XML Standards Converge at OASIS

Industry Groups Migrate XML Specification Development to Interoperability Consortium

Boston, MA, USA; 19 December 2001--The trend to consolidate XML standards development strengthened in 2001 as independent industry groups and vendors alike chose to migrate their work to OASIS, the XML interoperability consortium. Citing the need for wider adoption and international participation, the groups and companies expressed confidence that the open OASIS technical process offered the strongest potential for advancing their specifications.

In Web services, independent efforts from WSUI.Org and WSXL from IBM joined to advance the OASIS Web Services Component Model specification. In the security space, AuthXML and S2ML combined their efforts to produce one universally accepted OASIS standard, SAML. BEA Systems chose to submit their XOCP specification to the consortium and help start the OASIS Business Transaction Protocol (BTP) Technical Committee. XML schema languages, TREX and RELAX, combined their work into RELAX NG at OASIS. Commerce One submitted its xCBL XML business document library to OASIS as a starting point for work on the Universal Business Language. MSI Solutions contributed their CRML customer relationship specification to the OASIS Customer Information Quality Technical Committee. TopicMaps.Org moved development of its ISO standard for navigating information to OASIS. The new OASIS Provisioning Services Technical Committee is evaluating contributions from the XRPM Working Group, the ADpr Initiative and developers of ITML.

"We realize it is difficult for most companies to track--let alone fund participation--in all the relevant standards work that's happening," said Patrick Gannon, president and CEO of OASIS. "By pursuing convergence and offering a home for advancing standards created externally, OASIS gives companies the opportunity to contribute to the broadest possible range of significant work through one membership in OASIS."

"By bringing specifications to OASIS, industry groups significantly broaden global support for their work," added Colin Evans of Intel Corporation, chair of the OASIS Board of Directors. "The real increase in the breadth and depth of technical committees shows that OASIS is rapidly becoming the central location for XML convergence planning."

Many developers choose to work within OASIS in order to take advantage of close liaison activities with the consortium's other technical committees. "Having separate groups for security information exchange and for security policy definition allows the two distinct, but overlapping communities of interest to focus their efforts on a manageable set of concerns," explained Carlisle Adams of Entrust and Hal Lockhart of Entegrity, co-chairs of the OASIS eXtensible Access Control Markup Language (XACML) Technical Committee. "Because both technical committees are at OASIS, we are better able to coordinate our efforts, employ common terminology and make use of each other's work."

OASIS' connection with other major standards bodies also attracts developers. Jon Bosak of Sun Microsystems, chair of the OASIS Universal Business Language Technical Committee and organizer of the working group that created XML, said, "The OASIS technical process gives us the open and democratic standards framework
needed for credibility among businesses large and small, and its close working relationship with UN/CEFACT, maintainers of the international EDIFACT standard for EDI, makes OASIS the obvious choice for UBL."

"One significant advantage of migrating development to OASIS is the consortium's reputation and international standing. The OASIS technical process is widely regarded as an open, reliable, proven method of development in which everyone has a voice," said Ed Anuff of Epicentric, a founder of WSUI.Org, which contributed its Web Services User Interface standard to the OASIS Web Services Component Model (WSCM) Technical Committee. "A specification that has been developed within OASIS has a much greater chance of achieving widespread adoption."

In addition to accepting submissions of externally produced specifications, OASIS offers other avenues of consortia cooperation, including joint development, fast-tracked specification approval and shared resources.

About OASIS
OASIS, a not-for-profit, global consortium, 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 is the home for XML conformance, Web services, security, business transactions, electronic publishing, topic maps and other interoperability specifications development.

OASIS has more than 400 corporate and individual members in 100 countries around the world. OASIS and the United Nations jointly sponsor ebXML, a global framework for e-business data exchange. OASIS operates XML.org, a community clearinghouse for XML application schemas, vocabularies and related documents. OASIS hosts The XML Cover Pages, an online reference collection for interoperable markup language standards.

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