Common Alerting Protocol (CAP) 1.2 Receives Approval as OASIS Standard


Boston, MA, USA; 12 August 2010 ? The OASIS open standards consortium today announced approval of the Emergency Data Exchange Language (EDXL) Common Alerting Protocol (CAP) version 1.2, a message format for exchanging emergency alerts and public warnings over all kinds of networks. Advanced via an international collaboration of the public and private sectors, CAP 1.2 is now an official OASIS Standard, a status that signifies the highest level of ratification.

EDXL-CAP allows a consistently well structured message to be disseminated simultaneously over many different warning systems. The standard is simple to understand and easy to implement. Its all-hazard, all-media format means it can provide notifications via radio, television, cell phones, email, and other media. The new version of CAP delivers digital signature support, which offers added security and authentication for next-generation alerting systems.

"CAP has been driven by practitioners, reviewed by vendors, and adopted internationally. Practitioner involvement ensures that CAP meets the needs of the disaster management and responder communities. Vendor participation guarantees availability of a wide range of products built to support the standard. International adoption enables CAP to be useful for emergency response around the world, especially for disasters that cross national boundaries," said Elysa Jones of WSI, chair of the OASIS Emergency Management Technical Committee.

CAP is endorsed by organizations and government agencies around the world. The standard has been approved as ITU-T 1303. It's supported by the World Meteorological Organization, as well as Environment Canada and the U.S. National Weather Service. The U.S. Geological Survey uses CAP for earthquake and tsunami warnings.

Canada and the U.S. have adopted profiles of CAP that define events, location codes, and other parameters specific to their needs. The Canadian Profile (CAP-CP) supports automated translation of emergency messages, critical for Canada's bi-lingual society. The U.S. Integrated Public Alert and Warning System Profile (IPAWS) defines codes in support of the Emergency Alert System (EAS). Other countries and groups are expected to develop similar CAP profiles.
CAP is part of the EDXL family of standards, which also includes the Distribution Element (DE), Hospital Availability Exchange (HAVE), and Resource Message (RM), as well as two specifications under development, Situation Reporting (SitRep) and Tracking of Emergency Patients (TEP). EDXL-HAVE recently played an instrumental role in Haiti by enabling response workers to transport earthquake victims to available and appropriate emergency care facilities.

CAP is offered for implementation on a royalty-free basis. Participation in the OASIS Emergency Management Technical Committee and Emergency Management Adoption Committee is open to all companies, non-profit groups, governments, academic institutions, and individuals. As with all OASIS projects, archives of the Committees' work are accessible to both members and non-members, and OASIS hosts an open mail list for public comment.

CAP will be featured in the upcoming OASIS EDXL Interoperability Demo at the International Association of Emergency Managers (IAEM) conference, 28 October - 4 November in San Antonio, Texas. Participating in the demo will be AtHoc, Desktop Alert, U.S. DHS, WSI, and others.

Support for CAP 1.2

AtHoc
"The OASIS CAP 1.2 ratification is another important milestone for making multi-channel and interoperable alerting systems a reality. The ability to alert people quickly using multiple and redundant communications channels across multiple systems and devices is critical for achieving an effective emergency response. Interoperability between these communication channels is the key for successful alert dissemination to all targeted populace during an emergency." -- Aviv Siegel, CTO

Desktop Alert
"The emergence of CAP has significantly impacted the way information sharing is accomplished within DoD and numerous other government agencies. Information silos created by proprietary vendor protocols greatly limited information sharing between these agencies until CAP arrived. Emergency operation centers and other critical government agencies using CAP may now share critical message information across disparate networks, disparate platforms and proprietary vendor communication protocols. The end result is a truly unified mass notification capability without technological or competitive barriers." -- Howard Ryan, CEO and Founder

U.S. DHS Science and Technology Command
"The continued advancement of CAP is vital to enhancing the ability to provide alerts and warnings to the public. The partnership of CCI and OASIS on this version of CAP will provide the foundation for the nation's IPAWS alert and warning protocol." -- Denis Gusty, EDXL Program Manager, Science and Technology Command, Control and Interoperability (CCI) Division

U.S. DHS FEMA National Continuity Programs
"With the American public as our most trusted stakeholder, this is yet another huge OASIS accomplishment towards ensuring Americans receive timely information about emergencies that helps increase the likelihood of their survival and minimize damage." -- Damon C. Penn, Assistant Administrator, National Continuity Programs

U.S. DHS FEMA IPAWS Program Management Office
"FEMA is very proud of our partnership with OASIS and is excited about the release of the CAP standard. This is a huge step towards ensuring interoperability and establishing standards for emergency notification across the spectrum of alerting systems." -- Antwane V. Johnson, Director, IPAWS Program Management Office

WSI
"The approval of CAP 1.2 marks another milestone in the history of this vitally important international standard. WSI is proud to play a part in this work, having provided leadership to the OASIS Emergency Management Technical Committee since 2004. By being interoperable with other CAP-compliant applications, WSI's OnAlert and AdaptAlert systems rapidly convey alerts and warnings to the right people to save lives and protect property." -- Patrick J. Gannon, President and COO

Additional information:

OASIS Emergency Management Technical Committee [1]
OASIS Emergency Management Adoption Committee [2]
EDXL Product Directory [3]

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. [4]

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