HL7, SWIFT, VCA, and e.centre Join OASIS UBL Liaisons

Boston, MA, USA; 29 August 2002 -- Data standards organizations representing health care, banking, prescription eyewear, and supply chain management have become the latest industry groups to appoint representatives to the OASIS Universal Business Language (UBL) Technical Committee. HL7, SWIFT, VCA, and e.centre join liaisons from a broad group of industry standards organizations in the subcommittee that provides guidance to UBL, the initiative to define standard XML business forms for electronic commerce.

"HL7 is not looking to UBL to replace our already existing XML schemas for medical records," said Wes Rishel, chair of HL7. "But health care companies such as hospitals and clinics are major consumers of supplies from a wide variety of vendors. Using the UBL supply chain documents for these ordinary procurement transactions makes practical sense -- we can concentrate on the data standards that require our knowledge of health care without reinventing basic business schemas for supply chain management."

"One of the great challenges SWIFT is actively involved in, as a standardisation body, is the convergence of the different XML standardisation initiatives within the finance industry, and the further alignment across industries," said Jean-Marie Eloy, Head of Standards for SWIFT. "We see UBL as a great opportunity to assist us in ensuring that this convergence will actually happen."

"Prescription eyewear is produced and distributed by a highly specialized web of businesses" said Bill Thomas, CEO of VCA. "Each pair of eyeglasses must be custom made to exacting standards to meet the wide range of prescriptions and the many product options. Prescription eyewear is a regulated medical device and is often covered by health insurance plans. All of this results in a vast quantity of very detailed and often vision-specific business transactions. We believe that UBL can help us improve the industry's efficiency in handling these transactions."

"e.centre, on behalf of EAN.UCC, welcomes the opportunity to work with UBL and hopes that this effort will further the cause of convergent XML data transfer standards based upon the principles of ebXML," said James Whittle, Consulting Services Executive for e.centre. "As EAN.UCC move to implement ebXML based solutions, it is vital, on behalf of our one million users worldwide, that we promote a spirit of co-operation and openness to facilitate effective and efficient standards development."

Organizations that have already appointed liaisons to UBL include: ACORD, representing the insurance industry; ARTS, representing retail sales; ASC X12 and the UN/EDIFACT Working Group, representing U.S. and international EDI standards; EIDX, representing the electronics industry; NACS, representing convenience stores; RosettaNet, the information technology consortium; and XBRL, the accounting industry standards organization. UBL liaisons provide input to UBL and coordinate the review of standard XML business schemas as they become publicly available. Information about the UBL Liaison Subcommittee and its members can be
"Input from industry data exchange organizations ensures that UBL reflects the needs of the marketplace," said Jon Bosak of Sun Microsystems, chair of the OASIS UBL Technical Committee and organizer of the working group that created XML. "Our goal of defining a common XML library for basic business documents like purchase orders, invoices, and shipping notices crosses all industries. Contributing to the development of our library of UBL schemas allows industry groups to pool their resources in the design of common business documents and to focus their special expertise on the development of XML schemas for the documents that are specific to their own domain."

About UBL (http://www.swift.com/ [2])

SWIFT is the industry-owned cooperative supplying secure messaging services and interface software to 7,000 financial institutions in 197 countries. SWIFT carried over 1.5 billion messages in 2001. The average daily value of payment messages on SWIFT is estimated to be above USD 6 trillion. SWIFT provides messaging services to banks, broker/dealers and investment managers, as well as to market infrastructures in payments, treasury, securities and trade. These services help customers reduce costs, improve automation and manage risk. SWIFT is also leading convergence initiatives in the finance industry, collaborating with over 30 different organisations involved in financial standards.

About VCA (http://www.visionsite.org [3])

Vision Council of America is the U.S. prescription eyewear trade association representing 2,000 supplier companies and 80 leading manufacturers. VCA member companies do business in more than 40 countries around the world. The U.S. eyewear industry, with over 30,000 stores across the country, posted sales of $15 billion for 2001.

About e.centre (http://www.e-centre.org.uk [4])

e.centre is an independent, not-for-profit association providing guidance and support for its 16,000+ members on supply chain efficiency through the use of the EAN.UCC System for bar coding and business-to-business communications such as EDI (electronic data interchange). e.centre is the UK authority for the EAN.UCC System, which is used in 129 countries worldwide and forms the basis of interoperable solutions such as asset tracking, traceability and collaborative planning.

About OASIS (http://www.oasis-open.org [5])

OASIS (Organization for the Advancement of Structured Information Standards) is a not-for-profit, global 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. OASIS produces worldwide standards for security, Web services, XML conformance, business transactions, electronic publishing, topic maps and interoperability within and between marketplaces. OASIS has more than 500 corporate and individual members in 100 countries around the world.
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