



OASIS Members Form New Committee to Advance BPEL4People

Active Endpoints, Adobe, BEA, IBM, Oracle, Red Hat, SAP, Sun Microsystems, Software AG, and Others Collaborate on Extension for Web Services Business Process Execution Language for Human Interactions

Boston, MA, USA; 14 February 2008 – OASIS, the international open standards consortium, has formed a new technical committee to extend the Web Services Business Processes Execution Language (WS-BPEL) to support human interactions. The new OASIS WS-BPEL Extension for People (BPEL4People) Technical Committee will expand the capabilities of WS-BPEL to support a broad range of human interaction patterns, allowing for additional modeling of business processes within the language.

WS-BPEL 2.0, which was approved as an OASIS Standard in 2007, introduced a model to support automated business processes based on Web services. The standard is now widely used for orchestrating machine-to-machine interactions.

“WS-BPEL was not designed for human workflow,” noted Jeff Mischkinsky of Oracle, convener of the OASIS BPEL4People Technical Committee. “Nevertheless, we realize that many business processes comprise a broad range of activities where people are directly involved. Whether performing tasks, reviewing actions, approving steps, or entering data, people are a key part of many workflow scenarios.”

BPEL4People will define a new type of basic activity that will allow human tasks, including their properties and behavior, to be defined, as well as the operations used to manipulate those tasks. A BPEL4People coordination protocol will control autonomy and life cycle of service-enabled human tasks in an interoperable manner.

“BPEL4People demonstrates WS-BPEL's promise of extensibility,” said James Bryce Clark, directory of standards development at OASIS. “Being able to represent human interactions as well as automated service exchanges is a powerful evolutionary step. We expect that building on

WS-BPEL, rather than developing an entirely new specification, will be most welcomed by the marketplace.”

OASIS members will build on version 1.0 of the BPEL4People and WS-HumanTask specifications, which will be contributed to the Committee by Adobe, Active Endpoints, BEA, IBM, Oracle and SAP. Other contributions and changes to these input documents will be accepted for consideration and evaluated based on technical merit and conformance to the Committee's charter.

BPEL4People will be offered for implementation on a Royalty-Free basis. The new technical committee will hold its first meeting by teleconference on 5 March 2008. Participation remains open to all companies, non-profit groups, government agencies, academic institutions, and individuals. Archives of the work will be accessible to both members and non-members, and OASIS will offer a mechanism for public comment.

Presentations on BPEL and other SOA-related standards will be the focus of the upcoming OASIS event, 'Open Standards 2008: Composability within SOA', which will be held 28 April – 1 May in Santa Clara, California.

OASIS also recently introduced BPEL XML.org (<http://bpel.xml.org/>), an online community gathering place and information resource for the standard.

Support for BPEL4People

Active Endpoints

“Active Endpoints looks forward to participating in the OASIS BPEL4People Technical Committee and contributing to the extension of BPEL to include human tasks. As one of the authors of BPEL4People, we very strongly believe that no visual orchestration system is complete without the ability to flexibly integrate people as part of the overall application. By formalizing the BPEL4People specifications, OASIS is ensuring that BPEL itself will continue to be the most effective way to drive services-based application adoption,” said Chris Keller, founder and vice president of engineering, Active Endpoints, Inc.

Adobe

“Adobe is dedicated to creating rich and immersive online and offline experiences. WS-BPEL Extensions will considerably close the gap between human behavior and structural business processes and establish standards for effective process management. Human Task Enablement extends the ability for organizations to use open-source Flex to build standards-based applications that are intuitive and interactive. Adobe looks forward to participating within the newly formed

OASIS Technical Committee and standardizing the specifications,” said Charlton Barreto, senior software architect, Adobe.

BEA Systems

“BEA is pleased that an OASIS technical committee is being formed to standardize extensions to WS-BPEL 2.0 which are designed to support human interaction within business processes. This technology can help deliver significant value to customers and the industry,” said Ed Cobb, vice president of emerging technology and standards at BEA Systems.

IBM

“We're very pleased to join with our co-authors on BPEL4People, Active Endpoints, Adobe, BEA, Oracle, and SAP, in forming the OASIS BPEL4People Technical Committee. This is an important milestone in providing a common way for vendors to represent the human steps in a business process based on BPEL. Our customers have told us that it is critical that their business process management applications be able to address the diverse activities that people perform, such as review and delegation, in a standardized way. The BPEL4People Technical Committee starts the industry on a clear path to an open, widely adopted industry standard for this important capability,” said Karla Norsworthy, IBM.

Oracle

“The BPEL4People specification addresses two critical industry needs: providing a standard workflow language for broad adoption, and enabling a single base standard (WS-BPEL) to orchestrate both people and systems. Having supported this architecture for several years in our Fusion Middleware, Oracle believes its standardization by the OASIS Technical Committee will accelerate the market adoption of workflow technology and BPM,” said Don Deutsch, vice president, Standard Strategy and Architecture, Oracle.

Red Hat

“Red Hat is happy to see the emergence of BPEL4People as an OASIS Technical Committee and intends to contribute actively in this endeavor,” said Mark Little, Director of Standards.

SAP

“SAP is pleased to see that OASIS is further enhancing the BPEL specification and encouraging broader adoption of this technology. Through BPEL4People, modeling of service-based and human interactions will be unified, thus driving further adoption of enterprise-class SOA for critical business applications,” said Michael Bechauf, Vice President, Industry Standards at the Global Ecosystem and Partner Group, SAP.

Software AG

“The BPEL4People and related WS-HumanTask specifications fill major holes in the area of human interaction that existed within the original WS-BPEL 2.0 specification. These extensions to WS-BPEL 2.0 target the unique needs of complex business process orchestration with embedded human interactions so that they can more fully support the 'ad hoc' process orchestrations that are critical to the continued evolution of BPEL-centric BPM. We are pleased to co-submit these specifications to OASIS and co-sponsor the formation of the BPEL4People TC. Software AG is committed to open standards as a means for ensuring interoperability across heterogeneous systems. This is fundamental to our position as the independent leader in business infrastructure software globally,” said Dr. Peter Kürpick, President and Chief Product Officer of the webMethods Business Division and member of the Software AG Executive Board.

Sun Microsystems

“Sun Microsystems is a long-time supporter of and contributor to WS-BPEL 2.0. Sun supports the standardization of BPEL4People as the next logical step in the growth of WS-BPEL, bringing work flow capabilities to BPEL's web service orchestration facilities, and to our customers. And, as always, we are happy to support this work being done in the open environment offered by OASIS,” said Carl Cargill, Sun's Director of Corporate Standards.

Additional information:

OASIS BPEL4People Technical Committee

<http://www.oasis-open.org/committees/bpel4people/>

BPEL XML.org

<http://bpel.xml.org/>

Cover Pages Technology Report

<http://xml.coverpages.org/bpel4people.html>

Open Standards 2008: Composability within SOA

<http://events.oasis-open.org/home/symposium/2008/>

About OASIS:

OASIS (Organization for the Advancement of Structured Information Standards), drives the development, convergence, and adoption of open standards for the global information society. A not-for-profit consortium, OASIS advances standards for SOA, security, Web services, documents, e-commerce, government and law, localisation, supply chains, XML processing, and other areas of need identified by its members. OASIS open standards offer the potential to lower cost, stimulate innovation, grow global markets, and protect the right of free choice of technology. The consortium has more than 5,000 participants representing over 600 organizations and individual members in 100 countries. <http://www.oasis-open.org>

Press contact:

Carol Geyer

OASIS Director of Communications

carol.geyer@oasis-open.org

+1.978.667.5115 x209 (office)

+1.941.284.0403 (mobile)