

A proposal for unifying the efforts of UBL and UN/CEFACT's core component work

Introduction

Groups working under the auspices of the United Nations Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business (UN/CEFACT) and the Organization for the Advancement of Structured Information Standards (OASIS) are currently progressing the development of complementary electronic business specifications. Specifically, these are the core component specifications developed with UN/CEFACT and the Universal Business Language (UBL) specifications developed by the OASIS UBL Technical Committee.

Proposal

Taking into account that:

- UN/CEFACT through the groups of the UN/CEFACT Forum, working under the guidance of the Plenary, are committed to developing core components related to electronic business;
- UN/CEFACT leadership and its participants believe there is significant commonality between the UN/CEFACT core component work and the OASIS UBL work;
- OASIS UBL TC leadership and its participants have testified to a desire to have the UBL specifications adopted and maintained within the international realm;
- leadership of both initiatives and their participants agree that the experts contributing to the work are in many cases the same, and this produces duplication of effort and taxes resources;
- analysis of both efforts strongly suggests a unified UBL/core component working environment; and
- unifying these efforts will eliminate the risk of multiple ebXML payloads and consequently greatly accelerate the adoption of ebXML in the market place;

it is proposed that the OASIS UBL TC and UN/CEFACT core component and related syntax activities be incorporated into the work plan of the UN/CEFACT Applied Technologies Group (ATG).

Assurances and Conditions

UN/CEFACT will leverage the expert resources of its core component activities and UBL by:

- transferring core component projects currently assigned to the TMG to the ATG subject to ratification of this proposal (a recommendation recording this position is contained in the minutes of the TMG Plenary Session (final), dated September 13, 2002) ;
- assigning the OASIS UBL TC activity to the ATG; and
- establishing an organizational structure within ATG that is supportive of the goals and objectives of the core component/UBL work.

TMG acknowledges that the UN/CEFACT modeling methodology (UMM) is NOT required for the UBL work. There will be no attempt to impose UMM upon the UBL activities. This position was publicly acknowledged during the TMG Plenary Session (final) on September 13, 2002. (This acknowledgment is based upon the current concepts and activities of the UBL initiative.)

ATG shall establish an organizational structure supportive of the goals and objectives of the core component/UBL work. ATG will do their utmost to ensure minimal disruption to UBL's current activities.

New ATG working groups can determine their organization in accordance with the ATG Terms of Reference. This ensures that the working group and components of the working group are free to elect their own leadership.

All UN/CEFACT groups and their projects follow the Open Development Process (ODP). UN/CEFACT confirms its commitment to the current timelines driving the OASIS UBL TC project and will strive to ensure that all milestones are satisfied. UN/CEFACT continues to solicit comments and recommendations for improvement of the ODP. The ATG working group is encouraged to submit recommendations for improving the Open Development Process to the CSG.

All members of the OASIS UBL TC will be granted full member status within the UN/CEFACT Forum, ATG, and ATG working groups immediately upon ratification of this proposal. They shall continue to enjoy membership rights in accordance with the terms of reference of the ATG. UN/CEFACT encourages the OASIS UBL TC members to join the work of other groups or working groups.

The resulting work will be published by UN/CEFACT as royalty free, no license required, technical specifications to the world's electronic business community.

The unification of the two groups will begin immediately upon ratification of this proposal by them and their organizations.

Geneva, September 13, 2002