COMPUTERWORLD
THE NEWS WEEKLY FOR SINGAPORE'S IS PROFESSIONALS
Vol. 10 Issue No. 3, 29 October - 4 November 2003

NEWS

S'pore partners Oasis

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By Tan Ee Sze

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Oasis or Organisation for the Advancement of Structured Information Standards is a global consortium that drives the development, convergence and adoption of ebusiness standards. "The work of the Oasis FWSI TC will help to enable web services and service-oriented architectures to be more rapidly implemented in ecommerce applications around the world," said Oasis president and chief executive officer Patrick Gannon.

Web service implementation deals with the analysis, design, development, testing and deployment, said Dr Lee Eng Wah, senior scientist at the Singapore Institute of Manufacturing Technology (SIMTech) and co-chair of the FWSI TC. In addition, it deals with interoperability and integration and at least two environments must implement the same web service specifications and interpret the same way. "Only then the goal of achieving interoperability and integrating disparate software systems can be attained," he said.

According to Lee, there is no existing methodology in web service implementation. However, SIMtech's Java Smart Services Lab (JSSL) has studied and used a well-structured Unified Process Methodology and modified it for web service implementation; taking into consideration a component-based approach which is akin to the use of "lego" building blocks. "In the context of web service implementation, these building blocks can be quickly put together to create a specific web service, thus greatly reducing the time and effort in web service development and improve re-usability," said Lee.

As for the functional elements or the so-called "lego" building blocks, Lee said that they are similar in concept to JSSL's Web Service Reference Architecture core services. Some examples of core services are log-utility, search, notification engine, sensory engine, service tester and secure SOAP (simple object access protocol) management.

Essentially WSRA core services are designed taking into consideration other efforts such as the web services architecture from W3C, J2EE, Microsoft .Net framework and other software implementations, be they open source or commercial platforms, said Lee.

The FWSI Technical committee will identify and select the desired functional elements to be specified.

The 15-member FWSI Technical Committee is co-chaired by SIMTech and the Infocomm Development Authority of Singapore. Founding members also include the Information Technology Standards Committee (iTSC), as well as six local companies, CrimsonLogic, Ecquaria, eG Innovations, ESS Software, ReadiMinds and Singapore Computer Systems.

Srinivas Ramanathan, Chief Technology Officer of eG Innovations said, performance monitoring and root-cause problem analysis, which are eG Innovations' core strengths will be critical components of the management architecture for web services.

Another local company, Ecquaria Technologies, brings to the table its experience in real-life deployment of web services over the Internet such as those deployed for its customer, Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay. Deployed with the Ecquaria Service-Oriented Platform, Esplanade's web services comprise information of Esplanade's performances which can be syndicated readily by others, said the company's president and chief executive officer Dr Foong Wai Keong.

The local companies will be joined by three multinational corporations Sun Microsystems, NEC and Yellow Dragon, two international ebusiness consortia RosettaNet and CommerceNet, and a research institution, the Centre for E-Commerce Infrastructure Development (CEDID) at the University of Hong Kong.

Oasis is at http://www.oasis.org, SIMTech is at http://www.simtech.a-star.edu.sg and IDA is at http://www.ida.gov.sg.