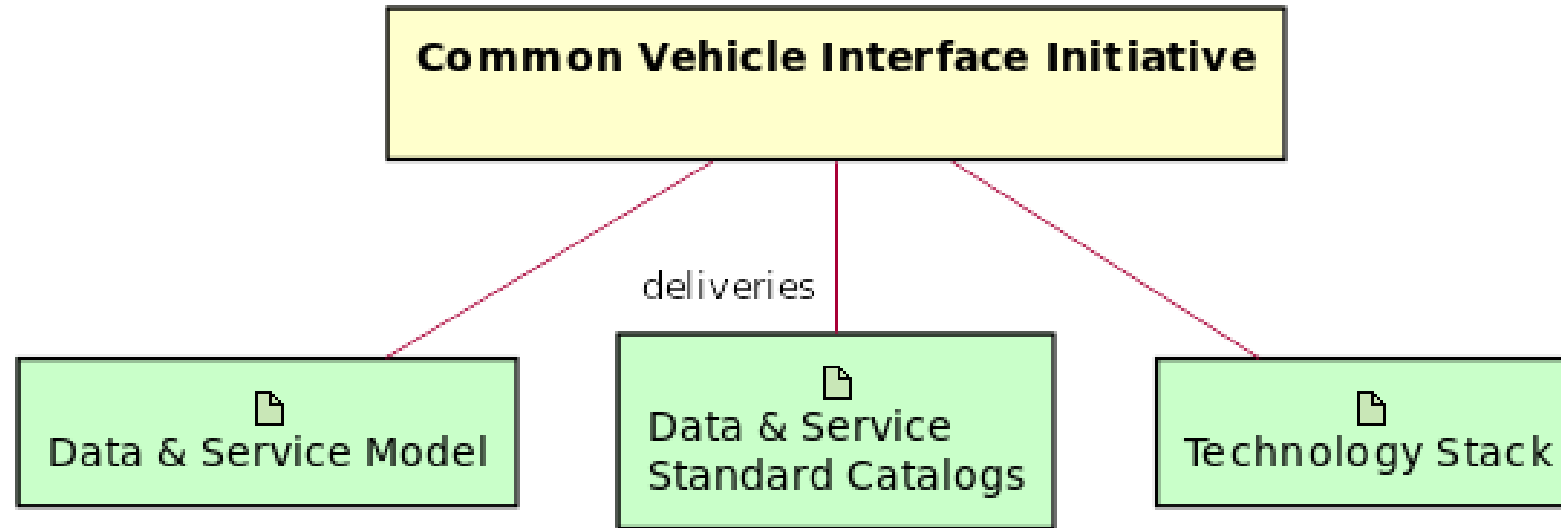


By definition of the CVII Technology Stack we mean:

To agree on chosen technologies, and/or to develop those technologies.

The deliverables that define the Technology Stack are either **specifications** or **implementations** (to be decided within the project)

# Outlook for CVII Deliverables



- The single **Model for data**
- The single **Model for Services/Interface**
- *At least one* standard **Catalog for Data**
- *At least one* standard **Catalog for Services**
- A **Technology Stack** definition (collection of software & standards)

# W3C development for the Technology Stack

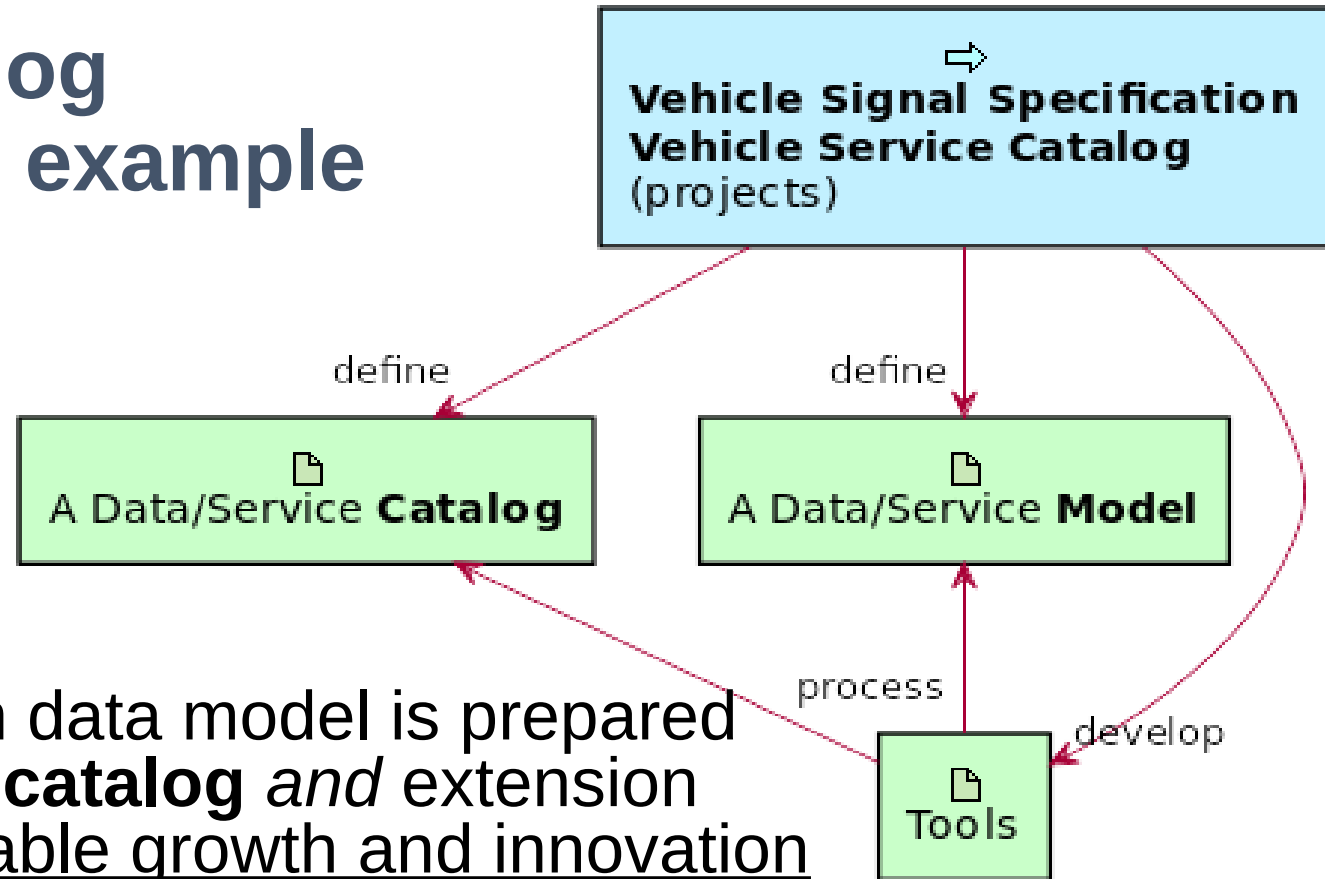
## Standard protocols and implementations



- **The W3C Automotive Working Group (WG)** develops web-protocols for accessing vehicle data and is working on an more capable successor version to **VISS**, which already distributes VSS-defined data in production vehicles.
- The WG is starting to define the equivalent protocols for remotely-accessible services (as defined by the common service model)
- **W3C Automotive and Transportation Business Group** fosters development of transportation standards and conventions that provide additional guidance for the CVII activities, such as:
  - Development of **VSS ontology (VSSo)** enabling AI processing potential
  - Promotion of established solutions from other fields (Web-of-Things, Spatial Data on the Web, ...)
  - Best practices for automotive applications



# Model(ling) vs. Catalog with VSS (& VSC) as example



- VSS\* as proposed common data model is prepared to support both a **standard catalog** and extension catalogs (proprietary) to enable growth and innovation
  - But the agreed upon **modelling rule set** (*aka metamodel*) shall always be common!
- A common model behind data is required for the *technology stack* to be shared, and for successful interconnection of parts across the whole software stack. The common model also guarantees that there is a common understanding among industry partners.

# Data description format conversions



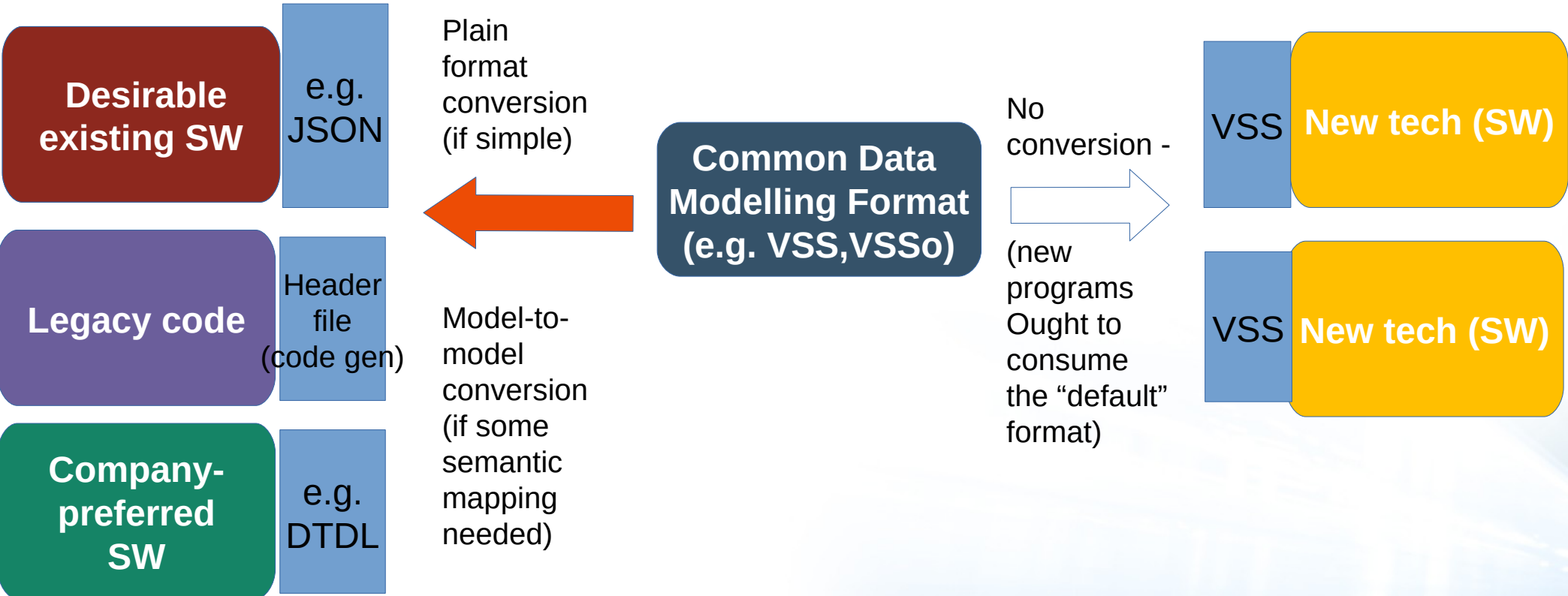
If there is a single model, when and why are conversions still needed?

Q: When and why do we convert from **the common data model** to other formats?

A1: To interface with existing technology that *consumes* a different format! (e.g. DTDL for Microsoft solutions)

A2: Some strong driver for a certain choice (e.g. Web technology vastly favors JSON)

A3: Use a more advanced model-language (e.g. ontology) → additional information may be added from other source



# How is this conversion strategy different from today's situation?

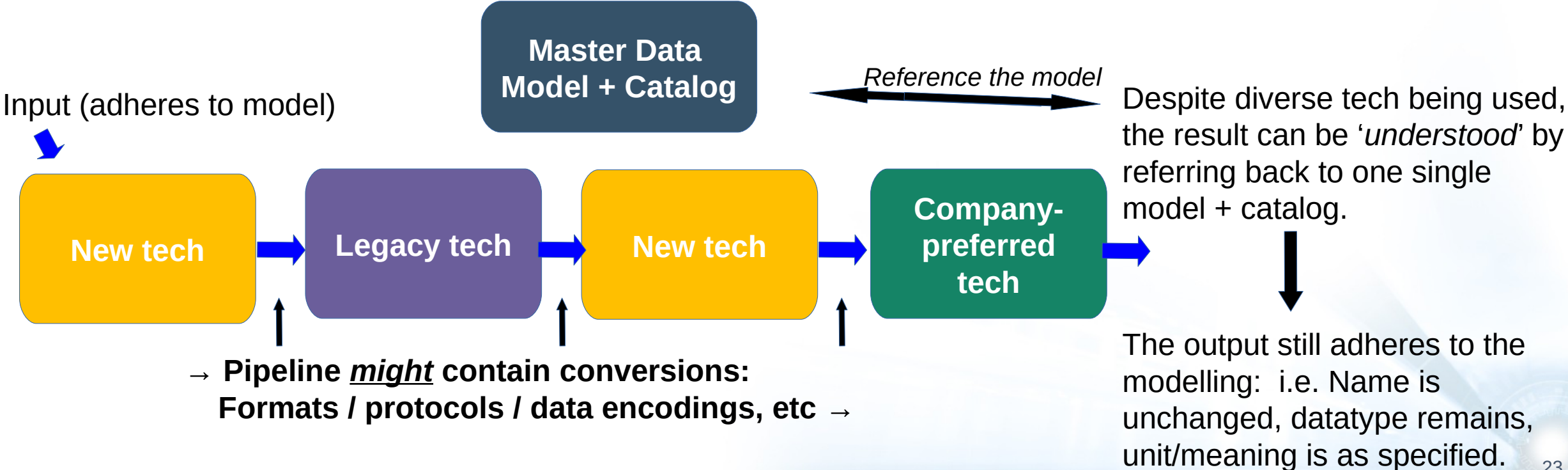


Q: Since we propose to sometimes convert to other formats/models, how is this different from the **conversion** of many different formats and models that is being done today?

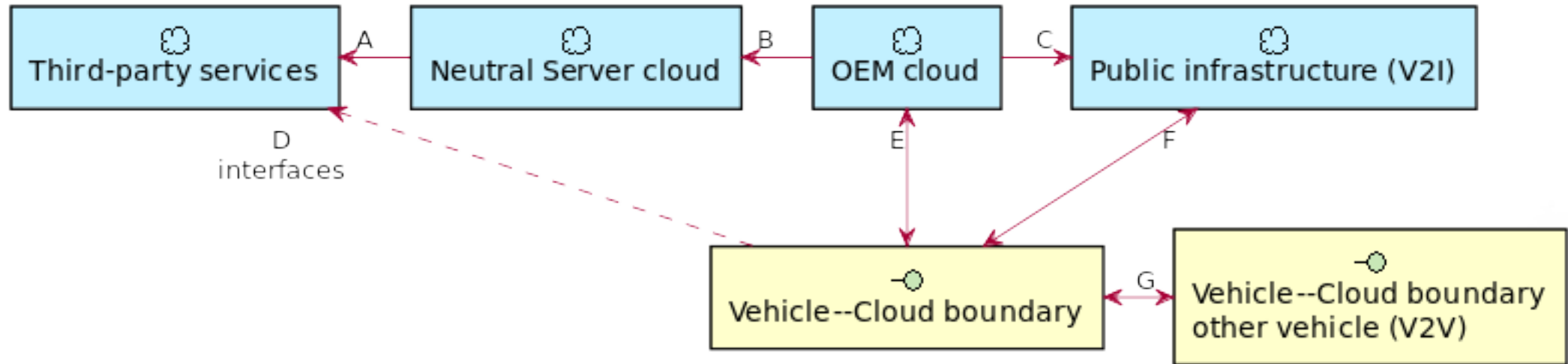
A: Current conversions are simply **ad-hoc integrations** of many fragmented technologies without a plan.

Whereas, agreeing on one *central* data model means there is an expectation and agreement that the whole technology stack **maintains** that meaning / behavior / semantics, even in the presence of some conversions.

*Meaning* shall be maintained throughout any technology pipeline, even if made up of diverse technology. Fundamental things like the actual data name, datatype, unit is *uniquely defined* when there is one central model.



# CVII – usage and impact (1)



“Typical” cloud architecture

Which interfaces are most appropriate for industry standards?

Which interfaces does your company want to focus on?

How do we best organize the responsibility between *projects & consortia*?

# What is VSS (Vehicle Signal Specification)?



- A mature (many years in development) data model & catalog which is used in vehicle production and W3C standards
- Fully open-licensed
- It is therefore a proposal for the industry-standard model deliverable from CVII
- VSS is a project that deals with **both**:
  - 1) **Model (Rule Set)** for vehicle data definition
  - 2) A proposed **Standard Catalog**
- It is important that the project separates model & catalog concepts, even if it has been driven under a single name (VSS) up to this point:
- These two aspects are individually usable for CVII, and of course open for adjustment
- The VSS data **model rule set** is *extensible* and *flexible* and has been shown to be able to model a very wide variety of data categories. Do not be fooled by the word “Signal” in its current name. VSS has evolved into a proposal for a widely applicable CVII common data model. In addition, where the expressiveness of VSS ends the VSC model can take over.
- (In the unlikely case you have never heard of VSS before, please seek further information beyond this single slide)

# What is VSC (Vehicle Service Catalog)?



- A new definition in the same spirit of VSS
- Services are collections of Interfaces. Interfaces (**APIs**) are definitions of functions/procedures that can be activated.
- VSC started with the intention of defining remotely-callable functions, a.k.a. **Remote Procedure Call\***, meaning services that vehicles expose to be activated from outside the vehicle (with the right security credentials of course) from a Cloud-connected infrastructure\*.
- However, VSC uses a full featured interface language - in other words it is recommended to model *any* interfaces at *any* level that is desired, including between subsystems inside the vehicle, or even between software components.
- VSC is using a VSS-like YAML-based format but retains Franca IDL compatibility
- **VSC is therefore also a proposal for the industry-standard model deliverable from CVII**
- Like VSS, **VSC** is *also* a project that within it deals with **both**:
  - 1) **Model** for vehicle services definition
  - 2) A proposed **Standard Catalog**

\*In traditional Computer Science literature the term RPC is often described as a function invocation between processes, inside of a single operating system, but there is no intention to be overly formal here.



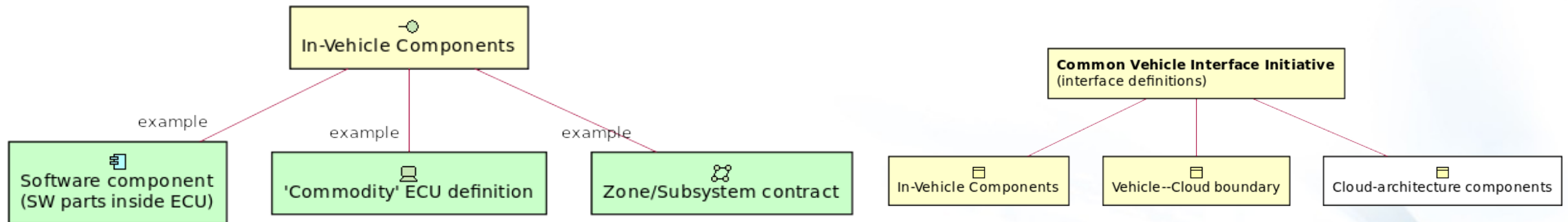


# CVII – usage and impact – inside vehicle

Most likely the whole electrical architecture behavior is already today defined using primarily two aspects: *(with different methods in each company)*

1. Provided/consumed “data”
2. Provided/consumed functions/interfaces/services.

What if a **common data and service model** is used for all system behavior? How could this not create huge synergies across the development ecosystem (OEM/Tier-1/Software House/Innovator/Tester/Cost Estimator/Analyst)?



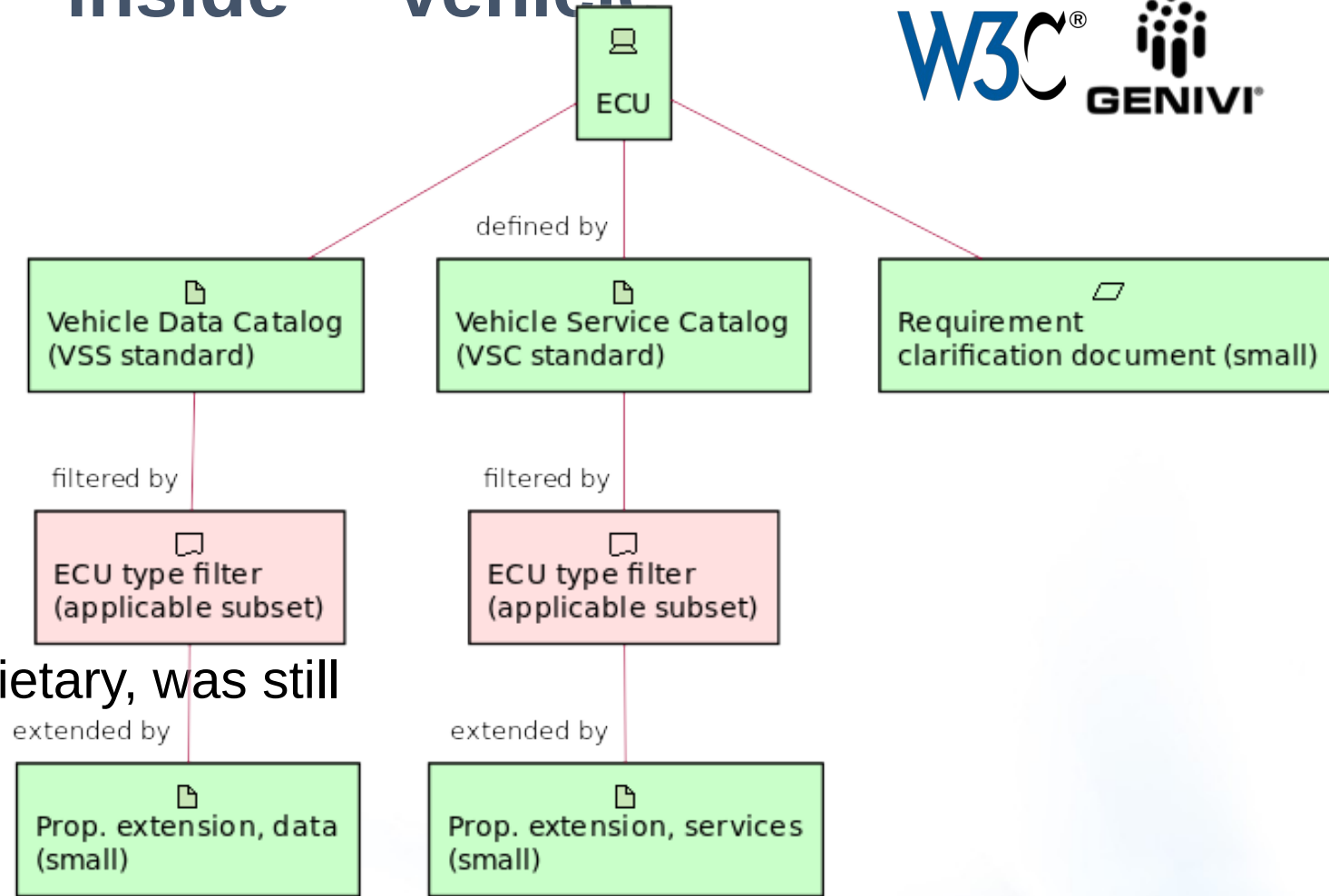
# CVII – usage and impact – inside vehicle



*Imagine a situation where ECUs were not specified using huge, unique, proprietary text documents.*

...instead by simply selecting **Data** and **Services** from a **Shared catalog** – thereby defining the major part of the ECU function directly from standards that all partners know well.

... and remaining data and functions, while proprietary, was still specified using the same common model principles.



How might it facilitate both the **quotation** and **development process** for both OEMs and Tier-1 suppliers? How might it enable an active market of Commercial Off-The-Shelf standard ECUs (a.k.a. **Commodity ECUs**)?

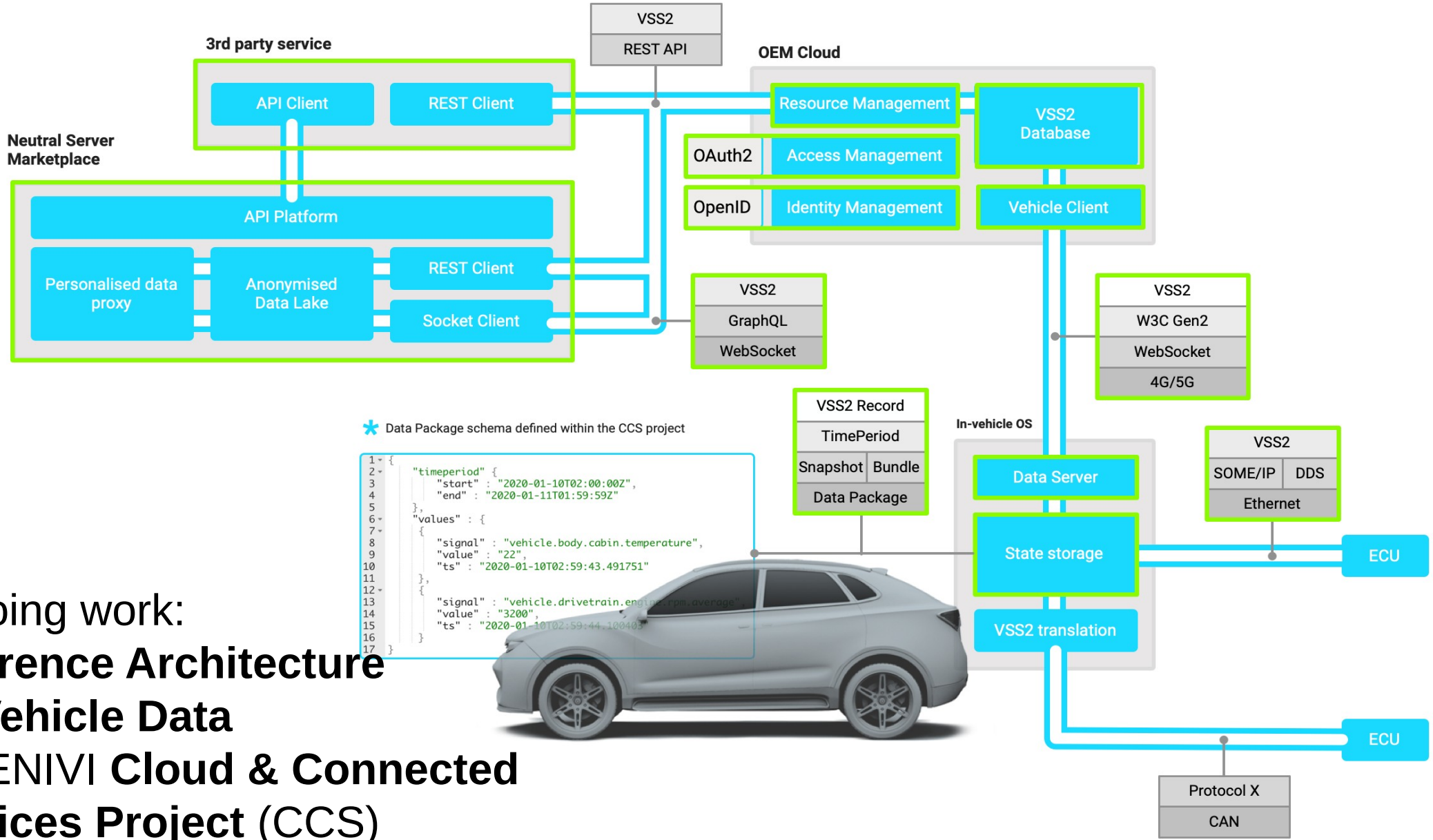
# Previous and upcoming activities



- **Tuesday 27 October, track starts 1600 CET**
  - 1) **OEM reactions:** “Why the Industry Needs a Common Vehicle Interface Initiative”
    - (Simultaneously) project introduction at **W3C TPAC** Plenary (non-automotive crowd)
  - **2) CVII Working Session** at GENIVI AMM, **Tuesday 27 October** →
- Future project organization, to be discussed at working session.
- Already ongoing related projects:
  - **W3C “VISS” protocol** (Data) – contact: [ted@w3.org](mailto:ted@w3.org), Tuesdays 2000 CET
  - **W3C “RPC”** (services) – contact: [ted@w3.org](mailto:ted@w3.org), Biweekly Mondays 1900 CET
  - **VSS data model & catalog project call**, Tuesdays 1930 CET  
– contact [daniel.dw.wilms@bmw.de](mailto:daniel.dw.wilms@bmw.de) or [gandersson@genivi.org](mailto:gandersson@genivi.org)
  - **GENIVI Cloud & Connected Services (CCS) project**, Mondays 1600 and Wednesdays 1700 CET
- New project-related calls (to be planned) – e.g. CVII all-hands, and specific topics
- Additional one-on-one interviews with companies
- Seminar / workshop in → **January/Feb 2021**
- General CVII questions: Email [gandersson@genivi.org](mailto:gandersson@genivi.org), [ted@w3.org](mailto:ted@w3.org) !
- GENIVI Membership questions: Email [scrumb@genivi.org](mailto:scrumb@genivi.org) !

“Backup slides”

(Associated details to fill in the blanks)



Ongoing work:  
**Reference Architecture  
for Vehicle Data  
in GENIVI Cloud & Connected  
Services Project (CCS)**

## [Related projects]



Another related project:

- Showing the usage potential of system-wide **common** data model (**VSS**) in the **specific** Android Automotive operating system.
- This has been designed and demonstrated within GENIVI's Android Automotive Special-Interest-Group (SIG)



# Vehicle Signal Specification (VSS)



- Developed for around 4-5 years already → v2 release in October
- Defines **model** (description syntax, rules, datatypes, semantics)
- Proposes a **standard catalog** (std. signals, organization, taxonomy (hierarchy))
- VSS fully adopted for the official **W3C** automotive data access protocols (REST/WebSocket)
- Exists: **Partial Technology stack** (software, translations, protocols, bindings)
- **VSSo** – ontology extension, could support big-data / Artificial Intelligence usage
- **VSS best choice(?) for a common standard:**
  - See next slide for reasons
- What about alternatives?
  - 1) Remember, the common VSS standard is proposed only as the source format and to define the associated rules and behavior.  
Translations to many other formats are simply part of a technology stack setup!
  - 2) What other alternatives? Which standards may apply for creating the *common data model*? (not a rhetorical question – do you know any good alternative we ought to consider?)

# Why is VSS (& VSC) the most appropriate “source format”?



- The selected format should be a plain-text, line-oriented format, like VSS:
  - Any text editor – **no special tooling** for editing! Uses well established “YAML” meta format
  - The line-oriented YAML format looks like any normal logical hierarchical document would look
  - Is **easy to read and write**, also by “non-programmers” ← **IMPORTANT FACTOR!**
  - A line-oriented format (YAML) promotes handling VSS like source code (version control in git repository, patches, change history, ...), better than syntax-oriented (JSON, XML, ...) which are less convenient.
  - YAML still has formal meaning, machine-processable input, and it is easy to write and extend tools.
- **VSS** is plain-text YAML, has *several years of development*, and includes:
  - Easy, obvious hierarchical model
  - Simple and recognizable data types
  - Reasonable modeling power for signals/data (e.g. multiple instantiation of a single definition)
- **VSS is extensible using VSS-layers.** Adds unique deployment information for different target environments. Adds your own (proprietary) signals and/or potentially local modification to common catalog if required
- VSS is only the **source** and **model** of our information
  - Already proven conversion to other formats (including JSON, GraphQL, XML, Franca IDL,... )
- **W3C** develops official protocols for web-access to data with **VSS as the primary data model**

# Vehicle Signal Specification (VSS) – Catalog



- The .id file has a flat list of signals – it now contains 1770 lines.
- But there is repetition in this signal tree where some subtrees are identical (same sensors on each wheel, each door, left/right pairs, etc.)
- The VSS definition is capable to create “instances”. In other words to define such repeated sections without explicitly repeating them.
- In addition to instances, the definition is in multiple files, and files can be “included” at multiple levels.
- *As yet another modeling feature*, the total data definition can *also* make use of *VSS-Layers* (described elsewhere).

# Vehicle Signal Specification (VSS) – example signals



Our most important discussion topic is the model, but also the catalog.  
Here are just a few examples from the proposed **standard catalog**:

Vehicle.VehicleIdentification.Brand  
Vehicle.VehicleIdentification.Model  
Vehicle.VehicleIdentification.Year

...

Vehicle.DriveTime  
Vehicle.TravelledDistance  
Vehicle.TripMeterReading

...

Vehicle.AmbientAirTemperature

...

Vehicle.AngularVelocity.Roll ,Pitch ,Yaw

...

Vehicle.RoofLoad , cargoVolume

Vehicle.Powertrain.PowerSource.CombustionEngine.Displacement  
....Configuration

....MaxTorque

....FuelType

Vehicle.Powertrain.PowerSource.ElectricMotor.MaxPower  
Vehicle.ADAS.CruiseControl.SpeedSet ,Error ...

...

Vehicle.ADAS.LaneDepartureDetection.Warning

Vehicle.Powertrain.Transmission.GearCount  
Vehicle.Powertrain.Transmission.DriveType

...  
Vehicle.Body.Horn.IsActive

...  
Vehicle.Body.Raindetection  
...Windshield.Heating.Status

Vehicle.Body.Lights.IsHighBeamOn  
Vehicle.Body.Lights.IsLeftIndicatorOn

...  
Vehicle.Cabin.RearShade.Switch  
Vehicle.Cabin.HVAC.Station.FanSpeed  
Vehicle.Cabin.Infotainment.Media.Volume  
Vehicle.Cabin.Infotainment.Navigation.DestinationSet  
Vehicle.Cabin.Sunroof.Position  
Vehicle.Cabin.Door.Window.Position ,ChildLock, ...

...  
Vehicle.Cabin.Door.Shade  
Vehicle.Cabin.Seat.Recline

...  
Vehicle.Chassis.AxleCount  
Vehicle.Chassis.SteeringWheel.Angle  
Vehicle.Chassis.Trailer.Connected  
Vehicle.OBD.PidsA  
Vehicle.OBD.Status.DTCCount  
Vehicle.OBD.FreezedTC

# Vehicle Signal Specification (VSS) – Simple File Syntax



Snippet from **ElectricMotor.vspec**:

```
# This is a comment, anything can be written here, just like in program code.
# Here follows a signal definition:
- MaxRegenPower:
  datatype: uint16
  type: attribute
  default: 0
  unit: kW
  description: Peak regen/brake power, in kilowatts, that motor(s) can generate.
- Motor.CoolantTemperature:
  datatype: int16
  type: sensor
  unit: celsius
  min: -50
  max: 200
  description: Motor coolant temperature (if applicable).
```

Sensor = readable, variable value

Attribute = “constant”

Actuator = writable

Note that due to the how the specification tree is created, the file can omit some part of the tree path.

whereas the above snippet *actually* defines these two items written with their fully qualified name format:

Vehicle.Powertrain.PowerSource.ElectricMotor.**MaxRegenPower**

Vehicle.Powertrain.PowerSource.ElectricMotor.**Motor.CoolantTemperature**

# Vehicle Signal Specification (VSS) – Layers



VSS tools can process and combine multiple definition files.

There is an explicit branch named **/private** where any tree can be placed.

However, it is also possible to use the VSS-Layer capability.

- **VSS Layers** can add metadata to the signal definitions
- **VSS Layers** are perfect to define a unique “deployment model” in which metadata that is only relevant for this particular usage environment can be added to the standard model.
- **VSS Layers** can add or remove signals, or even modify existing metadata.

As such, layers can be added and removed depending on situation, while keeping the main data model, and a main catalog definition intact.

While we promote the huge industry value of the standard data/service catalog, this feature explicitly prepares for the *inevitable* desire for some proprietary extension of available data and services.

By proactively allowing extension to the list of data (\*services in the case of VSC), we can succeed in protecting the integrity (thus compatibility) of the model itself.



# Vehicle Service Catalog (VSC)



- Early work so far.
- Reuses VSS principles, but a much extended model
- Same plain text, YAML\* principle = low barrier for entry to program tools and transformations
- \*However, semantic equivalence with **Franca IDL** is also expected  
→ could hook into Franca ecosystem (code generators etc.)
- Same responsibility split GENIVI/W3C (data model vs. protocol)
- *“What about that VSS is so limited in its datatypes?”* (It is deliberately so)
  - => Solution: **VSC can define arbitrarily complex datatypes**
- → Proposal: Use VSC when complex data exchange is required
- → By pushing any need for complex data types to VSC instead, we can keep VSS more usable for simple “signal-like” data.  
Best of two worlds.
- (Up for discussion. A potential merge of VSS+VSC models in the future?)



# Vehicle Service Catalog (VSC) – File Syntax



```
service:
  name: comfort
  description: A collection of interfaces for cabin comfort.
  datatypes:
    - namespace: movement
      description: |
        The units used to describe movement of the seats
      types:
        - name: movement_t
          type: uint16_t
          min: 0
          max: 1000
          description: |
            The movement of a seat component
        # Structs
        - name: position_t
          type: struct
          description: |
            The position of the entire seat
          members:
            - name: base
              type: movement.movement_t
              description: |
                The position of the base 0 front, 1000 back
            - name: cushion
              type: movement.movement_t
              description: |
                The position of the cushion 0 short, 1000 long
            ....
      type: enumeration
```

(continued)

interfaces:

- include-interface: "xxx.yml"
- name: seats
 description: Seats API

commands:

- name: move
 description: Set the desired seat position
 in\_argument:
 - name: seat
 description: The desired seat position
 type: movement.seat\_t
 out\_arguments:
 ...
 - name: move\_component

methods:

- name: current\_position
 description: Get the current position of the seat
 in\_arguments:
 - name: row
 description: The desired seat to row query
 type: uint8\_t
 out\_arguments: ...

events:

- name: seat\_moving
 description: |
 The event of a seat beginning movement
 in\_arguments:

# Thank you!

**Visit GENIVI:**

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