SHOULD STANDARDS BE FREE?

News Cluster: **ISO: "Royalties? Did We Say Royalties?"**
When word leaked out that global standards organization ISO was thinking about charging for the use of the currency, language and country codes that lie embedded in software and web pages, it set off an immediate storm of negative reaction.

Rambus Update: **Supreme Court says "No Dice" to Infineon**
Standards experts were disappointed, but not surprised that the Supreme Court didn't take the Rambus case. Day traders were smug and euphoric. Coming soon: The FTC decision.

Standards Blog: **Alpha Predators and Cyber *In*security**
Is there a way to make economic self-interest drive even monopolists to play nice?

The Rest of the News: Shakeout Looms in Web Services Management; Legislation Introduced to Bolster Homeland Security Standards; W3C Approves XForms 1.0; We find we have no choice but to introduce a new topic area: "Who's Doing What to Whom"; and much more

Featured Meeting: Five standard setting organizations convene a "News Standards Summit" to plan how standards developers can coordinate to help the world share its news

Featured Event: **OSGi Alliance World Congress**

ISO: "ROYALTIES? DID WE SAY ROYALTIES?"

- A Tale Told in Twelve Days of News -

Andrew Updegrove

Early this summer, this writer first heard of some surprising planning going on inside ISO, the global standard setting body that manages over 13,000 standards. The word was that ISO'S Commercial Policies Steering Group was considering levying use charges for the pervasive and simple language, currency and two letter country codes that it maintains. These codes are not only used in print, but are employed behind the scenes in software programs and web pages as well.

When word later reached a wider audience, the reaction was immediate and hostile, with both consortia and accredited standards organizations protesting the concept of use fees for copyrighted standards data. Press reaction and piling on by bloggers predictably followed. Finally, on September 30, 2003, ISO issued a clarification that addressed the central concern, but which left some observers still wondering where all will settle out in a practical, commercial sense. At the end of this article, we have aggregated some of the press releases, open letters, press accounts and blog entries that appeared during the twelve-day period in question.

But first, one unfamiliar with the fracas might ask, what's the big deal about, anyway?

The reasons for the breadth and depth of industry reaction were several: First, the trend toward free implementation of standards has been picking up steam of late, with many of the most influential consortia (e.g., W3C and OpenGIS) adopting policies strongly in support of royalty-free standards. Second, the marketplace is still absorbing the (to many) shocking series of victories that Rambus has racked up in court in its effort to collect royalties from the implementers of certain JEDEC chip standards. Add to that SCO's efforts to sack the Linux marketplace for alleged infringement of the Unix OS, and anyone concerned with standards could be excused for being a bit touchy these days, if not downright grouchy.

It also didn't help that ISO is the 900 pound gorilla of standard setting, with hundreds of affiliated standards organizations around the world, or that the country codes seem so innocuous. The fact is, though, that the revenue model of the official standards development organizations of the world (SDOs) has been absorbing a one-two punch from the rise Internet and the proliferation of consortia. That's because, unlike most consortia, SDOs are cheap to join, and therefore able to accommodate the views of everyone. In order to do so, they underwrite a major part of their expenses by selling paper copies of the standards that they approve and maintain. Consortia, on the other hand, are usually expensive to join, but almost always give their standards away, since the goal of their members is to secure widespread adoption of the standards that these self-selected groups of members wish to promote.

It's a real problem for SDOs, involving a century-old standards infrastructure that evolved to set standards for a bricks and mortar world. And for that world, it still serves pretty well. But in the rapidly evolving IT and telecommunications industry, major stakeholders want to move more quickly, and to remove as many barriers to adoption of the standards that they create as possible. That means making their standards just one fee-free, click-wrap license press of the mouse button away for anyone, members and non-members alike. Since many companies make bet-the-company decisions to launch products based on these standards, they are willing to pay dues of $10,000, or $50,000 -- or more -- per company to a single consortium to get a new standard done fast and pervasively adopted.

Meanwhile, the low membership-fee SDOs still need to pay the bills. So it's neither surprising nor "wrong" for them to be creative in thinking about how to get their still-necessary job done in changing times. But it looks like this time at bat, they've hit a foul ball.

Another reason why much of the standards world is in arms is because the implementation of standards has historically presented royalty issues only where patents have been involved. With the ISO country codes, it is the copyrights in codes that ISO would be asserting. But instead of charging just once for the original copy of the codes, the fear was that a fee would be collected every time there was a sale of a product with embedded codes (or a substantial up-front fee would be levied for unlimited use rights). Think of it as having to put another quarter in the coin slot of the phone booth (remember phone booths?) if you wanted to use the phone book as well as the phone.

The thought of charging for incorporation of country codes also touched another hot button: many specifications (including key Internet infrastructural standards) "reference," or incorporate, ISO and other SDO standards. If these organizations were to begin charging for repeat use of standards generally, the domino effect would cascade throughout the global IT infrastructure.

Finally, the concept of charging for something as simplistic as a compilation of two letter codes invoked a legal objection as well. The issue here is that there is a well developed (albeit recent) line of cases that has held that mere compilations of data, absent a creative element, are not eligible to receive copyright protection (think again about a phone book).

Following the outraged responses of multiple standards organizations, including the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C), INCITS and the Unicode Consortium, ISO issued a statement saying that the various codes themselves would remain free, while a new "optional software services package" relating to country codes might be deployed for a fee. Whether or not the former will be commercially valuable without the latter will remain to be seen. Some have responded that the updating service, as a practical matter, would be needed. And there is where things stand for now.

Following are the representative links to primary sources comprising this month's News Cluster.

Comments? updegrove@consortiuminfo.org

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I. EXAMPLES OF PROTEST LETTERS AND PRESS RELEASES FROM STANDARDS ORGANIZATIONS:

Letter from World Wide Web Consortium to Oliver Smoot, President of ISO
(September 19, 2003)

From Tim Berners-Lee, on behalf of the W3C:

To: Dr. Oliver Smoot, President, International Organization for Standardization Dear Dr. Smoot, The World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) wishes to express its deep concerns over a recent proposal by the ISO Commercial Policies Steering Group (CPSG) to charge fees for the commercial use of ISO codes such as ISO 639 (language codes), ISO 3166 (country codes), and ISO 4127 (currency codes).... Any charges for the use of these standards are going to lead to fragmentation, delay in deployment, and in effect a lack of standardization. In particular, those users who depend upon multi-lingual or non-English language services will suffer.

For the full letter, see: http://lists.w3.org/Archives/Public/www-international/2003JulSep/0213.html

UNICODE TECHNICAL COMMITTEE
PUBLIC POSITIONS

UTC Website, August 26, 2003: With reference to the proposal by ISO CPSG to charge fees for the commercial use of ISO codes: ISO infrastructure standards such as ISO 3166 (country codes), ISO 4217 (currency codes), and ISO 639 (language codes) must be royalty-free. The negative consequences of charging royalties would be severe, including strong incentives for companies and other organizations to:

1. avoid future contributions to ISO standards development
2. avoid using or referencing ISO standards
3. develop and use alternative, royalty-free, standards.

Moreover, many of these ISO standards are themselves based on contributions from other sources or duplicate pre-existing data, and charging royalties for the use of this data may expose ISO itself to debates over intellectual property rights and financial liability. Even the discussion of this issue casts a cloud of uncertainty over future use of ISO standards in the IT environment. *UTC Resolution 96-M4*

Full the full statement, see: http://www.unicode.org/consortium/utc-positions.html

IPTC says ISO code fees are a threat to free exchange of news

WINDSOR, UK, Oct. 2 /CNW/ - The International Press Telecommunications Council has strongly protested against proposed royalties to be charged by the International Organization for Standardization (known as ISO) for the commercial use of its widely used codes. Licensing fees for ISO codes that represent languages, countries and currencies are a threat to the free exchange of news, the IPTC said.

For the full press release: http://www.newswire.ca/releases/October2003/02/c7353.html

II. PRESS REACTION:

New ISO Fees on the Horizon?
By Evan Hansen

CNET News.com, September 19, 2003 -- Information technology standards groups are raising warning flags over a proposal that could raise fees for commonly used industry codes, including two-letter country abbreviations, used in many commercial software products. At stake is a tentative proposal from the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) to add usage royalties for several code standards, a move that opponents say could weaken standards adherence by forcing software providers to pay a fee for each ISO-compliant product they sell. The standards -- ISO 3166, ISO 4217, ISO 639 -- cover country, currency and language codes, respectively. The proposal is still in the early stages, and may yet be significantly altered or shelved…. [in the words of Martin Duerst, W3C Internationalization Activity Lead] "It's not so much a legal question as a question of standards policy….If you start asking for money for the usage, people will stop using the standard. Then...there will be chaos."

For the full story, see: http://news.com.com/2100-1032_3-5079256.html

In a Down Economy, Is the IT Industry Eating Its Own Young?
By James Turner

LinuxWorld.com, September 20, 2003 -- Summary: SCO's shenanigans, Verisign's redirection of mistyped domain names, and now ISO itself talking about possibly making ISO country and language codes (like en-US) a royalty-generating item. What do all these have in common? According to LinuxWorld senior editor James Turner, they're all attempts to turn a quick profit at the expense of the overall health of the IT community and economy.

For the full story, see: http://www.linuxworld.com/story/34185.htm

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III. MEANWHILE, BLOGGERS (OF COURSE) WERE NOT AMUSED:

When good institutions go bad
By Simon St. Laurent

O'Reilly Developer Weblogs, September 23, 2003 -- The last few weeks have seen a dismaying upturn in the number of semi-public institutions which seem to [be] out to make a buck rather than a contribution, risking the contributions they've already made. ISO has the potential to cause the largest trainwreck, with plans to require licensing fees from those who use their language codes (ISO 639), country codes (ISO 3166), and currency codes (ISO 4127)….

For the full story, see : http://www.openp2p.com/pub/wlg/3791

IV. ISO RESPONDS:

ISO reaffirms free-of-charge use of its country, currency and language codes
September 30, 2003 (ISO Website)

[The following press release has been reproduced verbatim – *editor*]

ISO issues the following statement in response to recently publicized misunderstandings of its current practice and intentions regarding its widely used country, currency and language codes.

- ISO is to continue with its established practice of allowing free-of-charge use of its country, currency and language codes from, respectively, the ISO 3166, ISO 4217 and ISO 639 standards, in commercial and other applications.
- There is no proposal currently being considered by ISO to impose charges for use of these codes, including on the World Wide Web and in software applications.

Based on international consensus reached within the ISO standards development system, these codes reduce the confusion that could be created if there were multiple, conflicting codes in common use. The development of the Web and of electronic commerce has been facilitated by the existence of the ISO standardized codes and their use has become pervasive.

ISO encourages such developments by making the two-letter country codes contained in ISO 3166 available free of charge on ISO's Web site , along with a great deal of regularly updated information related to the codes and their use. The ISO Web site also has hyperlinks to the sites of the British Standards Institution (BSI) and the US Library of Congress - where the currency and language codes are, respectively, publicly available.

The full ISO 3166, ISO 4217 and ISO 639 standards from which these codes are drawn are available from ISO and its members on a sales basis, as a contribution to supporting the standards development process. However, ISO and its members do not charge for the use made of the codes contained in these standards, subject to this being consistent with ISO's copyright. For example, ISO does not charge organizations for the inclusion of the country codes in their Internet domain names, and ISO does not charge banks for using the currency codes in their electronic financial transactions.

If a user of the codes, such as a software developer, wishes to claim that its product incorporates the codes in conformity with the ISO standards (which could be perceived by the market as an added value), then it would have an interest in buying the standards to make sure that this is indeed the case. But this is a "one-off" transaction for purchase of the standards; ISO does not subsequently charge a fee for use of the codes in the software product and has no plans for doing so.

Like many organizations, ISO continually reviews its practices and products in order to provide added value to its customers. With regard to ISO 3166, ISO is considering a proposal to develop an optional software service package that would facilitate incorporation and maintenance of the country codes in IT products. The service package being considered would include regular updating of the codes, which would add value to products because they would be conforming to the International Standard ISO 3166. The service package being considered would be a charged option. However, no decision has yet been made to go ahead and even if this option were developed, ISO will continue to allow use of its country, currency and language codes free of charge.

As found at: http://www.iso.ch/iso/en/commcentre/pressreleases/2003/Ref871.html

V. AS DOES THE PRESS

Country codes 'will stay free'
By Paul Festa

CNET News.com, October 1, 2003 -- A key standards organisation distanced itself from a controversial proposal to charge for commonly used country, language and currency codes, following an uproar over the potential fees…. In a press release, ISO said the controversy had mischaracterised its plans and practices, but it did not say how. A representative for the organisation was not available for comment…

For the full story, see: http://news.zdnet.co.uk/internet/0,39020369,39116797,00.htm

SUPREME COURT SAYS "NO-DICE"
TO INFINEON

Andrew Updegrove

Infineon's quest to restore its jury verdict, and thereby avoid the requirement to pay an estimated $45 million a year in royalties to patent owner Rambus, ended in defeat on October 6, when the Supreme Court announced that it would not review the Circuit Court holding in *Infineon v. Rambus* . The *Rambus* case has become one of the most closely-watched cases in standard setting of recent years (The **CSB** has been following this case on a monthly basis since February; see, e.g., **_Rambus: Hard Cases Make Bad Law_**). After the Circuit Court overturned a jury court's finding of fraud on the part of Rambus, the case became a focus of more than just the directly affected world of chip vendors. Lucash, Gesmer & Updegrove LLP (the host of this site) filed a "friend of the court" brief in support of Infineon on behalf of 10 standard setting organizations representing over 8,600 companies, government agencies and universities in support of Infineon, as did the Attorneys General of 15 States and Puerto Rico (see: **_States, SDOs, Consortia all Unite to Support Infineon_**).

Day traders, for whom Rambus was a long-term darling, rejoiced over the high Court's decision, and Rambus' stock shot upwards. Meanwhile, Infineon (and the other companies sued by Rambus for refusing to pay up) were left to lick their wounds and consider their next moves.

The story does not, however, end here. The antitrust-based suit brought against Rambus by the FTC entered the final argument stage several weeks ago. A large amount of testimony has been developed in the process of that proceeding that has suggested new dimensions to the case. And the Infineon case itself now returns to the trial court for further consideration within the parameters established by the Circuit Court, and left in place by the Supreme Court.

Hundreds of articles have been written since the Supreme Court's announcement, of which the following are representative of the attention paid in the initial hours after the high Court's announcement.

Rambus Announces Court Denial of Infineon Petition
BusinessWire *(10:17 AM, October 6, 2003)*

LOS ALTOS, Calif. - Rambus Inc. (Nasdaq:RMBS), a leading provider of chip-to-chip interface products and services, today announced that the United States Supreme Court has issued a ruling denying Infineon Technologies's (NYSE:IFX) petition for a writ of certiorari in the litigation between Infineon and Rambus. This ruling, announced by the Supreme Court today, means that Infineon has exhausted all possible avenues of appeal from the January 29, 2003 ruling of the Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit. That Federal Circuit ruling favored Rambus. It confirmed the breadth of Rambus's patent claims as asserted against Infineon. It also rejected Infineon's fraud counterclaims, concluding that Rambus had not been shown to have violated the rules of an industry standard setting organization called JEDEC and that those rules showed a "staggering lack of defining details." The Federal Circuit also concluded that Rambus did not have applications or patents that read on any JEDEC standard during the relevant time.

For the full story, see:
http://home.businesswire.com/portal/site/google/index.jsp?ndmViewId=news_view&newsId=20031006005477&newsLang=en

Rambus Soars on Supreme Court Ruling
TheStreet.com *(2:37 PM, October 6, 2003)*

Shares of **Rambus** (RMBS:Nasdaq) vaulted 35% in midafternoon trading following a favorable U.S. Supreme Court decision. The stock climbed $6.48 to $25.21 in recent trading. Rambus is at the center of a web of ongoing patent litigation, including an antitrust case filed by the Federal Trade Commission. The complaints have alleged that Rambus deceived an industry standards-setting organization in the early 1990s, helping to set standards in a way that favored its own technologies and later reaping royalties from memory manufacturers. But today, Rambus scored a major victory when the U.S. Supreme Court affirmed an earlier favorable court ruling by declining to hear an appeal in a case involving memory maker **Infineon** (IFX:NYSE).

For the complete story, see: http://www.thestreet.com/tech/kcswanson/10117556.html

ALPHA PREDATORS AND CYBER *IN*SECURITY

[] [] [] October 15, 2003 - If you've been reading the IT press lately, its likely that the name "Dan Geer" will ring a bell. If not, type the search "geer + microsoft" into Google and you'll be able to access 70,000 hits. Sorry; that was 15 minutes ago. Now its 75,300 hits. Seems like something's going on here.

That something is a report entitled "Cyber In security: the Cost of Monopoly," co-authored by Dan Geer and six other security gurus. The thrust of the report is that a world that relies on a single, tightly integrated OS and applications environment controlled by a single vendor is more vulnerable to attack -- and disastrously so -- than a world that relies on a more diverse IT environment.

The Computer & Communications Industry Association, a long-time critic of all things Microsoft, published the report. Geer, the CTO of @stake, inc., a security firm, learned the day after the report was issued that he had been retroactively fired as of the day prior to the report's release. By coincidence, Microsoft is a major customer of @stake.

What, you may ask, does this have to do with alpha predators, let alone standards? Several things:

- The more the IT world evolves, the more it emulates an eerie subjectivity to the laws of physical nature, notwithstanding its virtuality. The adoption of biology-based terms such as "virus," "neural networks" and, in the case of the Geer report, "computer monoculture" seems to be not only convenient, but also even unavoidable.

- Hence, the best predictions of future risks -- and the most instructive source of models for future solutions -- are often found in nature. Mother nature, it appears, even looks after her virtual own.

If one accepts this premise, then many of the conclusions of the Geer report become manifest: just as a single, newly-mutated virus can wipe out an entire species limited by a depleted gene pool, the world's Microsoft-based systems can be taken down by a teen-aged hacker in need of a date.

But - natural science reveals another risk as well: the destabilizing influence of the removal of a "keystone predator." In this model, it is recognized that the role of the top predator in an ecosystem has a moderating influence on most, or all, of the downstream species. Remove the alpha predator, and all hell breaks loose.

Remove the alpha predator, and equilibrium of a sort will eventually be restored, but that equilibrium is likely to be at the cost of multiple extinctions, long periods of population booms and busts, and overall ecological degradation. In David Quammen's latest book, "Monster of God," the author goes even further, postulating that our lives are in some way enriched (or at least informed) by the humbling reality that our essential value in the ecosystem can be reduced to mere calories.

So what does Mother Nature teach us? That we're better off protecting the alpha predator, the ultimate devil we know? Is Geer wrong? Should we come not to bury Microsoft, but to praise and protect it?

I think not. The trick is to discern what else we can learn from nature, and seek a different course, one that leads where we want to go, and with the winds of nature at our backs.

And that takes us back to standards. The IT world need only be constrained to follow the rules of the physical world to the extent that it is bound by its physics. Change a variable in the program, and the fractal patterns must change. Happily, some of the variables in the IT world are within our control.

One of those variables involves our ability to agree on interconnections, interfaces, enablements -- in short, standards. Standards, by their nature, create evolutionary opportunities that are beneficial. And, because these opportunities are made available as well as beneficial, vendors have no choice but to take advantage of these evolution pathways. Linux is a sterling example of a successful effort to adjust the dial of commercial gravity. Once the opportunity to make money by offering Linux-based products came into credible existence, the rules of virtual commercial physics left vendors no alternative but to build such products.

The lesson, then, is not to fight gravity exclusively with antitrust legislation and other man-made rules that seek to outlaw the laws of virtual commercial physics. That type of fight is far too exhausting, and always, ultimately unsuccessful. (Remember communism?)

The lesson of nature, instead, is to set standards that make the path to diversification appear to be manifestly easier, strategically safer, and ultimately more commercially desirable -- even for the alpha predators.

Then just stand back.

Comments: updegrove@consortiuminfo.org

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Postings are made to the Standards Blog on a regular basis. Bookmark:
http://www.consortiuminfo.org/blog/

Useful Links and Information:

CCIA Press Release: http://www.ccianet.org/press/03/0924.pdf

Geer Report: http://www.ccianet.org/papers/cyberinsecurity.pdf

ComputerWorld Geer interview (October 6, 2003):
http://www.computerworld.com/printthis/2003/0,4814,85563,00.html

Geer + Microsoft hit counter: http://www.google.com/search?sourceid=navclient&ie=UTF-8&oe=UTF-8&q=geer+%2B+microsoft

NYT Review of Monster of God ("The Better to Eat You With, My Dear"; August 31, 2003:
http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9406E5DD1739F932A0575BC0A9659C8B63

THE REST OF THE NEWS

Every day, we scan the web for all of the news and press releases that relate to standards, and aggregate that content at the News Section of ConsortiumInfo.org. For up to date information, book mark our News page, or take advantage of our RSS feed: http://www.consortiuminfo.org/news/rss/

The following are just a few of the many stories from the past month that you can find digested at ConsortiumInfo.org.

Who's Doing What to Whom

Department of "here we go again": Standards are good for everybody, right? You know, open playing field, compete on value-adds, all that stuff? Sure. But not everyone looks at it that way all the time. When they don't, there's trouble in River City. This time, its the wireless industry that's taking the Divide and Conquer hit.

Microsoft nabs Vodafone for mobile Web partnership: Alliance Expected to Fracture Industry's Standards Efforts.

RCR Wireless News, October 13, 2003 - Microsoft Corp. and Vodafone outlined a new partnership to push mobile Web services…Read More, and company executives called on the rest of the wireless industry to follow their lead-although they made no mention of existing industry efforts for Web services from the Open Mobile Alliance and the Parlay Group...The companies said developers will be able to access and integrate mobile network services, such as messaging, location, authentication and billing into their applications...Industry analysts blasted the plan as a way to further fracture wireless industry standards efforts. [One analyst commmented:] "The opening salvos at the first industry workshops planned for January will not be for those of a sensitive disposition."

For the full story see: http://rcrnews.com/cgi-bin/news.pl?newsId=15431

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They're at it again . When people play nice, standards are about leveling playing fields and improving the lot of end-users. Then there's the other way, where standards are used to counter market forces. Not infrequently, the companies on either side of this digital divide are Microsoft and Sun.

Sun Touts Liberty for Digital Rights Management

Computer Business Review Online, September 19, 2003 -- -- Sun Microsystems Inc hopes to replicate an industry initiative for federated identity in the field of Digital Rights Management (DRM), to stymie Microsoft Corp's own controversial plans to control distribution of electronic content. The company has thrown its weight behind a wireless group's effort to define a DRM specification on mobile devices. Ultimately, though, Sun hopes to build a coalition of vendors and end-users similar to the Liberty Alliance Project to drive uptake of DRM. Sun's goal is to counter Windows software and hardware initiatives from Microsoft, which it says will leave that company in control of users' business data and other digital content. Sun CTO John Fowler said yesterday: "You can see what we do around Liberty as a similar effort for DRM. Then we will do what we did with Java, and promulgate that in volume."

For the full story see: http://www.cbronline.com/cbrnews/0c6050c7cc37124380256da60018cb81

What's Up/What's Down

Good news/bad news of the month: Software vendors suffering through what has seemed to be an endless sales drought have held on to one consoling thought through the dark days: when corporate profits pick up, so too, presumably will software sales. Well, maybe not - unless you're selling the right standards-based products. According to the Director of PWC's Global Technology Centre, 70% of IT spending next year may go solely to deploying regulatory compliance systems - especially those based on the new XRBL financial reporting standard. That's a pretty thin slice of total software product offerings.

Software Industry Faces Shake-Up

Electronic News, September 26, 2003 - Speaking at the launch of PwC's Technology Forecast 2003-2005, PricewaterhouseCoopers Global Technology Centre director Terry Retter warned that the majority of investments will be centered on technologies needed for legal or regulatory compliance, including the current 'hot topic' of corporate governance. Regulatory compliance-based investments could make up as much as 70 percent of the total IT spend next year. A significant portion of this could be on the emerging eXtensible business reporting language (XBRL) standard, which allow companies to present financial reports in standard electronics formats. "It's our belief that if beta testing with NASDAQ goes well, the exchange will require all companies to report financial information using XBRL in the future," Retter says. "Additionally, the UK could implement XBRL initiatives by the end of next year and Canada will also follow."

For the complete story, see: http://www.electronicsnews.com.au/articles/fb/0c01a1fb.asp

See also the CoverPages XBRL reference page : http://xml.coverpages.org/xbrl.html

A hard rain's (not) agonna fall: Standards provide both opportunity and risk: just as a forest fire permits thousands of seeds to begin a race for the sun, a new standards-based business paradigm can allow a host of startups to make a run for commercial success. As in the forest, only those that grow the fastest will survive. The rest will be overshadowed and must inevitably wither and die. Seedlings in a forest need rain, as well. To continue the analogy, when the ASP model took the market by storm several years ago, many more startups started up than actual commercial opportunity could sustain. What will be the fate of Web Services Management? The following commentator sees a dry future for the seeds that are sprouting in this emerging area.

Opinion: Shakeout looms in Web services management
By James Kobielus, IDG News Service

ComputerWorld Australia, September 25, 2003 -- Web services management (WSM) is one of the most innovative sectors in today's IT industry. Despite the general economic slump, dozens of start-ups have ventured into the WSM market over the past few years. Consequently, enterprise customers can choose from many sophisticated tools for managing their complex Web services middleware environments…But today's WSM market is overcrowded and due for a serious shakeout. …Today's WSM start-ups will need to aggressively partner, specialize and diversify if they want to survive the coming industry consolidation. Specialization will lead to profitability for some, and the WSM market will continue to splinter. Some WSM start-ups are positioning their products as special-purpose solutions such as Simple Object Access Protocol (SOAP) firewalls, content-aware SOAP routers and XML accelerators….WSM is an exciting, dynamic market. But it's also a battlefield in which many pioneers will perish,…

For the full story, see: http://www.computerworld.com.au/pp.php?id=971618132&taxid=2078095612

New Standards/Specifications

Next generation web forms (10 years after): 10 years ago, an Internet connection meant a desktop PC, a baud rate equivalent to a pea-shooter for data, and non-techie users were almost unknown. Today, noncommercial users want Web access (that wasn't there 10 years ago, either) everywhere, all the time. And those that serve this new, voracious need want to reuse their work and get it out there fast. The W3C has responded:

World Wide Web Consortium Publishes XForms 1.0 as a W3C Recommendation

W3C, October 14, 2003 - When HTML forms were introduced to the Web in 1993, they provided a means to gather information and perform transactions. The structure of forms served the needs of many users at that time, as well as the devices used to access the Web. Now, 10 years later, the original HTML form design is showing its limitations.... In contrast to HTML forms, in which functional and presentation markup are intertwined, XForms lets forms authors distinguish the descriptions of the purpose of the form; the presentation of the form, and how the results (the instance data) are written in XML....Practically speaking, XForms technologies make it possible to deliver the same form to a PDA, a cell phone, screen reader or conventional desktop machine—without loss of functionality for the end user...No W3C specification has been so widely implemented so early in its life cycle as XForms.

For the full press release see: http://www.w3.org/2003/10/xforms-pressrelease.html.en

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New Initiatives

Pick your sports analogy: Take your pick; a trifecta? A hat trick? Either way, OASIS has been busy, making an announcement of three new technical committees at once:

Three New OASIS Technical Committees Form

OASIS website, September 16, 2003 -- Call for Participations have been issued for the following TCs:

* OASIS Framework for Web Services Implementation (FWSI) The purpose of OASIS FWSI TC is to facilitate implementation of robust Web Services by defining a practical and extensible methodology consisting of implementation processes and common functional elements that practitioners can adopt to create high quality Web Services systems without re-inventing them for each implementation.

* OASIS Web Services Composite Application Framework (WS-CAF) The purpose of the OASIS Web Services Composite Application Framework TC is to define a generic and open framework for applications that contain multiple services used in combination (composite applications).

* OASIS ebXML Business Process Technical Committee (ebXML BP) The purpose of the OASIS ebXML Business Process TC is to continue work on a royalty-free technology representation and model compatible with an underlying generic metamodel for business processes, activities, and collaboration.

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Story Updates

Why can't we be friends? Beginning with our May issue (Who should set the Standards for Web Services?), we have repeatedly focused on the jockeying between companies and standard setting bodies for primacy in setting the standards permitting the deployment of web services. Unfortunately,
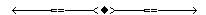
efforts to create winners inevitably create losers, and those losers inevitably include the end users that a standard is ultimately intended to serve. In the following Special Report, CIO magazine sees things getting worse before they get better.

The Battle for Web Services
By Christopher Koch, CIO Magazine

CIO Magazine, October 1, 2003 - Everyone wants Web services standards. CEOs think the technology will create new opportunities. CFOs believe it will save millions. Vendors see a pot of gold at the end of the Web services rainbow. And CIOs know that linking to customers and partners over the Internet will revolutionize both business and IT. So what's the holdup? The usual suspects: Politics. Ego. Suspicion. Fear. Greed. Research company Gartner predicts American business is going to squander $1 billion on misguided Web services projects by 2007. Exactly how much of that will come out of your pocket depends in part on how many confusing, overlapping Web services standards emerge in the next few years.

For the full story, see: http://www.cio.com/archive/100103/standards.html

See also "Standards Bashing"

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Big pond, big ripples: *The repercussions from Microsoft's loss to Eolus in a patent suit affecting the web continue to echo. The following story reports on contingency planning on the assumption that the decision stands.*

W3C Investigation Begins on HTML Standard
By Matt Hicks

eWEEK September 23, 2003-- W3C is now investigating whether the claims in the patent infringement lawsuit brought by Eolas Technologies Inc. and the University of California could require changes to both the current and future HTML specifications. The World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) is investigating whether the claims in the patent infringement lawsuit brought by Eolas Technologies Inc. and the University of California could require changes to both the current and future HyperText Markup Language specifications, W3C officials said on Tuesday…. The W3C is forming a patent advisory group that will decide whether to recommend changes to HTML and could also call on the full standards body to conduct a formal legal analysis of the patent.

For the full story see: http://www.eweek.com/article2/0,4149,1277713,00.asp

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Department of Strange Bedfellows: *In our past several issues we have highlighted the scrambling going on Web Services standard setting. The following stories highlight two unusual dynamics at work in this area, each a product of the perceived size of the opportunity and the speed believed by the major players to be necessary to secure the greatest advantage. While historically, companies sought either to set proprietary standards or work through SDOs or consortia to create open industry standards, those two techniques are now merging as ad hoc coalitions of companies race to create draft specifications, and then persuade existing bodies to take them up, complete them and endorse them. The second story highlights a different sort of ad hoc coalition, in this case one that hopes to convince customers that Web Services are real enough to buy. In both of these processes, some strange bedfellows are coming together.*

Web Services Management Heats Up

CNET News.com, September 17, 2003 -- The development of a Web services management standard continued to move forward, in a technology area fast becoming the next major competitive race among Web services providers. Computer Associates International, IBM and Web services management start-up Talking Blocks last Thursday submitted a technical specification to the standards group OASIS for consideration as an eventual industry standard. The goal of the Web Services Distributed Management (WSDM) technical committee at OASIS is to write a technical blueprint for products that track the performance of applications written according to Web services standards. The standard, due in January of next year, will ensure that Web services management wares from different companies will interoperate.

For the full story see: http://news.com.com/2100-7345_3-5077906.html

Microsoft, IBM Toast Next Era of Web Services

CRN.Com, September 17, 2003 -- Microsoft and IBM united in New York to demonstrate preview code for the next set of Web service protocols designed to enable more complex, secure, cross-company e-business transactions. Microsoft Chairman Bill Gates, on hand with top IBM software executive Steve Mills, said the forthcoming WS-Security, WS-Reliable Messaging and WS-Transaction protocols are designed to enable the kind of e-business relationships many dot.com vendors hyped during the late 1990s. Microsoft and IBM together demonstrated early WS-Security, WS-Reliable Messaging and Web service application among a car dealer, manufacturer and supplier. The Web service application was running on disparate systems -- a Windows 2003 Server, a Linux-based Websphere server from IBM and Linux-based wireless handheld.

For the full story see:
http://www.channelweb.com/sections/Newscenters/Article.asp?newscenterID=88&ArticleID=44591

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Advocacy and Legislation

Standards and Security: *One of the many sobering lessons of 911 was the degree to which standards failures can lead to loss of life. From lax and poorly adhered-to screening standards at the airports from which the fateful flights departed, to ineffective wireless communications between emergency workers in the Twin Towers, it was a day of realization of what proper standards, carefully adhered to, might have prevented. A new, bipartisan bill has been introduced in the House that would augment the work that has already been done to plug this gap.*

New Legislation Would Amend Homeland Security Act to Create Preparedness Standards

ANSI, New York October 3, 2003 - Introduced into the House of Representatives on October 2, 2003, the National Preparedness Standards Act (H.R. 3227) aims to assist the Secretary of Homeland Security in establishing clearly defined standards and guidelines for federal, state, and local government emergency preparedness and response capabilities…. t would amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 by adding Section 510, "Emergency Preparedness and Response Standards," which sets forth a requirement that the Secretary, "in consultation with other Federal agencies, State and local emergency responder agencies and officials, and standard-setting bodies from the emergency responder community, shall establish clearly defined standards and guidelines for Federal, State, and local government emergency preparedness and response capability, including for training, interoperable communication systems, and response equipment."

For the full story: http://www.ansi.org/news_publications/news_story.aspx?menuid=7&articleid=516

Standards in Society

Europe and adaptors: You already know that you have to take a grab bag of adaptors with you if you travel to Europe with a hair dryer. But what if you have a wireless controlled pacemaker? That would be rather awkward. In response, ETSI is tackling the necessary work to permit new, more advanced, wireless controlled medical devices to be used without regard to border crossings.

ETSI STANDARDS FOR ULTRA LOW POWER ACTIVE MEDICAL IMPLANTS NEAR

Sophia-Antipolis, France, 15th October 2003 - The European Telecommunications Standards Institute (ETSI) has completed the majority of the standardization programme necessary for the harmonized use of Ultra Low Power Active Medical Implants (ULP-AMIs) in Europe. The medical world will then just need the harmonization of frequency bands to enable implanted medical devices, such as pacemakers, defibrillators and insulin pumps, to be used by patients when traveling from one European country to another....Without common standards, combined with national frequency allocations, usage of such devices can be prohibited in certain countries....

For the full press release, see: http://www.etsi.org/pressroom/Previous/2003/2003_10_lpra1.htm

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Putting things back together: *In an earlier CSB, we noted that the US government was putting the reestablishment of a standards infrastructure in Iraq on a high priority. The following press release shows how standards-based telecommunications systems can restore communications much more rapidly than wire-line based systems.*

GSM - The Global Mobile System to Lead Iraq's Reconstruction

London, UK: 6th October 2003 -- The GSM Association, the global trade association for the world's GSM mobile operators, today welcomed the news that GSM has been confirmed as the mobile communications system of choice for Iraq's new commercial mobile networks…The decision to use the GSM system for the country's commercial networks is fundamental to reconnecting Iraq internally and to the rest of the world in the shortest possible time…GSM can be deployed and become operational faster than any other mobile technology: the CPA's tendering process stipulated that network deployment must commence within 20 days of licenses being issued…The CPA has awarded licenses in three regions. As well as providing service to foreign visitors, GSM's roaming capabilities will ensure that customers of one regional operator will be able roam on to any of the other regional networks.

For the full press release, see: http://www.gsmworld.com/news/press_2003/press_27.shtml

FEATURED MEETING

December 8, 2003 - News Standards Summit

Standards in the News: As a news channel focused on standards, we couldn't help noticing this meeting. Besides being of topical interest, it highlights one of the challenges that arises from broad, spontaneously generated standards efforts: coordinating the results on a simultaneous and productive basis. We applaud the efforts of the five standard setting organizations sponsoring this event to work together for the benefit of all.

What is the News Standards Summit?

NewsML, NITF, PRISM, RSS, Atom, ICE, XMP, XHTML... As interest builds for standardizing news dissemination, concern also grows that specifications are being developed in isolation. How do they fit? Where will they converge? How can developers and users collaborate to identify gaps and overlaps and ensure their systems will be able to interoperate now and in the future?

The News Standards Summit will bring together major players--experts on news metadata standards as well as commercial news providers, users, and aggregators. Together, we will analyze the current state and future expectations for news and publishing XML efforts from both the content and processing model perspectives. Our goal--to increase understanding and drive practical, productive convergence.

For the full story see: http://www.idealliance.org/news -summit/

FEATURED EVENT

October 21 - 24, 2003 OSGi Alliance World Congress

The World Congress of the OSGi Alliance will be held this year in Dusseldorf, Germany. A one-day workshop will preceded the three day World Congress.

For the full program, see: http://www.osgiworldcongress.com/agenda_main.asp

To register, see: http://inventures.com/authorize/events/registration/start.asp?id=56

About OSGi Alliance: http://www.osgi.org/about/