XEP-0099: IQ Query Action Protocol

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Short Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Deferred</td>
<td>Standards Track</td>
<td>Not yet assigned</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Standardizes behavior of <iq/> <query/> actions for generic query behavior.
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## Contents

1 Introduction 1

2 `<query/>` Action Protocol 1
   2.1 Description 1
   2.2 Actions 1
   2.3 Elements 2
   2.4 Error Codes 2

3 Create Action 2
   3.1 Description 2
   3.2 Error Codes 2
   3.3 Examples 2

4 Read Action 4
   4.1 Description 4
   4.2 Error Codes 4
   4.3 Examples 4

5 Update Action 6
   5.1 Description 6
   5.2 Error Codes 6
   5.3 Examples 6

6 Delete Action 7
   6.1 Description 7
   6.2 Error Codes 7
   6.3 Examples 8

7 Defining an Action Protocol 9
   7.1 Description 9
1 Introduction

There is a need for consistent query behavior amongst XMPP iq protocols. Currently each protocol invents its own, slightly different behavior for conducting query behavior to create, read, update, and delete (CRUD) recipient node data. This document defines a generic query action protocol to standardize behavior across iq protocols. In addition, we hope this standard will make other protocols easier to understand and implement by using a common core protocol.

2 iq Action Protocol

2.1 Description

The existing XMPP core protocol defines four iq types (get, set, result, and error). Unfortunately, these four types don’t include a ‘delete’ type, and the ‘set’ type must do double duty for ‘create’ and ‘update’. Many protocols can benefit from a clear separation of create and update paralleling other query languages such as SQL.

Protocols complying with the iq action protocol use iq ‘set’ to initiate all request-response interactions. The particular action to be taken MUST be set as an “action” attribute in the iq iq sub-element. The action attribute MUST have a value of ‘create’, ‘read’, ‘update’, or ‘delete’. Responses use the standard iq ‘result’ and ‘error’ types. For backward compatibility, an iq ‘get’ query is treated as equivalent to an iq ‘set’ query with action of ‘read’. Action protocols may require all or just a subset of these actions depending on the desired outcome.

In addition to the action attribute an optional "strict" attribute may be set in the iq iq sub-element. The only valid values for strict is "true" or "false" (case sensitive). The strict behavior of actions causes more errors to be returned which tends to make protocols more robust but also more complex. Action protocols MUST define the default value of the "strict" attribute in the context of that protocol. In addition, some protocols may not wish to allow changing the strict default, so action protocols MUST declare whether the strict behavior of the protocol may be set in the iq iq sub-element.

2.2 Actions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>create</td>
<td>Creates/inserts new data on the recipient node.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>read</td>
<td>Retrieves data from the recipient node.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>update</td>
<td>Updates existing data on the recipient node.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>delete</td>
<td>Deletes existing data on the recipient node.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2.3 Elements
The root element is query which is in a namespace defining the protocol in use. The query element MUST have an attribute named 'action' with values given in the previous table.

2.4 Error Codes
The following error codes apply to all action codes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>406</td>
<td>Not Acceptable</td>
<td>The IQ query contents are not properly formatted for the action protocol.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>503</td>
<td>Service Unavailable</td>
<td>The IQ query is sent to a JID that cannot handle the query.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3 Create Action

3.1 Description
The create action inserts new data on the recipient node. If the strict attribute is 'true' the create action fails if colliding data already exists on the recipient node. If the strict attribute is false, the create action will insert new data on the recipient node overwriting existing colliding data if it exists (e.g. equivalent to update).

3.2 Error Codes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>409</td>
<td>Conflict</td>
<td>The strict attribute is set to 'true' and colliding data exists on the recipient node.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.3 Examples
Creating new data on the server using iq:private, and strict actions when no existing data is on the server.
Listing 1: Client Stores New Private Data

**SENDER:**

```xml
<iq type="set" id="1001">
  <query xmlns="jabber:iq:private" action="create" strict="true">
    <exodus xmlns="exodus:prefs">
      <defaultnick>Hamlet</defaultnick>
    </exodus>
  </query>
</iq>
```

**RECIPIENT:**

```xml
<iq type="result" from="hamlet@shakespeare.lit/denmark" to="hamlet@shakespeare.lit/denmark" id="1001"/>
```

With strict actions enabled, conflict data will cause the create action to fail when existing data is on the recipient node. Here we show iq:private, and strict actions with existing data on the server.

Listing 2: Client Stores New Private Data but Conflicts

**SENDER:**

```xml
<iq type="set" id="1002">
  <query xmlns="jabber:iq:private" action="create" strict="true">
    <exodus xmlns="exodus:prefs">
      <defaultnick>Hamlet</defaultnick>
    </exodus>
  </query>
</iq>
```

**RECIPIENT:**

```xml
<iq type="error" from="hamlet@shakespeare.lit/denmark" to="hamlet@shakespeare.lit/denmark" id="1002">
  <error code="409">Conflict</error>
  <exodus xmlns="exodus:prefs">
    <defaultnick>Hamlet</defaultnick>
  </exodus>
</query>
```

```xml
</iq>
```
4 Read Action

4.1 Description

The read action retrieves data on the recipient node. If the strict attribute is 'true' the read action fails if no appropriate data exists on the recipient node. If the strict attribute is false, the read action will always return with a 'result', sending an empty result in place of a 'not found' error.

4.2 Error Codes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>404</td>
<td>Not found</td>
<td>The strict attribute is set to 'true' and no matching data exists on the recipient node.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.3 Examples

Reading data on the server using iq:private, and strict actions when data is on the server.

Listing 3: Client Reads Private Data

```xml
ENDER:
<iq type="set" id="1001">
  <query xmlns="jabber:iq:private" action="read" strict="true">
    <exodus xmlns="exodus:prefs"/>
    <defaultnick>Hamlet</defaultnick>
  </exodus>
</query>
</iq>

RECIPENT:
<iq type="result" from="hamlet@shakespeare.lit/denmark" to="hamlet@shakespeare.lit/denmark" id="1001">
  <query xmlns="jabber:iq:private" action="read" strict="true">
    <exodus xmlns="exodus:prefs"/>
    <defaultnick>Hamlet</defaultnick>
  </exodus>
</query>
</iq>
```
With strict actions enabled, the absence of matching data will cause the read action to fail. Here we show iq:private, and strict actions with no matching data on the server.

Listing 4: Client Reads Private Data but Not Found (strict)

```
SENDER:
<iq type="set" id="1002">
  <query xmlns="jabber:iq:private" action="read" strict="true">
    <data xmlns="imaginary"/>
  </query>
</iq>

RECIPIENT:
<iq type="error"
    from="hamlet@shakespeare.lit/denmark"
    to="hamlet@shakespeare.lit/denmark"
    id="1002">
  <error code="404">Not Found</error>
  <data xmlns="imaginary"/>
</iq>
```

With strict actions disabled, the absence of matching data will cause the read action to return an 'empty' result. Here we show iq:private, and strict actions disabled with no matching data on the server.

Listing 5: Client Reads Private Data but Not Found (not strict)

```
SENDER:
<iq type="set" id="1003">
  <query xmlns="jabber:iq:private" action="read" strict="false">
    <data xmlns="imaginary"/>
  </query>
</iq>

RECIPIENT:
<iq type="result"
    from="hamlet@shakespeare.lit/denmark"
    to="hamlet@shakespeare.lit/denmark"
    id="1003">
  <data xmlns="imaginary"/>
</iq>
```
5 Update Action

5.1 Description
The update action edits existing data on the recipient node. If the strict attribute is 'true' the update action fails if matching data does not already exists on the recipient node. If the strict attribute is false, the update action will edit existing data, inserting the data on the recipient node if necessary.

5.2 Error Codes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>404</td>
<td>Not Found</td>
<td>The strict attribute is set to 'true' and matching data does NOT already exist on the recipient node.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.3 Examples
Updating existing new data on the server using iq:private, and strict actions when existing data is on the server.

Listing 6: Client Updates Existing Private Data

```xml
SENDER:
<iq type="set" id="1001">
  <query xmlns="jabber:iq:private" action="update" strict="true">
    <exodus xmlns="exodus:prefs">
      <defaultnick>Hamlet</defaultnick>
    </exodus>
  </query>
</iq>

RECIPIENT:
<iq type="result" from="hamlet@shakespeare.lit/denmark" to="hamlet@shakespeare.lit/denmark" id="1001"/>
```

With strict actions enabled, the absence of existing data will cause the update action to fail. Here we show iq:private, and strict actions with no existing data on the server.
6 Delete Action

6.1 Description

The delete action deletes existing data on the recipient node. If the strict attribute is 'true' the delete action fails if matching data does not already exists on the recipient node. If the strict attribute is false, the delete action will delete any existing data on the recipient node (if any) and return successful.

6.2 Error Codes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>404</td>
<td>Not Found</td>
<td>The strict attribute is set to 'true' and matching data does NOT already exist on the recipient node.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6.3 Examples

Deleting existing new data on the server using iq:private, and strict actions when existing data is on the server.

**Listing 8: Client Deletes Existing Private Data**

**SENDER:**
```
<iq type="set" id="1001">
  <query xmlns="jabber:iq:private" action="delete" strict="true">
    <exodus xmlns="exodus:prefs"/>
  </query>
</iq>
```

**RECIPIENT:**
```
<iq type="result"
    from="hamlet@shakespeare.lit/denmark"
    to="hamlet@shakespeare.lit/denmark"
    id="1001"/>
```

With strict actions enabled, the absence of existing data will cause the delete action to fail. Here we show iq:private, and strict actions with no existing data on the server.

**Listing 9: Client Deletes Private Data but None Found (strict)**

**SENDER:**
```
<iq type="set" id="1002">
  <query xmlns="jabber:iq:private" action="delete" strict="true">
    <data xmlns="imaginary"/>
  </query>
</iq>
```

**RECIPIENT:**
```
<iq type="error"
    from="hamlet@shakespeare.lit/denmark"
    to="hamlet@shakespeare.lit/denmark"
    id="1002">
  <error code="404">Not Found</error>
  <data xmlns="imaginary"/>
</iq>
```

With strict actions disabled, the absence of existing data will not cause the delete action to fail. Here we show iq:private, and strict actions with no existing data on the server.

**Listing 10: Client Deletes Private Data but None Found (not strict)**

With strict actions disabled, the absence of existing data will not cause the delete action to fail. Here we show iq:private, and strict actions with no existing data on the server.
7 Defining an Action Protocol

7.1 Description

In order to define an action protocol that uses the <query/> behavior defined in this document, you must specify the following:

- The actions (create, read, update, delete) supported in the action protocol.
- The matching semantics for determining if data exists/collides.
- The default "strict" attribute (’true’ or ’false’). This may be defined for each action supported or for all actions supported.
- Whether the "strict" attribute may be set by the user. If the attribute may not be set, the strict attribute will always hold the default value.