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OASIS oBIX Technical Committee Forms to Advance Web Services Standard for Building Management Industry

Boston, MA, USA; 21 June 2004 -- International standards consortium, OASIS, announced plans to advance oBIX (Open Building Information Xchange), a Web services implementation for the building management and controls industry. The new OASIS oBIX Technical Committee will define a standard method to enable mechanical and electrical systems in facilities and buildings to communicate with enterprise applications. oBIX is an example of the growing trend of vertical industries organizing within OASIS to develop standards that leverage Web services methods for their specific industry needs.

oBIX will be applicable to a wide variety of smart systems embedded in facilities, such as heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC), elevators, laboratory equipment, life/safety systems, access control, intruder detection, audio visual event management, closed circuit television monitoring, and many others. oBIX will also provide access to information from sensing devices that are not typically part of control systems, delivering real-time access to sensors that measure or monitor the physical space in a facility, including environmental sensing, electrical panels, and power meters.

"Currently, there is no easy way for IT departments to integrate their enterprise systems with those that run their buildings. Yet facilities represent the largest physical asset most companies have. Using Web services to enhance the effectiveness of building control systems promises to have an enormous impact on an organization's bottom line," said Ron Zimmer, President & CEO of the Continental Automated Buildings Association (CABA). oBIX was originally established as a working group within CABA, which will continue its involvement through participation in OASIS.

"oBIX is an exciting example of applying Web services to solve a specific market requirement," added Patrick Gannon, president and CEO of OASIS. "The building controls industry recognized the need for a standard optimized for Internet technology. By choosing to advance this work within OASIS, CABA's domain experts join together with developers of more than 14 Web services initiatives currently underway at our consortium. We believe that proximity to other OASIS Web services standards efforts will help foster interoperability and encourage reuse of related work."

"oBIX will improve operational effectiveness, giving facility managers and building owners increased knowledge and control of their properties. It will be a major step forward in fulfilling the vision of truly intelligent buildings," said Toby Considine of the University of North Carolina, proposed chair of the OASIS oBIX Technical Committee.

The OASIS oBIX Technical Committee is made up of users and vendors from all sectors of the building controls market, including the security, HVAC, building automation, open protocol, and IT disciplines. Current

members are listed at http://www.oasis-open.org/committees/membership.php?wg_abbrev=obix [1], however, participation remains open to all organizations and individuals. OASIS also offers a mechanism for public comment on the work. The Technical Committee plans to prioritize oBIX development based on input from the community and particularly seeks use scenarios from those managing systems for large office buildings, universities, hospitals, etc.

"We intend to work with control protocols such as LonTalk (now known as ANSI/EIA/CEA709.1) and BACnet (ASHRAE/ANSI 135-2001, ISO 16484-5) so that oBIX can become the vehicle to take building systems to the TCP/IP layer in a consistent manner for the benefit of the enterprise. oBIX will also make it possible to integrate the many legacy proprietary control and monitoring systems in use today as well as future, native TCP/IP control systems," noted Paul Ehrlich of Trane, convener of the OASIS oBIX Technical Committee.

Anders Axelsson, senior vice-president of sales and marketing at Echelon, added, "We have been strong advocates of XML and Web services for enterprise-level interfaces and as a mechanism for data exchange amongst otherwise disconnected systems for some time. The combination of open control networks within buildings and oBIX open information exchange at the enterprise and gateway levels will, we believe, eliminate many of the complexities, confusion, and redundancies that can keep building owners and facility managers from reaping the many benefits of open systems."

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. Members themselves set the OASIS technical agenda, using a lightweight, open process expressly designed to promote industry consensus and unite disparate efforts. The consortium produces more Web services standards than any other organization along with standards for security, e-business, and standardization efforts in the public sector and for application-specific markets. Founded in 1993, OASIS has more than 3,000 participants representing over 600 organizations and individual members in 100 countries. Approved OASIS Standards include CAP, DocBook, DSML, ebXML, SAML, SPML, UDDI, WSRP, WSS, XACML, and XCBF.
<http://www.oasis-open.org> [2]

More information:

OASIS oBIX Technical Committee <http://www.oasis-open.org/committees/obix> [3]
Cover Pages Technology Report: <http://xml.coverpages.org/facilitiesXML.html> [4]
oBIX Initiative: <http://www.obix.org> [5]

Press contact:

Carol Geyer
Director of Communications
OASIS
carol.geyer@oasis-open.org [6]
+1.978.667.5115 x209

Links:

[1] http://www.oasis-open.org/committees/membership.php?wg_abbrev=obix
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[4] <http://xml.coverpages.org/facilitiesXML.html>

[5] <http://www.obix.org>

[6] <mailto:carol.geyer@oasis-open.org>