THE REST OF THE NEWS

Who's Doing What To Whom

Whither goest thou, UWB? The entire concept of standards is based upon agreeing on one way of doing things. For every rival way of accomplishing exactly the same task, the value of having a standard at all decreases dramatically. Thus an important goal of any standards development activity is keeping everyone working within the same virtual room. When that goal is thwarted, everyone tends to lose, at least until such time (if ever) as one rival group succeeds in convincing the marketplace that its solution should win (with market forces, rather than quality, often deciding the winner). The prospect for such a result has just arisen in the Ultrawideband (UWB) space. Time will tell whether the competing efforts of the two rival groups described below will be reconciled in the near term, or whether a protracted struggle, with attendant unfortunate market results for vendors and customers alike will ensue.

UWB standard split as product roll-out takes priority
By: Denes Bolza

Ferret.com.au, November 12, 2004 -- Pressured by business and consumer imperatives, an Ultrawideband (UWB) vendor group has bypassed a standards-setting quagmire and struck out in its own, confirming what has been lately increasingly evident: that there will now not be a universal UWB standard. Consumers will thus be faced with having to choose between two competing common air interfaces. Last month, the Multi-Band OFDM Alliance (MBOA) announced that it had finalised its physical layer (PHY) 1.0 specification for UWB, the leading contender for the technology behind the emerging IEEE 802.15.3a standard for high-speed, short-range wireless networks. The MBOA, which is strongly aligned to Intel and Texas Instruments, hopes to complete its specification by the end of the year. The rival vendor group - the UWB Forum - has yet to respond to MBOA's challenge. Driven to a large part by Motorola and XtremeSpectrum, the UWB Forum is developing a Direct Sequence version of UWB (as opposed to the MBOA's "frequency hopping" solution)….Full Story

www.ferret.com.au/articles/19/0c029019.asp

Standards and the Home

Good News/Bad News/Good News: A mixed bag on the (literal) home front this month. On the plus side, the first and last stories below report progress on two different consumer product interface fronts, offering hope that use-specific remote controls won't proliferate in scale to the explosion of wireless light, heat, entertainment and other computer controlled devices and systems that will be propagating like guinea pigs in our homes over the decade to come. Absent such progress, you'll need to reprogram your Roomba to follow you around the house with a basket of remotes balanced on its back. The middle story is less happy, reporting on a "standards conundrum" impeding the advent of High Definition video in the home.

Converged home entertainment standard mooted
By: Robert Jaques

VNUNet.com, November 1, 2004 -- A group of consumer electronics and semiconductor companies, including Samsung and Philips, have thrown their weight behind a scheme to develop standard hardware-independent application programming interfaces (APIs) for next-generation home entertainment devices. Launched today, the Universal Home Application Programmer Interface (UHAPI) Forum aims to standardise APIs for analog and digital televisions, set-top boxes, DVD players and recorders, personal video recorders, home servers and other consumer audio/video devices....Full Story

www.vnunet.com/news/1159091

HD stalled
By: Maury Wright

EDN.com, November 1, 2004 -- HD (high-definition) video is stalled again. That refrain is familiar to those of us who have waited the better part of a decade to get our HDTV . But this time, high-definition is DVD stuck in the standards conundrum. The situation perfectly illustrates the complexities involved in setting standards for state-of-the-art products-with a global plot twist thrown in for good measure. The DVD industry's track record when it comes to standards is far from perfect. Remember when Sony, Philips, and others went against the DVD Forum to establish the DVD+RW format after the Forum shunned the +RW technology in favor of DVD-RAM and DVD-RW? That fight delayed the widespread adoption of DVD recorders for three years. ...Full Story

www.edn.com/article/CA475077.html

UPnP Forum and UPnP Implementers Corporation Launch Standard for Remote User Interfaces

BusinessWire.com, San Ramon, CA, October 26, 2004 -- The UPnP Implementers Corporation announced today that its device certification program now includes support for new functionality for UPnP enabled products. The Remote User Interface (UI) standard will allow users to control a variety of products via wireless or wired networks . "The Remote UI (RUI) standard delivers a key piece of UPnP technology functionality that allows a server to deliver a user interface application to a remote client for display and user interaction," said Toby Nixon, chair of the UPnP Forum Steering Committee. "For example, using the RUI standard, the user interface for a home security, lighting or climate control system running on a PC or a dedicated box could be discovered, connected to and utilized on a Remote UI client connected to (or imbedded in) a television set. ...Full Story

http://home.businesswire.com/portal/site/google/index.jsp?ndmViewId=news_view&newsId=2004102600 5997&newsLang=en

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Standards and Society

Remember natural disasters? With all of the attention focused on first responder communications and other terrorist-related standards since 9/11, its easy to forget that the standard setting infrastructure, both private and regulatory, has worked for decades to better protect us when natural disasters strike – as they do somewhere every week. The following article highlights the type of quiet and pervasive work that continues on a steady basis in a multitude of standards venues to make not only the world around us, but the homes we live in as well, a safer place to be.

National Groups Join to Improve Disaster-Related Building Codes

ICC Press Release, November 4, 2004 -- Two national organizations with a mutual interest in developing and implementing effective building codes to protect homes and businesses from natural disasters today joined forces to share resources and expertise. The International Code Council, based in Falls Church, Va., and the Institute for Business & Home Safety (IBHS) of Tampa, Fla., have signed a strategic alliance agreement that paves the way for the two groups to work together on the research, development, adoption and enforcement of building codes on the state and national levels that address disaster-resistant residential and commercial construction. ...Full Story

www.iccsafe.org/news/nr/041104-IBHS.html

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Now you could vault the turnstiles and not get arrested: Card readers in commuter stations were quite an innovation when they first appeared, adding convenience and lowering personnel and other costs. Now, short-distance wireless technologies are set to revolutionize a multitude of everyday tasks, from transferring data and pictures to speeding up your passage through commuter turnstiles even more. The following story reports on a pilot using standards-based "contactless" fare cards that was conducted last month in San Francisco.

Contactless cards and readers pass interoperability tests by New York/New Jersey transit organization

CR80 News, October 25, 2004 -- The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey (PATH) have been conducting pioneering work on a standard for contactless fare collection. Last week (October 19, 2004), officials conducted an interoperability test to demonstrate the ability of various ISO 14443 compliant contactless technology to function running their evolving standard. The public trial was held in San Francisco using a series of cards and readers from different vendors, testing each one's ability to perform a different type of fare setup. ...Full Story

www.cr80news.com/library/2004/10/25/contactless-cards-and-readers-pass-interoperability-tests-by-new-yorknew-jersey-transit-organization/

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Open Source

Do not pass go, do not download Explorer 6.0: One well-understood problem with monopolies is that they stifle innovation. It usually doesn't pay to try to try to displace the monopolist, and the monopolist has no incentive to update or innovate, since there's no pressure from competition. The result is that the marketplace has to take what the monopolist is willing to give it. Even when the monopolist does choose to upgrade, the features added needn't be the ones that the customer really wants. That may be about to change on the Web, as a number of new browsers have recently been released or upgraded. The one that is picking up the most momentum is Firefox, based on the venerable Netscape platform where easy Web browsing all began. The popularity of Firefox arises party because of its features, partly because it is open source (which guarantees it an initial market among the aficionados of that development methodology) - and partly because it appears to be very good. Whether it will leap the chasm from early adopters to mainstream users remains to be seen, but given the increasing popularity of Linux with IT department decision makers, the importance of browsers to corporate users, and the annoyances of spyware and similar plagues to which Explorer is vulnerable, we think that Explorer is finally going to feel some pressure to respond to marketplace desires. If that happens, even those that stick with Explorer will win, as Microsoft will need to begin competing feature for feature with Firefox, and not just give the marketplace what Microsoft wants it to have.

Firefox 1.0 Lives Up to Hype
By: Jim Rapoza

eWeek, November 9, 2004 -- There's been a lot of hype surrounding the Mozilla Foundation's Firefox browser, and eWEEK Labs' tests of Version 1.0, released today, show the hype is well-deserved. During tests, we found Firefox 1.0 to be extremely intuitive, with probably the most minimal learning curve imaginable. In addition, the Linux and Mac OS X versions of Firefox are functionally identical to those on Windows, making Firefox an excellent cross-platform solution. Given the unprecedented pickup of Firefox in beta form, many people may be surprised that Firefox hasn't already shipped. ...Full Story

www.eweek.com/article2/0,1759,1723414,00.asp

And while we're talking about Microsoft: As noted above, Linux has already jumped the chasm, and Microsoft has been reacting to that reality. The following story focuses on one way that Microsoft is trying to counter the rapidly accelerating penetration of open source operating systems into its market place: by focusing on possible vulnerabilities of LInux to claims of infringement. The following story reports that Microsoft has decided to capitalize on SCO-induced infringement fears by broadening its own infringement warranty – the equivalent of trying to sell more cars by doubling the number of years and miles that your factory warranty will last. Of course, the risk to Microsoft of doing so is probably very low, given that its products have been deployed for many years without challenge, its patent portfolio is rapidly increasing (and can therefore be used for defensive cross-licensing purposes if it ever is sued for infringement), and its largest customers (i.e., the only ones who would ever be likely to actually make a warranty claim) were already covered. In short, a smart marketing move.

Microsoft Expands Intellectual Property Indemnification Coverage

Yahoo.com, November 9, 2004 -- Microsoft Corp. said it will expand its intellectual property (IP) protection policy and now cover all customers using current and earlier versions of its software, in a move designed to further differentiate its products from Linux (news - web sites) competitors. Until now, Microsoft's large volume licensing customers were the only ones protected under its IP indemnity program, but this latest move, to be announced by the Redmond, Wash. software maker on Wednesday, extends that to all users running software covered under the program. ...Full Story

http://story.news.yahoo.com/news?tmpl=story2&u=/zd/20041110/tc_zd/138972

New Consortia

There's always room for one more: The last few years have seen a veritable algal bloom of new consortia in the security space: homeland security, cyber security, you name it security, not to mention all manner of anti-spam, anti-phishing and other initiatives targeted at curbing a wide range of abuses of email. The following article reports on yet one more new collaborative effort launched to try and hold off the barbarians at the gate (or, in this case, at Web services application firewalls). It's unlikely to be the last new security group we will bring to your attention, although we believe that the pace of new security organization formation will slow down in 2005.

Group aims to create hallmark of security
By: Matt Hines and Dawn Kawamoto

CNETNews.com, November 8, 2004 -- The Applications Security Consortium, comprised of F5 Networks, Imperva, NetContinuum and Teros, plans to make its formal launch at the Computer Security Institute's annual conference in Washington, D.C., on Tuesday. The joint initiative aims to establish "minimum criteria" for protecting Web-based applications. "The four of us have expertise in application firewalls, and it occurred to us independently that there was a need for clarification in the market," said

Gene Banman, chief executive of NetContinuum, who noted the group formed last month. "The incumbent security vendors have made claims about application firewalls that have created confusion in the space." ...Full Story

http://news.com.com/Group+aims+to+create+hallmark+of+security/2100-1029_3-5443154.html

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XML Update

Yin and Yang: The following stories represent the continuing angst in XML circles regarding at what point a lot of something valuable tips over into being too much of a good thing.

Yin: In the Ying category this month, we have the following two stories. The first reports on the release of an important new broad-impact XML-based standard from OASIS that will facilitate the conduct of business. The second reports on a more narrow but equally important data challenge, as Homeland Security "tweaks" the XML Data Reference Model to facilitate exchange of counter terrorism data. More of a good thing in both cases.

Universal Business Language (UBL) Version 1.0 Approved as an OASIS Standard.

The Cover Pages, November 8, 2004 -- OASIS has announced the approval of the Universal Business Language (UBL) Version 1.0 as an OASIS Standard. UBL "defines a common XML library of business documents, such as purchase orders and invoices, as well as reusable data components from which an unlimited number of other documents can be constructed. UBL is the first standard implementation of the ebXML Core Components Technical Specification." Developed within the OASIS Universal Business Language Technical Committee and numerous subcommitteees, UBL "is the product of an international effort to define a royalty-free library of standard electronic XML business documents. ...Full Story

http://xml.coverpages.org/ni2004-11-08-a.html

Counterterror data sharing will rely on XML
By: Susan M. Menke

GCN.com, November 8, 2004 -- The Homeland Security Department will tweak the new Data Reference Model to create a data model for the exchange of counterterrorism data. Under Executive Order 13356, DHS data architect Michael Daconta is leading a revision of the Federal Enterprise Architecture's 30-page DRM to share counterterrorism data while preserving individual privacy. "I'm amazed that Extensible Markup Language has become so important" to the effort, Daconta said last week at a meeting of the Association for Information and Image Management's National Capital Chapter in Arlington, Va. ...Full Story

www.eweek.com/article2/0,1759,1714680,00.asp

Yang: In the too much of a good thing category, we have the comments of an author in the first story below believes that after the "elders" gave XML to the world, things soon "spiraled out of control." In the second, the author reports that German IT industry leaders are "demanding" greater discipline in resisting the proliferation of XML dialects.

XML's growing pains
By: Uche Ogbuji

ADTMag.com, November 1, 2004 -- XML 1.0 was developed by a roundtable of SGML veterans, the worthy founding elders of the phenomenon that XML has become. The result of their initial burst of energy was the first generation of XML technologies. The elders always said that XML 1.0 was but one part of a foundational trio comprising XML Core (syntax), XML Stylesheets and XML Linking, but it didn't take long for things to spiral out of control. Some influential early voices wanted vocabulary namespace capabilities, so XML Namespaces were born. The effects of namespaces combined with other considerations to drive the development of an XML schema language to supersede DTDs, so W3C XML Schemas (WXS) were born. The programming folk wanted a standardized API for XML, so DOM was born. ...Full Story

www.adtmag.com/print.asp?id=10196

Standardization cuts e-government costs

Heise Online, October 29, 2004 -- The German Federal Association of the IT, telecommunications and new-media industries (Bitkom) demands that public authorities in Germany in developing e-government applications adhere to a greater degree to existing standards. In its capacity as the leading organization dedicated to standardizing e-business and e-government the United Nations Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business (UN/CEFACT) had adopted the data model UN/CEFACT Core Components Technical Specification (CCTS) and the process model UN/CEFACT Modeling Methodology (UMM), the Association noted. Anzeige Bitkom's demand was prompted by the fact that meanwhile about 1,000 different XML dialects are making data interchange increasingly difficult. ...Full Story

www.heise.de/english/newsticker/news/52708

Story Updates

*Social responsibility and manufacturing: In our July, 2004 issue of the **CSB**, we reported that ISO had decided to address ethical as well as technical issues (see **ISO to Set Guidelines for Social Responsibility** http://www.consortiuminfo.org/bulletins/july04.php#trends) The following article reports on one example of this concept taking root in the technology sector which, like the athletic shoe industry, does much of its manufacturing in those parts of the world where labor is cheapest.*

Electronic suppliers to implement code of conduct
By: Spencer Chin

EETimes, Manhasett, NY, November 10, 2004 -- Cisco Systems Inc., Hewlett-Packard (HP), Microsoft and Intel Corp. announced Wednesday (Nov. 10) the formation of a supply chain working group to develop integrated implementation plans for the recently announced Electronics Industry Code of Conduct (EICC). The code was recently developed to establish and promote unified industry expectations for socially responsible practices across the electronics industry's global supply chain. The new working group, facilitated by Business for Social Responsibility (BSR), will develop common mechanisms and tools that will enable compliance with the Code. ...Full Story

www.eetimes.com/sys/news/showArticle.jhtml?articleID=52600649

Unicode Releases Common Locale Data Repository, Version 1.2

Yahoo.com, Mountainview, CA, November 4, 2004 -- The Unicode(r) Consortium announced today the release of new versions of the Common Locale Data Repository (CLDR 1.2) and the Locale Data Markup Language specification (LDML 1.2), providing key building blocks for software to support the world's languages. This new release contains data for 232 locales, covering 72 languages and 108 territories. There are also 63 draft locales in the process of being developed, covering an additional 27 languages and 28 territories. To support users in different languages, programs must not only use translated text, but must also be adapted to local conventions. ...Full Story

http://biz.yahoo.com/prnews/041104/sfth085_1.html

Sender ID Up for Discussion in D.C.
By: Jim Wagner

Internetnews.com, November 9, 2004 -- Microsoft's (Quote, Chart) controversial Sender ID for E-Mail dominated the opening panel of a two-day e-mail authentication summit sponsored by the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) and the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST). In addition to Sender ID, the summit will focus on other technologies it is hoped will combat the growing amount of spam and phishing attacks that clog user inboxes and steal personal information. ...Full Story

www.internetnews.com/xSP/article.php/3433351

AOL to Support Sender ID E-Mail Standard
By: Larry Seltzer

eWeek, October 25, 2004 -- America Online Inc. will support a new, modified version of the Sender ID e-mail authentication specification that is being submitted to the IETF for consideration Monday. The Sender ID specification had been in limbo since the collapse of the MARID working group in September. A new version of Sender ID, modified to address concerned such as AOL's, is being submitted Monday to the IETF by SPF author Meng Wong and Microsoft. ...Full Story

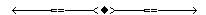www.eweek.com/article2/0,1759,1682948,00.asp

…But you might want to kill me anyway: *While Microsoft was showing flexibility on Sender ID licensing terms, other actions on its part were causing new alarums to sound within the IETF. In the following article, an engineer active in the evaluation of another licensing offer by Microsoft states his opinion that new mischief may be afoot. Stay tuned.*

Is Microsoft Ready to Assert IP Rights over the Internet?
By: Steven J. Vaughan-Nichols

eWeek, November 5, 2004 -- Has Microsoft been trying to retroactively claim IP (intellectual property) rights over many of the Internet's basic protocols? Larry J. Blunk, senior engineer for networking research and development at Merit Network Inc., believes that might be the case. Blunk expressed these concerns about Microsoft's Royalty Free Protocol License Agreement in a recent note to the IETF's Intellectual Property Rights Working Group. Specifically, Blunk suggested that Microsoft seemed to be claiming IP rights to many vital Internet protocols. And by so doing, "Microsoft is injecting a significant amount of unwarranted uncertainty and doubt regarding non-Microsoft implementations of these protocols," Blunk said. ...Full Story

www.eweek.com/article2/0,1759,1714680,00.asp

Once upon a time: *There was a time not so long ago where there was only one way that ICT (and many other) standards could be approved globally: they had to be created by organizations that were "accredited" by an internationally recognized national standards body as meeting certain requirements. Only organizations that were so accredited, or that were themselves the internationally recognized standards body for a country, could offer their standards for approval by the various global standards organizations. In the last 20 years, however, hundreds of consortia have sprung up that have elected not to seek accreditation, even though many of them meet accreditation criteria. As the work of those organizations has become more important, the global standards bodies have responded by creating ways that consortium standards can be approved internationally, thus allowing useful work to be properly recognized, but decreasing the importance of national standards accrediting organizations. The following press releases give examples of this process.*

GlobalPlatform Contributes Card Technology to ISO For New International Smart card Standard

Global Platform Press Release, November 2, 2004 -- GlobalPlatform has submitted a technical contribution, based on the GlobalPlatform Card Specification v2.1.1, to the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) to aid in the development of a new international standard within the ISO IEC* 7816 standard series for smart cards - the ISO/IEC 7816 part 13 standard, for application management in a multi-application environment. GlobalPlatform's contribution was supported by the US InterNational Committee for Information Technology Standards (INCITS), the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) committee responsible for smart card technology. ...Full Story

www.globalplatform.org/pressreleaseview.asp?id=252

ISO/TC211 Approves OGC Web Map Service as International Standard

Open Geospatial Press Release, Wayland, MA, November 1, 2004 -- ISO has approved an International Standard developed by the Open Geospatial Consortium (OGC(TM)) with input from the ISO technical committee responsible for the ISO geographic information: ISO/TC211 Geographic Information/Geomatics. The OpenGIS(R) Web Map Service (WMS) Interface Specification was approved by a ballot of the national bodies that are members of ISO. The OGC's WMS Specification (now also ISO 19128) specifies protocols that provide uniform access by HTML clients to maps rendered by WMS enabled map servers on the internet. Software complying to the specification enables automatic overlay,

in ordinary web browsers, of map images obtained from multiple map servers, regardless of map scale, projection, earth coordinate system, storage format, or vendor solution. ...Full Story

http://portal.opengeospatial.org/public/pdf/pr_pdf.php?prid=202

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*High stakes: In our May 2004 issue, we focused on the ways that nations can use standards as trade barriers, and highlighted the point with an article that described an impasse between U.S. manufacturers and China over the Wi-Fi wireless standard (See: **Breaking Down Trade Barriers: Avoiding the China Syndrome** www.consortiuminfo.org/bulletins/may04.php#trends). After high-level State Department intervention, China agreed to join the fold and adopt an international standard rather than its own domestic variant. However, that resolution is just the beginning. The Chinese government places a high priority on standards development, and funds such efforts heavily. As with so many other areas of commerce, we can expect that the efforts of the Chinese will be felt from inside the process as well as from outside. The following article from ChinaDaily.com demonstrates the sharp contrast between this centrally planned economy's approach to standard setting, in contrast to the United States government's "hand's off" approach, and almost total absence of economic support.*

China dialing into radio tags?
By: Li Weitao

ChinaDaily.com, October 19, 2004 -- Chinese companies are being urged to play a greater role in drafting standards for radio-tag technology, which is expected to revolutionize the manufacturing and retailing sectors. The technology, called radio frequency identification (RFID), also referred to as a supercharged version of the barcode, can help track goods, automate banking services and improve product quality. "Chinese industries and businesses should work together, and co-operate with relevant foreign companies, to set a unified standard for RFID," said Zheng Xinli, vice-director of the Policy Study Office under the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China. ...Full Story

www.chinadaily.com.cn/english/doc/2004-10/19/content_384313.htm

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Smart Cards Update

One card to rule them all: Magnetic stripe credit cards have been around for quite some time, but most people are not aware that a new generation of card, with an on-board microprocessor, is a next generation technology that is preparing to be widely deployed. Such cards can store data on a wealth of topics, such as health information and travel preference profiles, all of which are controlled by standards that have been under development for some years. Not surprisingly, credit card companies have at the forefront of standards efforts in this area, but it is the Federal Government that has been most active in committing to the actual deployment and use of this new technology. The following selection of articles give an idea of how smartcards will be used in the near future, as well as some of the challenges of transitioning to this new technology.

One card for travel and payment could become reality in Asia
By: Farah Abdul Rahim

Channel NewsAsia, SINGAPORE, November 14, 2004 -- There could soon be one standard for ID cards to be used throughout Asia -- from Singapore to Japan and even China -- so you won't need to carry multiple cards in future. The One Card-One Asia vision is an ambitious expansion of Singapore's EZ-Link card, a smart contactless card now used not just on Singapore's public transport system, but also the library and even a fast food restaurant…The ultimate aim is to use such a card for travel as an e-passport, and even for payment….But they say it will take at least three more years and some political will from regional countries to bring the One Card, One Asia vision closer to reality. There are also legal and security concerns that have yet to be worked out.

www.channelnewsasia.com/stories/singaporelocalnews/view/117056/1/.html

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NIST Requests Comments on Draft Federal ID Standard

NIST Tech Beat, November 10, 2004 -- The National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) is looking for comments on a draft Federal Information Processing Standard (FIPS) for a smart-card based form of identification that all federal government agencies will issue to its employees and contractors. On Aug. 27, 2004, President Bush issued a directive calling for the mandatory, government-wide standard (www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2004/08/20040827-8.html).   The directive oted that adopting a uniform format for government ID badges will eliminate the wide variations in the quality and security of forms of identification used to gain access to federal facilities and non-national security systems. The draft standard specifies the framework, architecture and technical requirements for the personal identity verification (PIV) card, including cryptographic, biometric and card reader specifications. ...Full Story

www.nist.gov/public_affairs/techbeat/tb2004_1110.htm#ID

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U.S. government smart card efforts get major boost from the President, NIST, and ISO

CR80 News, October 24, 2004 -- Keeping tabs on the U.S. federal government's smart card progress is tough. Memorize a list of acronyms today and they are likely to become old news as new agencies and initiatives take precedence. Though somewhat frustrating, this is a very positive indicator of the rapid progress being made as the U.S. federal government's smart card approach matures. In recent weeks, this progress has been further expedited by a Presidential Directive (HSPD-12), a national standardization effort (FIPS 201), and progress toward a potential international standard (ISO 24727). ...Full Story (requires log-in)

www.cr80news.com/library/2004/10/24/us-government-smart-card-efforts-get-major-boost-from-the-president-nist-and-iso