Members Approve Universal Business Language (UBL) 2.0 as OASIS Standard

New Version of Royalty-Free Standard Features Over 1,000 XML Data Elements for Common Business Documents

Boston, MA, USA; 19 December 2006 ? OASIS, the international standards consortium, today announced that its members have approved the Universal Business Language (UBL) version 2.0 as an OASIS Standard, a status that signifies the highest level of ratification. UBL defines a royalty-free library of standard, electronic XML business documents such as purchase orders and invoices. UBL formats in electronic messages enable direct connection into existing business, legal, auditing, and records management practices, eliminating the re-keying of data in existing fax- and paper-based supply chains and providing an entry point into electronic commerce for small- and medium-sized businesses.

UBL 2.0 features a library of more than one thousand XML data elements based on the ebXML Core Components Technical Specification (ISO 15000-5). Building on the eight core order-to-invoice document types in UBL 1.0, version 2.0 adds 23 new document types to accommodate extended procurement scenarios and basic transport processes. Development of these new schemas was funded directly or indirectly by the governments of Denmark, Norway, Sweden, England, Finland, Iceland, Singapore, Hong Kong, and the United States.

"Denmark has participated actively in the making of UBL 2.0 and has found the work to be very instructive and the co-operation very fruitful. We can only recommend other countries to join the work of developing open international standards, based on user needs," said Marie Munk, Deputy Director General in the Danish National IT and Telecome Agency. "In Denmark we see UBL 2.0 as a backbone for the future of eProcurement, and we have already seen the first real ERP-implementation of the Danish customization of UBL 2.0."

In addition to greatly expanding the range of business processes supported by UBL, version 2.0 also taps the power of W3C XSLT, W3C XPath, and ISO Schematron to provide a breakthrough in code list management. "Employing the new 'genericode' XML specification for code list publication currently under development in OASIS, our approach allows trading partners to easily and precisely specify code list subsets and extensions and even to apply them to particular elements and subtrees within UBL instances ? all without changing the standard UBL schemas," explained Tim McGrath, vice chair of the OASIS UBL Technical Committee. "Once in place, this standards-based process enables the implementation of business rule checking as part of instance validation. Open source software included in the UBL 2.0 release provides this new functionality 'out of the box.'"

"With the addition of new sourcing, fulfillment, and billing documents in UBL 2.0, global ecommerce now has what it needs to support the creation of inexpensive, off-the-shelf software for business-to-business transactions over the internet," said Jon Bosak of Sun Microsystems, chair of the OASIS UBL Technical Committee. "The UBL implementations underway in Northern Europe are already demonstrating the economic power of a
"The UBL OASIS Standard can extend the benefits of electronic business to companies of all sizes," noted Patrick Gannon, president and CEO of OASIS. "Building on other Internet-based messaging structures such as ebXML and Web services, UBL opens the door for companies, in both developed and developing economies, to engage in regional, national, and international trade." Gannon, who serves as an advisor to the United Nations Global Alliance for ICT and Development, observed that UBL can play a strategic role in the UN's economic development programs. "As a royalty-free, open standard, UBL offers a significant advantage for governments seeking longer term sustainability of applications and portability of data."

UBL 2.0 was developed by the OASIS UBL Technical Committee, which counted among its members representatives from Boeing, Booz Allen Hamilton, Capgemini, Intel, JustSystems, NEC, US National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), PTC, Sterling Commerce, Sun Microsystems, as well as government agencies such as the Denmark Ministry of Science, Technology & Innovation, Korea Institute for Electronic Commerce, New Zealand State Services Commission, Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions, US Dept of the Navy, and others. Participation in the OASIS UBL Technical Committee remains open to all, and OASIS hosts the public ubl-dev mailing list for exchanging information on implementing the standard.

Support for UBL 2.0

JustSystems
"With version 2.0, UBL becomes the foundation for building systems that are compliant with a global standard for business documents. JustSystems' native XML application platform, xfy, already supports the entire set of 31 UBL 2.0 document types, and we believe that this support will help industry adapt to UBL 2.0 and resolve real-world issues of doing business," said Hideki Hiura, CTO of JustSystems.

Sun Microsystems
"Ten years ago, Sun Microsystems organized and led the effort to create XML. Sun's sponsorship of the UBL standard for XML business documents continues its tradition of open standards leadership with a technology that promises huge savings for governments and businesses alike. The royalty-free UBL standard will lower the barrier to entry for small businesses, increase competition among software vendors, and foster innovation in electronic commerce," observed Crawford Beveridge, Sun's Executive Vice President of Global Government Strategy.

Additional information

OASIS UBL Technical Committee:
http://www.oasis-open.org/committees/ubl/ [1]

UBL FAQ:

Cover Pages Technology Report:
http://xml.coverpages.org/ubl.html [3]

OASIS Code List Representation Technical Committee:

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.

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