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THE STUDY OF STANDARDS

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EDITOR'S NOTE

THE STUDY OF STANDARDS

In this issue we focus on the study of not just standards, but of "commonalities," of which standards are but an example.

As our latest contribution to that field of study, we proudly announce the public launch of a major new research resource: the Standards MetaLibrary. The MetaLibrary is the most comprehensive access point to the literature of standard setting on the Web, and joins the other unique resources of ConsortiumInfo.org: the most complete listing of consortia and the standards they create, a daily feed of standards news of all types, the only monthly journal on standards in publication today, and much more.

In our Editorial this month, we place the MetaLibrary in the context of both traditional research methods and the new capabilities (and challenges) of on-line search, noting that without resources such as the MetaLibrary, it is easier to drown in than relish the wealth of data now available on the Web.

In our Feature Article, we propose that the broad range of "commonalities" (not just formal standards, but all consensus-based tools) that have been utilized throughout the history of humanity represents an important and under-examined field of study - a state of affairs that we hope the Standards MetaLibrary will help to correct.

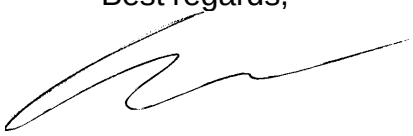
In the following article, we provide the details behind the Standards MetaLibrary - what it is, how it can be used, and how it came into being.

And in our Blog entry for this month, we explore how the parameters of another type of commonalities -- musical instruments – can provide a balance between strict design parameters and room for innovation, as personified by that unique addition to the jazz, rock and gospel instrumental arsenal, the venerable Hammond B-3 Organ.

As we do most months, we wrap up with what we think were the most interesting news items that crossed our virtual desk in the month just ended.

As always, we hope you enjoy this issue.

Best regards,



Andrew Updegrove
Editor and Publisher

EDITORIAL

COPING WITH AN EXPANDING UNIVERSE OF INFORMATION

Andrew Updegrove

If one were to compare the ten-year lifetime of the Web with the entire history of humanity, it would represent but the proverbial blink of an eye. But in that comparative instant, the information accessible to anyone with a computer and a broadband connection point has expanded by almost uncountable orders of magnitude. In these last few years, we have experienced a veritable "Big Bang" of information access.

But how does one cope with such an explosion of available information? The Googles and Yahoos of the world are doing yeoman service in their efforts to create search tools that will yield useful results. But the success of these efforts is increasing at merely sonic speed, while the envelope of web-accessible information that surrounds us continues to expand at the speed of light.

So how can we cope with this surfeit of riches? Perhaps the ultimate answer will lie not with more sophisticated search-based presentation of available information, but with a return to old fashioned, value added aggregation.

Today, the Web is like a well-endowed museum of natural history that acquires vast amounts of material, much of which is never indexed at all. Such a museum fails to achieve a balance between raw aggregation and useful presentation. Instead, it functions more like someone on a buying spree that buys more clothes than can actually be worn.

But unlike a museum, where much material disappears into locked drawers or remains boxed in warehouses, the Web allows us to bump around in the basement amid the unlabeled boxes as well as among the well-lit display cases, and to stumble unknowingly from one extreme to the other as we scroll endlessly down the page.

For all of recorded history, both aggregation and presentation have gone hand in hand in order to serve the needs of those desiring to access the wisdom of others. Libraries, after all, are simply aggregators of recorded material of various types. But unlike museums, libraries traditionally only acquire what they are willing and able to index and display.

Most libraries exist for generalist purposes, ranging from local libraries (at the modest end of the spectrum) to the United States Library of Congress (at the opposite extreme). But there are also a multitude of specialized libraries, focusing on subject areas such as music, law, medicine, theology and countless other domains.

Those who manage these specialist libraries dedicate their available resources towards specialized aggregation with the goal of offering as much as possible within a discrete subject area to an equally circumscribed audience, rather than seeking to provide something for everyone (and less of anything in particular for anyone with a specific interest).

Of course, useful aggregation involves not only acquisition within defined parameters, but applying standards of quality and relevance as well. It may also require tailored presentation, if the materials acquired are to be optimally useful. The results of well-conceived, financed and curated aggregation projects are information resources that attract visitors from all over the world.

How much should the advent of the Internet and the Web affect historical research methods? Most obviously, by allowing anyone to visit virtually what before could only be accessed physically. While there are troublesome issues that arise (will what I link to today still be there tomorrow?), the opportunities far outstrip the restrictions. Still, the concept of the "insurmountable opportunity" has perhaps never been more truly illustrated than by the enormity of the resources available on the Web.

Now that the Big Bang has occurred, we believe that it is therefore not less important, but more so to preserve the concept of aggregation. At least until such time (if ever) as search algorithms can be devised that can find just what is needed, and nothing else, aggregators that not only narrow the funnel but vet what is allowed to pass through it will provide an invaluable service.

It is therefore with great satisfaction that we announce in this issue the public launch of the ***Standards MetaLibrary*** -- our latest contribution to the world of standards. Made possible with the continuing support of Gesmer Updegrove LLP and a generous grant from Sun Microsystems, Inc., the mission of the Standards MetaLibrary is to identify, index and make available all of the scholarship that has been linked to the Web in the field of standards. We hope that you find it useful, and use it often.

Comments? updegrove@consortiuminfo.org

FEATURE ARTICLE

TOWARDS AN INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDY OF COMMONALITIES

Andrew Updegrove

Abstract: *"Commonalities," or consensus-based tools of which standards are only the most recent and highly evolved example, have been developed since the dawn of humanity. New types of commonalities, such as open source software, continue to be created organically, indicating that the concept of commonalities is intrinsic to how human beings address the world, how they solve problems, and how they choose to interact productively. The author suggests that an interdisciplinary approach to the study of how commonalities are created and used can yield lessons that are useful in a broad range of applications, from optimizing the governmental process to providing greater insight into what it means to be human.*

Introduction: It has become well recognized that many subjects can most productively be examined through the lens of more than a single discipline. More may be drawn from a piece of 18th century literature (for example) when it is studied in the context of the times and the society in which it was written than from a purely aesthetic point of view. Similarly, additional insight can be gained into the history of a prior time period by examining its literature. Again, that same literature (or history) may be examined from an economic or even an ideological perspective to make additional connections. In this article, we advocate applying the same approach in order to best study the significance of what we refer to as "commonalities."

Commonalities as a worthy subject of study. Our definition of "commonalities" is this: "Whatever tool we need -- that we need to agree on -- that is necessary to get the job done." The three essential features of a commonality are best examined in opposite order. Stated in another way, they are:

1. A desired and beneficial goal.

2. Recognition that in order to achieve that goal, the agreement of multiple parties will be required.

3. A mutually agreeable and appropriate mechanism that can be used to achieve the goal.

The earliest known examples of commonalities include language, weights and measures and monetary systems. Some of these commonalities (e.g., language) evolved organically and continue to develop in the same fashion, while others (such as weights and measures) with time became codified locally or

regionally, and eventually were superseded globally with more coherent constructs (e.g., the metric system).

Today, voluntary consensus standards are by far the most numerous examples of commonalities. But by limiting academic study to standards (as commonly defined), it is possible to miss many of the attributes of commonalities that are most interesting and worthy of examination.

Some of these attributes are the following:

Their relationship to the human condition: The development and use of commonalities (in the form of language – spoken and signed) have existed from the very dawn of human consciousness. Commonalities are not only ancient, but also universal (at least in concept), arising in comparable forms in myriad cultures across the world and throughout time. The continuous development and use of commonalities therefore appears to be intrinsic to the very concept of being human, and more particularly of being a social being.

Pervasiveness: There is no end to the variety of commonalities that have been developed over time, beginning with language, but becoming increasingly diverse and refined with the passage of time. By the definition offered above, commonalities also include musical instruments that have evolved to offer precise voices (e.g., violin, viola, cello, and bass) to fulfill very specialized roles in particular types of music. The result of such standardization permits music to be created and played over time and across international boundaries with predictable results.

Voluntary consensus: In a world rife with conflict and oppressive governments, it is in many ways remarkable that formal, modern standards are as pervasive as they are, each one created through a formal process. Huge corporations, government agencies, universities and individuals from around the world participate in these processes voluntarily, and then implement the resulting standards of their own volition as well.

Flexibility: The variety and ubiquity of commonalities is endlessly apparent, demonstrating not only the utility of the concept, but also its extensibility. In addition to musical instruments, one could add further examples as diverse as literary conventions (from the Greek Chorus to the Japanese Haiku), to the designation of time zones.

Ability to continuously evolve: New types of commonalities are emerging all of the time. Recent examples include open source software, and the Creative Commons copyright concept. Each of these examples, in turn, has its own tailored variations and is the subject of continuing evolution.

Durability: While new types of commonalities are being developed on a constant basis, others have existed for thousands of years and are still in use, such as the concept of weights and measures.

Challenges: At the same time, commonalities, by their nature, have their own limitations, such as the phenomenon of "lock in." For example, someone raised in the English system of weights and measures is apt to find metric measures to be less than intuitive. And just as it is awkward and inconvenient to emigrate and face the need to learn a new language, so also is it expensive and tedious to migrate from one proprietary computer operating system to another.

Rewards from the study of commonalities: After the rich diversity and importance of commonalities is recognized, it is easy to imagine a broad range of topics worth studying. The following is a sampling:

Robustness: Political systems continue to suffer from instability and abuse in many countries around the world, with democracies as well as autocracies frequently being subverted by one faction or another. In contrast, the standard setting process (while also often abused) nevertheless typically continues to function usefully. What are the aspects of the standard setting process that result in stability and the ability of opposing factions to agree? And are any of these aspects transferable into national, regional, or global governmental processes?

Economic value: Data regarding the economic value of standard setting is surprisingly sparse. And yet when such studies are conducted, the results can be dramatic. The United States National

Institute of Science and Technology (NIST) has conducted such analyses on occasion, and the results have never failed to be startling. In one recent study <www.nist.gov/public_affairs/techbeat/tb2004_0830.htm#software>, NIST found that the absence of adequate software interoperability in non-residential American buildings cost over $15.8 billion dollars in lost efficiency in 2002 alone. What are the areas that could benefit most from the development and application of standards, and how can this process best be facilitated?

Optimization: Given the value of standards, how could the standard setting process within existing organizations be optimized to make it more efficient and effective? With new types of technical challenges to address and new stakeholders expressing interests in results, how should old techniques adjust to address new realities?

Coordination: The same forces that are rendering standards more important are also exposing the limitations of the existing standard setting infrastructure. With the convergence not just of information technology and communications technology, but of disciplines as diverse as nanotechnology and life sciences, how should that infrastructure evolve, and how should the various existing and new nodes in this system best coordinate their efforts to maximal benefit?

Consumer interests: Does the current standard setting infrastructure adequately serve consumer interests, or does it serve users only to the extent that it also advances the interests of other stakeholders (and particularly vendors)? If the latter, how can this deficit best be addressed?

Conscious evolution: The development of new types of commonalities tends to be organic rather than deliberate, at the institutional level (the development of open source being an obvious example). Perhaps just as biotechnology is learning to work at the genetic level, the process of creating new types of commonalities, and the processes for creating them, could be more deliberately conceived as well.

Government support: What is the ideal relationship between voluntary consensus standards and government? How can governments best support standard setting (from a policy, economic and participatory perspective), and how can the standard setting process best support the needs and priorities of government, in its role as servant of the public interest, and also as a consumer of goods and services?

Social Policy: As the Web and the Internet play a greater and greater role in society, commerce, and education, how should its evolution and operation be managed and governed? Should the standards that enable these vital resources continue to develop within self-selected and independent standards bodies, or should the services that they make possible be considered to be akin to utilities, and be subjected to regulation in the same fashion as electricity?

Sociology: What does the process of commonality creation (both organic as well as formal) tell us about how people think and interact? What does this particular exercise, viewed in microcosm, tell us about other ways in which people interact? Are their lessons that can be learned from human behavior in standard setting that could productively be applied elsewhere, and vice versa?

Governance: What can the ability of competitors to agree in a single standard setting process, and of national standard setting bodies to collaborate in global associations, teach us about governance structures? What are the aspects of these processes that permit this result, and can they be applied in governmental and other contexts to advantage?

Conclusions: While standards and standard setting have not been wholly ignored as a subject of scholarship, it is our view that they have to date failed to attract either the degree of attention, or the level of appreciation that they merit. Further, we believe that there is a depth of meaning and a breadth of opportunity to learn lessons from commonalities that exceeds the traditional boundaries within which they have been viewed. The time is ripe for standards to be recognized as a multi-faceted field of study where much remains to be done, and even more of value remains to be learned.

ANNOUNCING

THE CONSORTIUMINFO.ORG STANDARDS <META> LIBRARY

Andrew Updegrove

> ***MetaLibrary:*** *An (abstract) metalibrary is the entire collection of a society's data, information, and techniques, together with the means by which it is stored, accessed, and communicated. (Rick Sutcliffe, The Fourth Civilization, 1998)*

We take great pleasure this month in announcing the newest major resource at ConsortiumInfo.org: the ***Standards MetaLibrary*** <www.consortiuminfo.org/metalibrary>.

What is the Standards MetaLibrary? Just as "meta information" is "information about information" and not useful data in its own right, and "metatags" are hidden codes that help a browser find a specific webpage, a "metalibrary" is a means to an end, and not the end in itself. In this case, the MetaLibrary is a research tool comprising an ever-increasing number of carefully indexed, sortable and searchable abstracts (705, as of the launch date) of articles about standards. Each abstract is linked to the full text of the article at its host site.

The Standards MetaLibrary is not limited to material about standards in a narrow sense. Rather, it focuses on the importance of standards to the modern world and their impact on society, and how they are created, and by whom. The materials included therefore address topics such as how the standard setting process operates, how governments support this process and utilize standards, the economic benefits of standards uptake, legal aspects of the use (and abuse) of standards, and many other subjects that illustrate the role of standards in the world today.

Why is there a need for a Standards MetaLibrary? There are four principal reasons why we have created, and why Sun Microsystems has supported (Sun provided a generous development grant), the Standards MetaLibrary:

- To raise the consciousness of society in general, and government in particular, on the importance of standards to society. With the increasing interdependence of the world on the Internet and the Web, the standards that enable communications and information technology are becoming essential to the operation of almost all aspects of modern life. The Standards MetaLibrary will provide a ready, effective and encyclopedic reference for those creating policy and supporting the legislative process.

- To encourage the proliferation of serious works of scholarship on standards and standard setting. By providing greater exposure for existing work, greater ease for conducting further research, and a broader audience for new work, we hope to provide incentives for more authors to dedicate their efforts to works of scholarship in this area of study.

- By making a rich and growing body of work readily available (most of which has been made available by the copyright holders without cost), we hope to encourage colleges and universities to offer more courses on standards, and to include more readings on standards in the syllabi of courses on other subjects as well.

- As the number of pages available on the Web expands more rapidly than the ability of search engines to efficiently filter them, the need for specialized on-line research resources becomes more acute. For example, a search using the relatively narrow request "consortium +standard +technical +internet +society" on the new Google Scholar web browser returned 8,110 items on February 12, 2005. With such riches at hand, how can someone performing research reliably find her way to the particular information needed?

How is the MetaLibrary Organized? The Metalibrary currently has 18 major categories (*shown at right*), and 85 subcategories. In each subcategory, the holdings may be sorted alphabetically (by author name and by article title) as well as by date and by the frequency with which the individual items have been accessed by site visitors.

Browse
By Technical Area
Certification and Conformance Testing
Economics
Formation and Management
Government
History of Standard Setting
Intellectual Property Rights (IPR)
Litigation & Legal Issues
Open Source
Other Resources
Participation
Perspectives & Viewpoints
Process of Standard Setting
Regional/National
Specific Organizations
Standards & Society
Structures/Types/Models
Theory and Practice

How did the Standards MetaLibrary come to be created? The concept and structure of the MetaLibrary was conceived by Andrew Updegrove, the creator of ConsortiumInfo.org, and a partner in the Boston-based law firm of ***Gesmer Updegrove LLP***. That law firm (which has represented more standard setting organizations than any other law firm in the country), supports both ConsortiumInfo.org and the MetaLibrary by providing hosting and web development services. The acquisition of all of the data in the Standards MetaLibrary was made possible by a generous grant from ***Sun Microsystems, Inc.*** The web development work was performed by Nathan Burke, the Gesmer Updegrove Webmaster, and all data collection and categorization was conducted by Greg Johnson, who works full-time on ConsortiumInfo.org projects.

Future plans: The Standards MetaLibrary by definition is a work in process. The work program for the balance of 2005 currently includes the following:

- Continuous addition of more articles as they are located
- Abstracting and linking of legislation, policy papers and other primary resource materials
- Compilation of a master bibliography, comprising all sources listed in the bibliographies of articles referenced in the Standards MetaLibrary
- Acting as a host for serious works of authorship not already available on the Web
- Addition of an automatic conversion tool to shift bibliographic data from MLA format to other commonly used citation forms
- Providing Amazon.com links to all in-print books listed in the master bibliography

Eventually, we hope to host a new peer-reviewed on-line eJournal on standards.

What you can do to help build the Standards MetaLibrary:

Tell us about a suitable on-line article that we don't yet link to. Simply send a link to the article to submit.articles@consortiuminfo.org. If we agree that the article is appropriate for inclusion, we will promptly add it to the Standards MetaLibrary.

Send us an article for hosting. If you have a suitable unpublished article or conference paper that is not currently available online, please send it to us. If we agree that it is appropriate for the Standards MetaLibrary, we will send you a brief copyright permission statement for your agreement before we post the article (you will retain ownership of the article or paper). Please be sure that your article includes a brief abstract.

Tell us how we can make the Standards MetaLibrary better. All suggestions, critiques and other constructive input will be gratefully received. We will acknowledge and respond to all such email. Please send your input to updegrove@consortiuminfo.org.

Offer to help fund the MetaLibrary, or one of the other features of ConsortiumInfo.org. Contact Andrew Updegrove at 617/350-6800, or by email at updegrove@consortiuminfo.org.

Partner with us. If you are a library, university, publisher, or other interested party and would like to discuss how we could work together, please contact us as above.

Join our Advisory Board. If you have an appropriate background and would like to join the ConsortiumInfo.org Advisory Board, again, please get in touch.

Volunteer to help. There are many ways you can help. The MetaLibrary is an ongoing and labor-intensive project. We would welcome assistance in expanding the MetaLibrary and adding to its features.

As with all of the other features of ConsortiumInfo.org, we hope that you find the Standards MetaLibrary useful to you, and a worthwhile addition to the tools that you use to further explore -- and to contribute back – to the world of standards.

Comments? updegrove@consortiuminfo.org

From the Standards Blog

#25 How strict a standard? In Praise of the Hammond B-3 Organ

A perennial question in the world of standard setting is this: "How tightly should a standard define, and thereby constrain, its implementation?"

In one type of standard (so-called performance standards), only the ends, but not the means are mandated. For purposes of truth in packaging, a 60-watt bulb is a 60-watt bulb, so long as it produces 60 watts of illumination, and regardless of how it achieves that feat. The second type of standard enables interoperability, and this type of standard is far less forgiving. It is this type of standard that assures you that the same 60-watt light bulb just discussed will invariably fit in your light socket.

Clearly, the first type of standard permits great flexibility, while the latter provides virtually none at all.

Is one type of standard better than another? Clearly not; they simply serve different goals. The art, as in so many things, is to find the right balance (even in the second type of standard) between ensuring usability, while enabling beneficial creativity.

This need for balance is recognized in one of the core tenets of modern standard setting, applauded by competitors, antitrust authorities and economists alike. That tenet goes something like this: vendors should be encouraged to collaborate on the creation of the standards necessary to enable new goods and services to be offered, and then compete in the creation of additional value-added features that will distinguish their particular wares in the marketplace from each other. And, in fact, this is exactly what does happen all of the time.

This conjunction of collaboration and competition has been in existence for far longer than the modern process of voluntary consensus-based standard setting. Consider, for example, the ancient tradition across all peoples of creating musical instruments (and surprisingly similar instruments, at that).

Anthropologists investigating cultures in out of the way places invariably find each of the three principal musical types in use. Those timeless variations comprise instruments that create sound by (a) hitting something with the hand or some other object, (b) blowing through something hollow, or (c) making a stretched string vibrate. Thus, the first level of musical standardization arises from the realities of physics and the universal availability of certain types of natural materials.

From this common beginning, local forces may have exerted the most influence on how these universal progenitors further evolved. Those forces could involve variations in locally available materials, or

perhaps purely eclectic tastes (compare, for example, the modest pan pipes of the Andes with the ten foot long Alpenhorns of the Tyrol).

Still, within specific cultures standardization of musical instruments invariably did take place - for the same general reasons that standardization usually takes place. Once instruments become similar, several can be played together to yield a more pleasing result, and music can be created that best suits the capabilities of the same instruments. Eventually, music (such as classical music) can be shared on a global basis, inspiring the creation of an ever-growing body of compositions that can be performed as intended anywhere in the world.

At the same time, individual craftsmen can still compete in the creation of instruments, based upon their talents and the non-standardized elements (or permissible variations within standardized elements) that they may employ to greatest effect. Thus, the particular pieces of wood selected and the secret glues and varnishes devised by master Luthiers Amati and Stradivarius helped produce instruments that, while visually indistinguishable from those constructed by lesser mortals, yield sounds of a richness and purity never replicated by their descendants in the same craft.

Happily, the specifications for musical instruments intended for non-symphonic use are more forgiving than those employed in telecommunications. This is in part because some musical instruments embody multiple layers of compliance, not all of which are mandatory. Thus, the builder (and the buyer) can choose the level of compliance that is desired. The result is that there is more room for experimentation, and therefore also for evolution in the state of the art.

All of which suffices to bring us to one of the truly iconic instruments of the second half of the twentieth century: the Hammond B-3 Organ (with Leslie speakers).

While you may not recognize the name "Hammond B-3," if you are an American (or, indeed, a jazz aficionado of any nationality) between the age of 30 and 75, you are nonetheless intimately familiar with its unique. To give but a single example, if you recall the soaring organ riff at the end of Crosby, Stills & Nash's "Love the One You're With," you will instantly recognize the instrument of which we speak, and the sound we are eulogizing. Again, if you are a fan of Gospel music, you've heard far more from the B-3 than you ever did from your eighth grade math teacher. Odds are that you paid more attention as well.

If you have ever seen a B-3 up close at a jazz or rock event, you will not likely have forgotten its unlikely physical presence, either. I made my first acquaintance with one around 1972, at a college mixer. In the middle of the colored lights, black speakers on stands, mikes and amps there incongruously stood what looked like (and was) a full-sized organ, complete with walnut case, double keyboard, full range of foot pedals and stops, and heavy (attached) wooden bench.

At 400 pounds, the B-3 is a roadie's nightmare and a keyboardists' delight. But a B-3 without a set (two, not one) of six foot high Leslie speakers, each almost as heavy as the organ itself and similarly encased in wood, is not in fact a Hammond B-3 at all. Throughout his life, this reality rankled Laurens Hammond, the inventor of the B-3. While a genius when it came to magnetic field tone generators, Hammond was not as gifted a designer of speakers as was Don Leslie, the acoustic magician behind the eponymous speakers that so brilliantly translated the best the B-3 had to offer into actual sound.

Those Leslie speakers added a further unworldly aspect to the presence of the Hammond B-3 in concern, with their spinning horns that could, at the whim of the musician, be accelerated from a slow spin to a near-blur that produced a paroxysm of Doppler-effected warbling that was like no other.

Was the Hammond B-3 an organ? Indisputably, just as Marilyn Monroe was… You get the idea. The basic elements were standard, but the way they were put together was unique. If Stradivarius was just another craftsman, then Laurens Hammond was just a technician.

Amazingly enough, Laurens was closer to that description than one would expect. By most accounts, he may even have been tone deaf. But he was an incredibly gifted engineer that brought (then) cutting edge technology to the design of a venerable mechanical instrument, creating a bridge between the church pipe organ (with which it was intended to compete) and the modern music synthesizer.

In the roughly 20 years that the B-3 was in production, over 100,000 were sold -- making it the most popular electric organ ever built. An enormous number are still in use, partly through the efforts of the skilled refurbishers that have sprung up to keep them in action. So popular did the Hammond B-3 organ become, and so perfectly matched to it were the Leslie speakers, that Don Leslie never bothered to advertise his wares at all. In fact, he was barely able to meet the demand.

Today, manufacturers continue to offer instruments that consciously (if never totally successfully) mimic the combination of a Hammond B-3 and a set of 122 Leslie speakers. But listen to the DJ give the credits on a jazz show, and you'll always hear them carefully intone who is "on the Hammond B-3 organ" on a given track. Look closely on the liner notes of a CD, and you'll see the same thing. That's not Eric Clapton's session musician on the "electric organ." He's on a *Hammond B-3* organ. In other words, the Hammond B-3 has received recognition as an instrument in its own right - something even Stradivarius failed to achieve.

Does all of this make the B-3 a "gold standard?" Not at all. A B-3 sounds like a B-3, and nothing else truly does (or perhaps ever will). Instead, the Hammond B-3 set a unique standard that continues to be valued for the qualities that set it apart.

Or, in modern standards parlance, Laurens Hammond out-competed all others with his ability to create truly superlative value-added features. A conclusion in which all music lovers would concur.

All, perhaps, except those who also happen to have been roadies.

Comments: updegrove@consortiuminfo.org

# # #

Useful Links and Information:

See Alpenhorns in action at:
http://image.guardian.co.uk/sys-images/Travel/Pix/pictures/2002/05/31/1alpen.jpg

For another affectionate (and more technically detailed) history of the Hammond B-3 Organ, see Nelson, Glen E. "History of the Hammond B-3 Organ," at: http://theatreorgans.com/grounds/docs/history.html

For confirmation and debunking of commonly held beliefs about the Hammond B-3 organ, see Olsen, Harvey. "Leslie Speakers and Hammond Organs: Rumors, Myths, Facts, and Lore," at:
http://www.hammond-organ.com/History/hammond_lore.htm

Postings are made to the Standards Blog on a regular basis. Bookmark:

http://www.consortiuminfo.org/blog/

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, bookmark our News page, or take advantage of our RSS feed: http://www.consortiuminfo.org/news/rss/ Updates are usually posted on Mondays and Wednesdays.

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

New Consortia

A gaggle of new consortia: *One reliable barometer of whether the technology sector is going places or stagnating is the number of new consortia being launched. By that measure, the technology economy is on a definite uptick, with new organizations being launched in the last few weeks in areas as diverse as external memory, VoIP, holographic DVD storage, PHP, and grid computing. Three of the new organizations identified security concerns as a primary focus of their projected activities. Not to be outdone, an existing standards development organization launched a major new initiative as well: the Aerospace Industries Association announced the formation of the Strategic Standardization Forum for Aerospace.*

PISMO Advisory Council Launched to Define External Memory Interface Standard

TMCnet.com, SUNNYVALE, CA, February 7, 2005-- Spansion, ARM, NanoAmp, SMedia, Spreadtrum and Toshiba Form Organization to Streamline Memory Validation and Test. A group of leading semiconductor companies today announced the launch of the PISMO Advisory Council, the industry's first organization focused on streamlining system-level memory validation and test. The group will define a single, board-level interface standard that allows designers to use a variety of memory devices on development platforms from multiple vendors in a plug-and-play fashion. The new PISMO (Platform Independent Storage Module) standard is expected to enable the more rapid deployment of increasingly powerful and affordable mobile telecommunications, computing and consumer products. ...Full Story

VoIP Leaders Form Alliance for VoIP Security Research and Testing

VOIPSA, Austin, TX, February 7, 2005-- The industry's first Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) Security Alliance was launched today in conjunction with leading VoIP vendors, providers, security researchers, and thought leaders to discover and reduce VoIP security risks. Some of the charter members include 3Com, Alcatel, Avaya, Codenomicon, Columbia University, Ernst and Young's Guiliani Advanced Security Center, Insightix, NetCentrex, Qualys, SecureLogix, Siemens, Sourcefire, Southern Methodist University, Spirent, Symantec, the SANS Institute, Tenable Network Security, and TippingPoint. A complete list of members can be accessed at www.voipsa.org. The growing convergence of voice and data networks only serves to exacerbate and magnify the security risks of today's traditional prevalent cyber attacks. Successful attacks against a combined voice and data network can cripple an enterprise, halt communications required for productivity, and result in irate customers and lost revenue. ...Full Story

New industry consortium to promote holographic storage

PC PRO, February 4, 2005-- The newly formed Holographic Versatile Disc (HVD) Alliance has been established to promote holographic-based storage for a new generation of optical discs. Blue laser-based Blu-ray is already set to replace current red laser-based DVD technology, but holographic storage is getting ready for its spot in the light. Whereas Blu-ray should enable 27GB of storage on a single-layer

disc (about 13 hours of standard-definition television), the HVD Alliance is anticipating discs storing multiple terabytes of data, written at a rate of 1Gbit/sec. The members of the HDV Alliance comprise Optware, CMC Magnetics, Fuji Photo Film, Nippon Paint, Pulstec Industrial and Toagose, reports the EE Times. The group is seeking to "accelerate development and standardization of the HVD' system." ...Full Story

PHP Consortium Tackles Third-Party Application Security
By: Ryan Naraine

eWeek, February 1, 2005 -- Worried that the credibility of the PHP scripting language is being hurt by high-profile security flaws in third-party applications, an international group of coding experts is taking matters into their own hands. The group, which includes Zend Engine developer Andi Gutmans, has formed the PHP Security Consortium with ambitious plans to promote secure programming practices among developers and set up a one-stop shop for documentation, tools and standards. ...Full Story

New Consortium Promotes Grid Computing For Businesses
By: Aaron Ricadela

InformationWeek, January 24, 2005-- A group of technology companies including Hewlett-Packard, IBM, Intel, and Sun Microsystems Monday said they've formed a new consortium to develop and promote grid-computing software for businesses. The group, called the Globus Consortium, will try to promote industry standards and develop new features for grid-computing software that would make it more attractive to large companies. HP, IBM, Intel, and Sun have invested $250,000 each, according to Ian Foster, a consortium board member who helped develop the original grid-computing software, the Globus Toolkit. The other participants in the consortium are Nortel Networks and [startup] Univa Corp. ...Full Story

AIA Forms Strategic Standardization Forum Following Groundbreaking Report

AIA-Aerospace Press Release, Arlington, VA, January 28, 2005-- A newly created forum will provide sweeping guidance of aerospace manufacturing standardization, the most ambitious such undertaking in any industry worldwide. The Aerospace Industries Association Executive Committee approved the creation of the Strategic Standardization Forum for Aerospace, which will provide leadership, guide activities, and address related issues, officials said. The move comes after the release of the industry's Report on the Future of Aerospace Standardization, one of the first follow-ups to the 2002 President's Commission on the future of the U.S. Aerospace Industry. ...Full Story

Pacific Rim Update

East is East: ICT standards have traditionally been developed exclusively in the western world and implemented in the East, but those days may be waning as China and its Pacific Rim neighbors begin to play the standards card. The wireless standards face-off between Intel et al. and the Chinese government last year was the first standards story involving the Far East to grab business headlines, but other less noticed standards news continues to emanate from countries such as Japan, Korea, and China. Look for this trend to not only continue, but also pick up steam, with the impact going beyond the advent of new players on the scene. China, in particular, has its own vision of where it wishes to go, the market power to back it up, and a commitment at the government level to not only devise a standards strategy, but to fund the efforts needed to create and promote the standards it sees as being necessary

to achieve its goals. The following selection of items showcases standards news from Japan, China, Taiwan, and even geographically tiny, but economically powerful Singapore.

Japan Offers ISO a Gen 2 Alternative
By: Mary Catherine O'Connor

RFID Journal, February 10, 2005-- As EPCglobal worked on developing a second-generation air-interface protocol, the goal was to create one standard that could serve for all classes of UHF RFID tags with worldwide regulatory compliance. Although the process was not easy or quick, the group did manage to declare its Gen 2 protocol a standard and work around a sticky issue regarding 8 bits of code (see Gen 2 Finds a Path to ISO Approval) in time for the ISO standard's committee meeting held Jan. 24-25 in Boca Raton, Fla. Here, EPCglobal submitted the technical specifications for its Gen 2 protocol as a candidate for approval under the ISO 18000-6 standard. ...Full Story

Standards update: Modbus Becomes Chinese standard; PC/104 Consortium to adopt EPIC spec

Control Engineering, February 10, 2005-- Ubiquitous Modbus network protocol has enjoyed wide de facto application in China. Recently it has gained official status in that country, being adopted as a standard in the People's Republic of China (PRC). Meanwhile, the PC/104 Embedded Consortium agreed to adopt the new EPIC Specification to widen support of embedded platforms that embrace PC/104 technology. More details about each development follow. The Standardization Administration of China (SAC) has formally launched three standards for industrial automation in the PRC-as announced by Modbus-IDA, the international organization for suppliers, implementers, and users of Modbus and its companion protocols. The new Chinese standards comprise three parts of "Modbus Industrial Automation Network Specification," namely: ...Full Story

IDA to take S'pore-developed IT standard global
By: Isabelle Chan

CNET Asia, February 8, 2005-- The Infocomm Development Authority of Singapore wants to make its business continuity and disaster recovery standard internationally accepted. Launched in December last year, the SS507 standard serves to differentiate BC/DR (business continuity/disaster recovery) service providers and provide guidance for organizations in selecting the best-fit providers. It was developed by IDA and the Business Continuity/Disaster Recovery Working Group of the Information Technology Standards Committee in Singapore. "IDA and our industry partners will promote the standard internationally, especially to regional BC/DR service providers and standards associations," an IDA spokesperson told CNETAsia. ...Full Story

New Memory Card Format Compatible with SD, MMC Hardware
By: Ed Hardy

Brighthand.com, January 26, 2005-- A consortium of Taiwanese companies has proposed a new memory card format. MÂ1/4-Cards will be able to fit in slots designed for SD and MMC cards, but will be cheaper to make. The new cards will be less expensive to make because they will be simpler than SD cards. "The SD I/O is not so easily used. It requires a lot of effort to develop, especially in terms of software," Gordon Yu told the EE Times. Mr. Yu's company makes SD cards under the name Pretec. The new cards will use the USB protocol to handle input/output. ...Full Story

Europe Update

West is West: *While the Asian Tiger was roaring, the European Union was continuing to struggle over whether to permit or hold the line against software patents, and with how to address privacy concerns related to RFID technology. In both cases, the European view is more conservative than that which has prevailed in the United States. In the case of software patents, the floodgates were unleashed in the U.S. more than twenty years ago, while in the area of Internet and Web privacy, the legislative response in America to date has been less stringent than across the water. Indeed, not only Wal-Mart but the Department of Defense have opted for RFID first, and privacy second. Our first selection below reports on the privacy debate, while the two items that follow track the ongoing saga in the EU over whether – or not – to broaden the criteria for patent protection. Europe may well chart a different course regarding software patents, and can be expected to impose privacy protection rules regarding the use of RFID tags that are more conservative than those that are likely to evolve in the U.S.*

The European Union Works Out RFID Privacy Legislation
By: Laurie Sullivan

InformationWeek, February 6, 2005-- The European Union is exploring ways to protect citizens' privacy with regards to personal data gathered using radio-frequency identification technology. The union created a working group that in mid-January published its first assessment--Working Document 105. The group is asking individuals to E-mail comments on its findings by March 31 to market-privacy-consultations@cec.eu.int. The document outlines RFID's potential in a variety of business sectors, including health care, retail, pharmaceutical, and logistics, and calls attention to the need for companies to comply with principals in EU privacy directives whenever personal data is collecting using RFID technology. The document also guides makers of RFID tags, readers, and applications, as well as standards bodies, on their responsibility to develop privacy-compliant technology. ...Full Story

EU Lawmakers May Rewrite Contested IT Patent Plan
By: Matthew Broersma

eWeek, January 21, 2005-- A fresh round of behind-the-scenes maneuvering around the European Union's efforts to pass IT patent legislation has left the European Parliament with a narrow window of opportunity to scrap the current, highly controversial text and start over from scratch, according to sources. The EU Council quietly planned to adopt the proposal (termed a Common Position) on Monday, according to sources. But Poland, which intervened to stop a planned vote last month, late this week stepped in again to delay approval, with the result that adoption won't happen until Jan. 31, sources said. ...Full Story

Global Software Patent Scrap Continues, EU Restarts Process
By: Matthew Broersma

eWeek, February 3, 2005-- The European Parliament's legal affairs committee, called JURI, has voted nearly unanimously to ask for a restart to the process around the European Union's proposed IT patents legislation. The decision will continue the turmoil over differing software patent law in two of the world's major technology markets. As U.S. software companies spend millions defending or attacking intellectual property holdings, European vendors are taking advantage of their easier legal climate for software, especially smaller companies and open-source projects. ...Full Story

Public Advocacy

Listen to me: *Few consortia engage in lobbying, but their older brethren in the accredited standards development community frequently do. As the following article demonstrates, a standard setting organization can be an effective venue to marshal the high-level cooperation of an industry. In this case, the CEOs of Alcatel, Lucent, Motorola, QUALCOMM, and Siemens.*

TIA Member CEOs Provide Vision of Converged, IP Future for House Panel

TIA Press Release, Arlington, VA, February 9, 2005-- Testifying before the House Energy and Commerce Committee's Subcommittee on Telecommunications and the Internet, chief executives of TIA member companies today outlined their organizations' views on convergence in the communications industry, broadband deployment and the continued emergence of Internet protocol (IP) networks and technologies. Witnesses [testified in hearings entitled]: "How Internet Protocol-Enabled Services are Changing the Face of Communications: A View from Technology Companies...Full Story

Intellectual Property

Whew! *Those who were part of the marathon effort by the W3C to revise their patent policy heaved a sigh of relief when that task was completed – after some three years of effort. Now it's the turn of those who stuck it out through the revision of W3C peer organization OASIS, which announced the completion of its own set of revisions earlier this month after a multi-year effort. The new version of the OASIS Intellectual Property Policy has been updated in numerous respects, and has also been crafted to offer a novel three choices of commitments that participants in a given process may elect. The first article below reports in detail on the mechanics of the new policy and the transition path from the old to the new while the second focuses on the features of the new policy that make it more welcoming to open source developers.*

OASIS revamps IP policy to avoid hidden patent charges
By: Robert McMillan

ComputerWorld, February 8, 2005-- After more than two years of review and deliberation, a key Web standards consortium has revised its intellectual property policy, forcing contributors to declare whether they plan to collect royalties on work they submit to the organization's technical committees. The consortium, the Organization for the Advancement of Structured Information Standards (OASIS), will implement the change on April 15. Under the new policy, the organization's existing technical committees will have two years to declare whether the standards they are developing are being released under "royalty free" terms, which do not allow patent holders to charge for their intellectual property (IP). Committees formed after April 15 must declare their IP policy upon creation. ...Full Story

Warming up to open source
By: Paul Festa

ZDNet, February 9, 2005-- OASIS (the Organization for the Advancement of Structured Information Standards) on Monday released its updated intellectual property policy, which will take effect April 15. In a statement, OASIS said it made the revision "to enhance support for open standards development." That, OASIS members said, meant a friendlier environment for open-source developers, whose licenses prevent them from using technologies that have royalties attached. ...Full Story

Rambus rides again: *Its been over four years since Rambus last brought a new infringement suit. Instead, the news has focused on the unsuccessful efforts of Infineon Technologies to sustain an early jury verdict against Rambus when that decision was appealed, and on the equally unsuccessful efforts (so far) of the Federal Trade Commission to convict Rambus on charges relating to the same course of behavior. Now Rambus is back on the attack, and its quarry once again includes some of the defendants (Infineon Technologies and Hynix Semiconductor) in the still ongoing original litigation.*

Rambus files new memory suit
By: Michael Kanellos

CNET News.com, January 25, 2005-- The Los Altos, Calif.-based chip designer announced on Tuesday that it had filed suit against Hynix Semiconductor, Taiwan's Nanya Technology and Infineon Technologies, as well as the latter two companies' joint venture, Inotera Memories, for allegedly violating its intellectual property in producing DDR2 DRAM, which started to get incorporated into PCs last year. The suit, filed in the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California, alleges that the GDDR2 and GDDR3 memory found on graphics cards violates its patents. The lawsuit will likely make memory executives shiver. Rambus has pending suits against Infineon, Hynix and Micron that allege that DDR DRAM--the most common type of memory used in PCs for the last several years--produced by these companies violates its intellectual property. These companies, in turn, have filed countersuits alleging that the patents are invalid and were obtained fraudulently. ...Full Story

Open Source

So, "open standards" means what, exactly? *Those in the standards community have haggled for decades over the proper definition of "open standards," without arriving at an exact definition that everyone would agree upon. Now a new dynamic has been introduced into the mix, as the open source community weighs in with its own opinions on the subject, and major vendors such as IBM are promoting their own vision of what "open standards" should mean. The first article below shows that the open source community is taking the question seriously, as the Open Source Initiative announces that henceforth it will concern itself not only with what is (and isn't) an "open source license," but also what should and should not qualify as an open standard in the context of an open source environment. The second article demonstrates that the industry will continue to look to OSI as the definitive arbiter of open source licensing.*

Open Source Initiative Changes Leaders
By: Steven J. Vaughan-Nichols

eWeek, February 1, 2005-- The Open Source Initiative announced Tuesday that it is replacing its longtime president, Eric S. Raymond, and other officers. The moves are part of the group's plans to expand its activities beyond its management of the Open Source Definition and the certification of open-source licenses to include creating a registry of open-source software projects and defining "open standards" that are consistent with open source. The OSI is the group behind open-source licenses. Approval from the OSI is necessary before any software license can be considered open-source. ...Full Story

Sun License to Give Developers Patent-Use Rights
By: Peter Galli

eWeek, January 19, 2005-- The Open Source Initiative has approved Sun Microsystems' CDDL (Common Development and Distribution License), paving the way for the Santa Clara, Calif., company to proceed with its plan to release its Solaris operating system as an open-source project. But if Sun does use the CDDL for its Open Solaris project, as is expected, one of this license's benefits for developers and the open-source community is that "with the CDDL, if you read it carefully, Sun will convey all of its

patents to the community, and not just 500 like IBM recently did, " a source close to the company told eWEEK. Sun also is considering open-sourcing its JES (Java Enterprise System) under the CDDL. "Everything that is built at Sun would fall under the CDDL" if that happened, the source said. ...Full Story

Hi Ho, Open Software, Away! *for years, high-minded law school graduates have forsaken lucrative big firm jobs to work in legal aid clinics to help the poor. Now there will be another alternative career path, with the founding (by open source advocate Eben Moglen) and funding (by Open Source Development Labs) of a legal center to provide free legal services to needy open source development projects.*

Lawyers ride shotgun for open source
By: Stephen Shankland

CNET.com, January 31, 2005-- A prominent intellectual property lawyer in the open-source movement is helping launch a center to provide free services to developers who use the collaborative programming method. Eben Moglen, a Columbia University law professor who has represented the Free Software Foundation in legal cases, said that he will help run the new Software Freedom Law Center, which is set to be announced on Tuesday. ...Full Story

Standards and Society

In all things, interoperability: *Enabling things to work together has been the role of standards from day one. As the following selection of articles demonstrate, in the increasingly high tech world in which we live, the urgent need for interoperability standards arises in more and more settings.*

XML Levels Educational Playing Field for Blind & Visually Impaired

BusinessWire, New York, NY, February 8, 2005-- For the blind and visually impaired new technology has opened doors to education. They can listen to a textbook on a computer or read using refreshable braille. Yet students with print disabilities needed to wait six months or longer for an accessible textbook to be made available. This will change with the reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Educational Act (IDEA). The act, signed December 3 by President Bush, gives students with print disabilities equal access to educational materials as their sighted peers. Key to the act is requiring a standard file format for each textbook. This makes conversion into accessible formats such as braille, large print or digital text much faster. ...Full Story

Liberty Alliance Response to National Health Information Network RFI

The Cover Pages, January 18, 2005-- Liberty Alliance, the global consortium for open federated identity standards and identity Web-based services, today announced that it had submitted a formal response to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology (ONCHIT) Request for Information (RFI) on "Development and Adoption of a National Health Information Network." The response was submitted on behalf of Liberty's 150-member base, and addresses possible methods by which widespread interoperability and health information exchange can be deployed and operated on a sustainable basis. Liberty also participated in a joint filing authored by 13 organizations, including the Markle Foundation, HIMSS, the AMIA, ANSI and a number of other organizations. Liberty's federated identity standards and business guidelines focus on privacy, confidentiality and security, offering the flexible, secure and open infrastructure that is required to support and manage online services and transactions that are necessary in healthcare. ...Full Story

Helping ATMs move into the 21st century
By: Tracy Kitten

ATM Marketplace.com, January 21, 2005-- Banking and modern communications technology have rarely been synonymous, at least not until recently. Interactive Financial eXchange, or IFX, is a messaging standard that makes it easier for delivery channels such as ATMs, teller stations and voice response systems to communicate with each other. It is bringing the banking industry into the 21st Century, according to industry experts like Rick Duvall, senior product manager for ACI Worldwide and a member of the IFX Forum ATM/POS Work Group. ...Full Story

EMERGENCY INTEROPERABILITY CONSORTIUM ANNOUNCES AGREEMENT WITH DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY TO PROMOTE DATA SHARING

Directions Magazine, Washington, D.C., January 17, 2005-- The Emergency Interoperability Consortium (EIC) announced that it has signed a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to promote the development and proliferation of data sharing standards for emergency response. Thought to be the first of its kind between DHS and a non-government entity, the agreement establishes an alliance between the organizations to jointly promote the design, development, release, and use of XML standards to help solve data sharing problems commonly encountered during emergency operations. The initial term of the agreement is three years. "This DHS/EIC alliance is an important step towards realizing the potential of a public/private partnership to rapidly develop and proliferate valid and commercially sustainable interoperability standards," commented Matt Walton, EIC chairman and vice chairman and founder of E Team, Inc., a Los Angeles-based manufacturer of crisis management software. ...Full Story

Standards and Your Business

Tag, you're it: *February is the month that the SEC officially began accepting filings utilizing the eXtensible Business Reporting Language (XBRL), an XML schema optimized for business reporting use. The move is being welcomed not only by the SEC, as noted in the first article below, but by savvy investors and analysts as well, as indicated in the second item.*

After Sarbanes-Oxley, XBRL?

BusinessWeek, February 8, 2005-- On Feb. 3, financial reporting took a giant step into the future with the Securities & Exchange Commission's announcement that it's ready to start accepting corporate financial reports that have been tagged with newly developed software code known as XBRL. That jumble of letters stands for Extensible Business Reporting Language. Software developers will easily grasp that it's a kind of XML (Extensible Markup Language), in this case tailored for business reporting. But to most financial professionals, XBRL represents a confusing new intersection of high tech and finance that they aren't quite ready to embrace. ...Full Story

Lifting the lid: XBRL seen easing financial analysis
By: Daniel Sorid and Joel Rothstein

BusinessWorld, January 24, 2005-- The day when stock investors scan corporate results with computer software to make immediate buy-and-sell decisions may be close at hand. After agonizingly slow progress, a computer language of business reporting called XBRL appears to be on the verge of wider adoption, its backers say. XBRL could have major implications on the speed at which hedge fund managers and other investors make trading decisions, making accounting shenanigans more readily

apparent and potentially increasing stock price volatility. XBRL, which stands for Extensible Business Reporting Language, consists of thousands of "tags" that correspond to items on financial reports, including balance sheets and income statements, making corporate filings understandable by a computer. ...Full Story

Standards and the Home

Your digital home and you: *One of the trends we will be reporting on in detail this year is the increasing digitization of the home, based upon an extensive skein of standards. In the following press release, CableLabs ® reports on the roll out of one such standard that will be certain to see heavy use: it will help enable next-generation video on demand services into the home.*

CableLabs® Issues Headend VoD Metadata ADI 2.0 Specifications

CableLabs Press Release, Louisville, CO, January 27, 2005-- Cable Television Laboratories, Inc. (Cablelabs) announced today that it has issued the first set of specifications to aid in the creation of next-generation Video-on-Demand (VoD) cable services through the development of headend metadata and content distribution documents. The two specifications are the products of a collaborative group comprised of cable operators, hardware vendors, and content providers. These newly released specifications build upon a family of specifications that currently are in use and have been adopted to address the needs of VoD services in the cable industry. The specifications address some of the needs anticipated for next-generation cable services, such as enhanced VoD, subscription VoD, advertising, and audio services in the cable headend. The specifications provide guidance to content providers for the distribution of content assets to cable operators. ...Full Story

Web Services Update

Would you like service oriented architecture with your web services? *The web services news continues to emanate from the major standards organizations active in that area, as the infrastructure becomes increasingly built out. The following selection of articles shows that activity continues at all levels, from updating of early standards in the Web services road map, to new elements, such as service oriented architecture, upon which major industry players are placing heavy strategic bets.*

UDDI v3.0 Ratified as OASIS Standard

Oasis, Boston, MA, February 3, 2005-- The OASIS international standards consortium today announced that its members have approved the Universal Description, Discovery and Integration (UDDI) version 3.0.2 as an OASIS Standard, a status that signifies the highest level of ratification. Advanced through an open process, UDDI is commonly regarded as a cornerstone of Web services, defining a standard method for publishing and discovering network-based software components in a service-oriented architecture (SOA). "The UDDI registry model is one of the central elements of an interoperable framework that ensures the effective interaction of services in a service oriented architecture." said Frank Kenney, analyst at Gartner. "By enabling policy-based distribution and management of enterprise Web services, a UDDI registry can deliver significant business value. ...Full Story

OASIS Creates TC to Define Service Oriented Architecture (SOA) Reference Model

The Cover Pages, February 8, 2005-- New SOA-RM TC (Service Oriented Architecture Reference Model Technical Committee) has been created by OASIS members. The goal of the TC is to "establish a Reference Model to encourage the continued growth of specific and different SOA implementations whilst

preserving a common layer that can be shared and understood between those or future implementations." The new TC is a spin-off and partial successor to the Electronic Business Service Oriented Architecture (ebSOA) TC, chartered in February 2004. Proposers of the new TC include representatives from Adobe Systems, BAE Systems, Boeing, Booz Allen Hamilton, Cisco Systems, ECOM, Fujitsu, and Lockheed Martin. ...Full Story

Sun, Microsoft Breaking SOA Barriers
By: Clint Boulton

InternetNews.com, New York, February 2, 2005-- Microsoft (Quote, Chart) and Sun Microsystems (Quote, Chart) are closing the gap between them in an effort to speed the adoption of service-oriented architectures (SOA), a Sun official said at the Web Services on Wall Street 2005 conference here. Sun Distinguished Engineer Hal Jespersen said the long-time rivals have been steadily working on setting up federated identity management to increase interoperability, a large barrier to wide-scale adoption of Web services (define) and SOAs (define). ...Full Story

World Wide Web Consortium Issues Three Web Services Recommendations; Three-Part Solution Leads to Better Web Services Performance

TMCnet.com, January 25, 2005 -- The World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) has published three new Web Services Recommendations: XML-binary Optimized Packaging (XOP), SOAP Message Transmission Optimization Mechanism (MTOM), and Resource Representation SOAP Header Block (RRSHB). These recommendations provides ways to efficiently package and transmit binary data included or referenced in a SOAP 1.2 message. Web Services applications have the primary goal of sharing and using data between applications. This includes an increasingly diverse set of media formats and devices, including large schematics and other graphical files. Examples are as intricate as sharing architectural blueprints between multiple parties, or as simple as sending a photo from a digital camera directly to a printer. ...Full Story

Meanwhile, back at the Web: Of course, without a Web, there would be no Web services. As shown in the following press release, the W3C and the IETF are still minding their knitting even while they serve the demands for web services standards as well.

World Wide Web Consortium Supports the IETF URI Standard and IRI Proposed Standard

W3C Press Release, January 26, 2005-- The World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) announces its support for two newly issued publications that are critical to increasing the international reach of the World Wide Web. These publications, coordinated through both the IETF and W3C, are RFC 3986, STD 66 Uniform Resource Identifier (URI): Generic Syntax and RFC 3987 Internationalized Resource Identifiers (IRIs), respectively an Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF) Internet Standard and Proposed Standard. URIs and IRIs Are the Glue That Holds the Web Together The World Wide Web is defined as the universal, all-encompassing space containing all Internet - and other - resources referenced by Uniform Resource Identifiers (URIs, sometimes commonly called "URLs"). In Tim Berners Lee's original proposal, and in the initial Web implementation, the Web consisted of relatively few technologies, including the Hypertext Transfer Protocol (HTTP) and the HyperText Markup Language (HTML). ...Full Story

XML Update

W3C recommends jolt for XML: *For the past several issues, we have been juxtaposing articles about XML successes with concerns over XML performance. This month, there was good news on the performance front, as the W3C issued three new Recommendations (signifying final approval) intended to help make XML data handling more efficient. The second story, from early eGovernment adopter Australia, shows that even after the technical issues are solved, the people issues can still present challenges.*

W3C Recommends Quicker XML Transmission
By: Martin LaMonica

W3C Press Release, January 25, 2005-- The World Wide Web consortium, the standards body in charge of developing XML, said Tuesday that it has issued three recommendations designed to make handling XML-formatted data more efficient. The specifications have the backing of large industry software providers, including IBM, Microsoft and BEA Systems, which provide the software infrastructure to build and run XML data and Web services applications. The W3C and vendors are looking at a variety of methods of speeding up the performance of XML, which can be slow for certain applications. The XML-binary Optimized Packaging, or XOP, specification provides an agreed-on way of sending binary information not typically represented as text, such as a photo, along with an XML document. ...Full Story

You Can Lead a Government to XML
By: David Braue

CIO.com, January 17, 2005-- Extensible Markup Language was once heralded as the lingua franca of e-government. More than six years down the road, however, it is still more of a regional dialect. It was with some pride that in 2002 the Australian Prudential Regulatory Authority (APRA) announced that it would be among the first such bodies in the world to support eXtensible Business Reporting Language (XBRL). As the government body responsible for supervision of Australia's financial services and insurance industries, APRA believed the standard's enablement of consistent financial reporting structures would make it extremely popular among the 10,000 institutions required to report regularly to APRA. ...Full Story

Who's Doing What to Whom

Consensus, ladies and gentlemen! *The "consensus" process may be all about agreeing, but agreeing doesn't always come easy. Usually, things get resolved in the standard setting milieu, but sometimes, as in all other areas of life, they just fall apart.*

Catfight in the spyware corral
By: Stefanie Olsen

ZDNET, February 8, 2005-- A group devoted to setting anti-spyware standards and helping consumers distinguish between safe and harmful software is on the rocks, with three founding members resigning in protest over policies they say are too lax. It's a "catfight in the spyware corral,"as one security expert called it. Webroot Software, Aluria Software and Computer Associates International's PestPatrol successively announced their departures in recent days from the Consortium of Anti-Spyware Technology vendors (Coast). ...Full Story