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OASIS Members Collaborate on Composite Application Framework for Web Services

Arjuna Technologies, Booz Allen Hamilton, Cyclone Commerce, Fujitsu, IONA, Oracle, SeeBeyond, Sun Microsystems, Yellow Dragon, and Others Work to Define Transactional Coordination Specifications

Boston, MA, USA; 7 October 2003 -- Members of the OASIS international standards consortium announced plans to collaborate on a generic, open framework for applications composed of Web services used in combination. The OASIS Web Services Composite Application Framework (WS-CAF) Technical Committee will define a set of royalty-free, interoperable, modular specifications that will enable the development of composite applications, ranging from simple to complex combinations of Web services and encompassing a useful range of transaction and coordination requirements.

"A serious problem remaining in Web services standardization is transactional coordination," explained Mark Little of Arjuna Technologies, convener of the OASIS WS-CAF Technical Committee. "Web services combined in composite applications require interoperable mechanisms to set the boundaries of an activity (such as start/end, or success/failure), to create, access, and manage context information and to inform participants of changes to an activity."

"We expect WS-CAF specifications will become the building blocks for other Web services standards," said Martin Chapman of Oracle Corporation, proposed co-chair of the OASIS WS-CAF Technical Committee. "That's why we're taking an incremental, multi-protocol approach, creating a modular stack of specifications. Instead of mandating a single protocol, we want to offer users the option to implement portions of WS-CAF based on their needs."

The OASIS WS-CAF Technical Committee intends to accept as input the WS-Context, WS-Coordination Framework, and WS-Transaction Management specifications published by Arjuna, Fujitsu, IONA, Oracle, and Sun Microsystems. Other contributions are welcome on an equal basis.

"Composability is a critical aspect of Web services," added Eric Newcomer of IONA, proposed co-chair of the OASIS WS-CAF Technical Committee. "That's why WS-CAF will be designed to be non-overlapping and interoperable with other open Web Service specifications. We plan to invest in gathering requirements input and defining relationships between related specifications and WS-CAF. Above all, we want to promote convergence, consistent use, and a coherent architecture."

WS-CAF specifications will provide WSDL definitions for context, coordination, and transactions. Message formats will be specified as SOAP headers and/or body content. The new group will collaborate with other OASIS Technical Committees, such as the OASIS Business Transaction Technical Committee, the OASIS Asynchronous Service Access Protocol (ASAP) Technical Committee and the OASIS Web Service Business Process Execution Language (WSBPEL) Technical Committee. WS-CAF developers also plan to liaise with efforts of the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C), including the XML Protocol, Web Service Architecture,

Web Service Description, and Web Service Choreography Working Groups.

"It is important that the industry agrees on a standard, interoperable way to demarcate and coordinate Web services activities," noted Karl Best, vice president of OASIS. "In parallel with the development of the framework, OASIS Technical Committee members will design and sponsor a testing/interoperability program for WS-CAF. This should go a long way toward ensuring widespread adoption."

OASIS WS-CAF Technical Committee members include representatives of Arjuna Technologies, Booz Allen Hamilton, Cyclone Commerce, Fujitsu, IONA, Oracle, SeeBeyond, Sun Microsystems, Yellow Dragon, and other OASIS members. Participation remains open to all organizations and individuals, and OASIS will host a mail list for public comment.

Industry Support for WS-CAF

Arjuna Technologies

"In Arjuna we spent a lot of time and effort listening to the requirements of our customers when working on the original submissions," said Mark Little of Arjuna Technologies Ltd. "It's important that WS-CAF takes into account work from other specifications and use cases that have real-world requirements for context, coordination, and transactions. This is a great opportunity to unify the current state-of-the-art in this extremely important area. We're excited to be involved in what should turn out to be critical infrastructural components for the Web services architecture."

Booz Allen Hamilton

"Booz Allen is pleased to contribute to the advancement of Web services standards through its participation in the further development of WS-CAF," said Joseph Chiusano, Senior Consultant at Booz Allen Hamilton. "WS-CAF is the latest in an exciting genre of specifications that advance Web services in critical areas such as transaction processing, coordination, and context propagation. We look forward to future applications of these important concepts for our clients."

Oracle

"Oracle is committed to promoting interoperability based on open industry standards. WS-CAF provides a common and open foundation to build complex Web services, enabling multiple Web services to function effectively in a coordinated and interoperable manner," said Don Deutsch, Vice President of Standards Strategy and Architecture for Oracle Corporation. "As one of the original authors and major proponent of WS-CAF, Oracle is pleased to be a co-sponsor and co-chair of the OASIS WS-CAF Technical Committee."

Sun Microsystems

"Composable Web services represents the leading edge of a new software development model for our industry, with the WS-CAF specification set providing some important enabling technologies" said Mark Bauhaus, VP of Java Web Services for Sun Microsystems. "It is vitally important that the underlying technologies and specifications for Web services be based on open, royalty-free standards, and Sun is pleased to be both a contributor of technology and OASIS supporter in this important effort."

About OASIS:

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, conformance, business transactions, electronic publishing, topic maps and interoperability within and between marketplaces. Founded in 1993, OASIS has more than 2,000 participants representing over 600 organizations and individual members in 100 countries. <http://www.oasis-open.org> [1]

Additional information:

OASIS WS-CAF Technical Committee

http://www.oasis-open.org/committees/tc_home.php?wg_abbrev=ws-caf [2]

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[3] <http://xml.coverpages.org/coordination.html>

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