

UDDI Takes Step Forward but Isn't Ready for Deployment

Most major IT vendors support OASIS's new committee to develop the UDDI protocol. However, UDDI will achieve widespread use only at a late stage in the deployment of Web services.

Event: On 28 August 2002, the Organization for Structured Information Standards (OASIS) announced the UDDI Specification Technical Committee to oversee the development of Universal Description, Discovery, and Integration (UDDI), a Web service protocol. More than 20 major IT companies have said they will participate, including most major software infrastructure providers.

First Take: The unprecedented cooperation by industry participants will do much to secure widespread acceptance of UDDI, which provides a common format for enterprises to identify and link to new Web services. The supporters of the new UDDI committee include major vendors that elsewhere carry on strong rivalries, such as BEA Systems, Computer Associates International, Hewlett-Packard, IBM, Intel, Microsoft, Novell, Oracle, SAP and Sun Microsystems.

However, this specification may not prove as important as other Web service protocols with which it is normally associated, such as Simple Object Access Protocol (SOAP) and the Security Assertion Markup Language (SAML), because UDDI will achieve widespread use only at a late stage in the deployment of Web services. In general, enterprises will not need UDDI initially, either behind the firewall or when they deal with trusted business partners. Supporters will have to resolve many security issues related to UDDI before enterprises can safely expose service information via UDDI. Standard mechanisms need to be defined for such functions as supporting granular access, denial-of-service protection and nonrepudiation.

Gartner recommends that enterprises evaluate the output of the UDDI committee for in-depth treatment of UDDI security issues before planning externally exposed use of UDDI. Gartner also believes that secure use of Web services will greatly accelerate if the vendors participating in the UDDI committee also participate aggressively in the SAML, Web Services Security (WS-Security), Liberty Alliance and other Web service initiatives related to security.

Analytical Sources: Raymond Wagner and John Pescatore, Gartner Research

Recommended Reading and Related Research

- "WS-Security Takes Good Step Toward Being Web Service Standard" — The lack of any guaranteed level of trust between enterprise Web service deployments will present a major stumbling block to widespread deployment beyond the enterprise. **By Raymond Wagner**

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- “How to Be Leading Edge — and Safe — With Web Services” — Web service standards, development tools and applications will be immature in security through 1H03. **By John Pescatore**

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