

Electronic Business XML Initiative

Terms of Reference

Electronic Business XML (ebXML) is an International Initiative established by UN/CEFACT and OASIS (the Organization for the Advancement of Structured Information Standards) with a mandate to undertake a 15-18 month program of work. This document represents an agreement between UN/CEFACT and OASIS on overall objectives (scope and purpose), key deliverables and the responsibilities delegated to the ebXML Working Group (ebXML/WG).

The purpose of ebXML initiative is to research and identify the technical basis upon which the global implementation of XML (Extensible Markup Language) can be standardized. The goal is to provide an open technical framework to enable XML to be utilized in a consistent and uniform manner for the exchange of Electronic Business data in application to application, application to person and person to application environments.

The scope of ebXML initiative is to develop and publish, in the public domain, relevant and open technical specifications in support of domestic and international EB exchanges.

These Terms of Reference cover:

- A definition of the specific technical issues to be addressed;
- A description of the proposed deliverables;
- Criteria for membership;
- The organisation of the group;
- Target time scales and milestones for its deliverables; and
- A proposal for membership from other relevant groups and organizations.

The detail for each of the above is as follows:

1 Definition of the specific technical issues to be addressed

In order to support the inter-operability of XML based information exchanges in Electronic Business, the ebXML initiative will provide the following deliverables:

- An analysis of the current EDI/EC/EB processes and issues;
- An assessment of the advantages and disadvantages of utilizing XML; and
- A definitive set of open technical specifications and recommendations that support the inter-operability of XML based information exchanges in application to application, application to person and person to application environments.

2 Description of the proposed deliverables

- The ebXML initiative shall define its detailed deliverables during its first meeting. This will be achieved by reviewing those contributions which address the technical issues identified under section 1 above and identifying the resulting work items. These deliverables shall be submitted to UN/CEFACT and OASIS for review.
- A mid-term and final report for submission to UN/CEFACT and OASIS

3 Criteria for Membership

The ebXML initiative shall comprise of a group of experts with broad-based knowledge of existing techniques and technological developments within EDI/EC/EB, XML, and their related standards. Membership in the ebXML initiative is open to any group or organization that is engaged in developing solutions for the utilization of XML in EDI, EC and EB. Each group or organization may designate one or more experts to the ebXML initiative. Experts are expected to contribute to the work based solely on their expertise. The ebXML initiative is not a commercial undertaking.

4 The Organisation

In order for the ebXML Initiative to fulfill its deliverables, a Working Group (ebXML/WG) is to be established. The WG leadership shall consist of a Chair, Vice-chair and an Executive Committee. UN/CEFACT and OASIS shall appoint the Chair and Vice-chair.

The WG shall be organized into project teams, each with its own elected project leader. Any election shall be decided by a simple majority of those voting.

Project teams will address specific tasks, such as architecture, repositories, naming conventions, etc.

The Executive Committee shall be composed of the WG Chair and Vice-chair and the project team leaders. The Executive Committee shall provide overall WG leadership and shall support and address issues that do not require the attention of the Plenary.

The Plenary shall be composed of all WG members and shall serve as the mechanism for reaching consensus on defining overall WG direction and deliverables, as well as approving the output of the project teams.

The WG Chair shall lead the Plenary and the Executive Committee.

5 Target Time Scales

The overall project has a limited life span of 15 to 18 months. In order to achieve this deadline, the WG shall meet at least once a quarter in different parts of the world, with regular tele-conference calls between these meetings.

6 Proposals for membership from other Working Groups and external organizations

The organizations listed below are those organizations that are known to UN/CEFACT and OASIS to be active in developing EC related XML solutions. Membership in the Working group is not limited to those listed in any way. Organizations or groups that are interested in the work of ebXML/WG are strongly encouraged to contact UN/CEFACT (Hans Hansell <Hans.Hansell@unece.org>) and/or OASIS (Laura Walker laura.walker@oasis-open.org) in order to be invited.

- Ariba - cXML
- ASC X12
- CEN ISSS XML WS
- CommerceNet - eCo Framework WG
- CommerceOne - Common Business Library (CBL)
- EEMA
- HL7
- IBM – e-business
- IEC
- ISO
- J.P. Morgan & PricewaterhouseCoopers – Financial Product Markup Language (FpML)
- Meta Data Coalition - OIM work
- Microsoft - BizTalk
- NIST
- OASIS
- Object Management Group (OMG)
- Open Application Group (OAG)
- Open Buying on the Internet (OBI) Consortium
- Open Trading Protocol (OTP) Consortium

- Open Travel Alliance (OTA)
- RosettaNet
- UN/CEFACT/TMWG & EWG
- XML/EDI Group
- Workflow Management Coalition - Wf-XML
- W3C XML WG