



Members Approve Election Markup Language (EML) as OASIS Standard

BOSTON, MA, USA; 13 FEBRUARY 2006 -- OASIS, the international standards consortium, today announced that its members have approved the Election Markup Language (EML) version 4.0 as an OASIS Standard, a status that signifies the highest level of ratification. Developed through an open process by the OASIS Election and Voter Services Technical Committee, EML enables the secure interchange of information between electronic voting systems, software, and services.

"EML provides a high-level overview of the processes within an electronic voting system and XML schemas for the various data interchange points between the e-voting processes," explained John Borrás, out-going chair of the OASIS Election and Voter Services Committee. "It describes the data requirements of the flows between electronic voting processes and addresses security issues relating to the exchange of data."

Services addressed by EML include new voter registration, membership and dues collection, change of address tracking, redistribution of electoral boundaries, requests for absentee/expatriate ballots, election timetabling, polling place management, election notification and administration, ballot delivery and vote counting, and election results reporting and analysis.

"The increase in the use of electronic voting techniques around the world has resulted in an explosion of products and suppliers addressing this market," said Siobhan Donaghy of OPT2VOTE Ltd, secretary for the OASIS Election and Voter Services Committee. "EML provides the needed assurance that all these products can work to the same standard."

EML has been developed following work over several years by key representatives from IBM, Oracle, Sun Microsystems, and other suppliers in collaboration with international government agencies across many countries. These organizations came together to develop a robust and reliable standard that would provide a secure approach and sustain voter confidence in voting practices.

"EML is designed to benefit public officials who oversee voting in local or national elections and referendums, as well as those who conduct private elections within corporations or other organizations. Suppliers of electronic voting systems profit from EML by reducing their development costs," noted Patrick Gannon, president and CEO of OASIS. "Of course ultimately, it's the voters who stand to gain the most from this standard. The added reliability that comes from using common data elements in a consistent manner provides more security and reduces costs in the election process, which is a bottom-line benefit that has the potential to touch us all."

The OASIS Election and Voter Services Committee remains open to new participation. Those interested in implementing EML are encouraged to exchange information via the public eml-dev mailing list (<http://www.oasis-open.org/mlmanage/>). As with all Consortium projects, archives of the OASIS Election and Voter Services Committee's work are accessible to both members and non-members, and OASIS hosts an open mail list for public comment on the standard.

About OASIS:

OASIS (Organization for the Advancement of Structured Information Standards) is a not-for-profit, international consortium that drives the development, convergence, and adoption of e-business standards. Members themselves set the OASIS technical agenda, using a lightweight, open process expressly designed to promote industry consensus and unite disparate efforts. The consortium produces open standards for Web services, security, e-business, and standardization efforts in the public sector and for application-specific markets. Founded in 1993, OASIS has more than 5,000 participants representing over 600 organizations and individual members in 100 countries. Approved OASIS Standards include AVDL, CAP, DITA, DocBook, DSML, ebXML CPPA, ebXML Messaging, ebXML Registry, EML, OpenDocument, SAML, SPML, UBL, UDDI, WSDM, WS-Reliability, WSRP, WS-Security, XACML, XCBF, and XML Catalogs.

<http://www.oasis-open.org>

Additional information:

OASIS Election and Voter Services Technical Committee:

<http://www.oasis-open.org/committees/election>

EML FAQ:

<http://www.oasis-open.org/committees/election/faq.php>

Cover Pages Technology Report:

<http://xml.coverpages.org/eml.html>

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