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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 Commonalities

Shakespeare v. the Big Mouse: One of the more interesting developments in the ongoing battle over the proper limits of copyright protection has been the birth of the Creative Commons licensing project conceived by Stanford University's Lawrence Lessig. While Napster and the entertainment industry have been focusing on what protections today's music can obtain in the near term, other forces have been quietly raising the ante of protection in the long term. Not long ago, for example, the Walt Disney Company successfully lobbied Congress to increase the scope of copyright protection by twenty years – thus protecting its early Mickey Mouse properties from entering the public domain. Lessig thinks that a less binary approach is the answer, and the Creative Commons licensing regime is his answer, allowing creators to decide what rights they wish to retain, and what rights they wish to share. The following two articles report on the most recent successes of the Creative Commons project: the launch of a localized set of Creative Commons licenses for use under U.K. law, and the endorsement of the Creative Commons' mission by the venerable *Scientific American*.

UK Gets Its Own Creative Commons

By: Graeme Wearden

ZDNet UK March 17, 2005 -- A version of the Creative Commons licensing scheme adapted for the UK's legal landscape will be formally launched in London on Wednesday evening. It's a groundbreaking licensing scheme that lets content be both shared and safeguarded, adapted to UK law. Creative Commons was first developed by US academic Lawrence Lessig as a more flexible alternative to the traditional copyright laws. It allows content creators to grant some rights to the public while keeping others...The UK-specific version has been some 15 months in the making, and has already attracted interest from some major British organisations. The BBC is expected to use the UK Creative Commons licences for its Creative Archive, in which it will throw open its back catalogue of broadcasting material. ...[Full Story](#)



Beyond the Big (c)

Scientific American, February 14, 2005 -- If William Shakespeare were working today on Broadway or in London's West End, he would be spending a lot of time with lawyers. The Bard adapted Romeo and Juliet from Arthur Brooke's poem *The Tragical History of Romeus and Juliet*, which Brooke, in his turn, had based on a French translation by Pierre Boaistuau of various Italian stories. The history of creative works, whether Romeo and Juliet or the Beastie Boys' "Pass the Mic," is a chronicle of "borrowing" from others. Intellectual-property lawyers might use a harsher word. But the framers of the Constitution always intended to provide owners of creative works with only limited monopolies, ensuring that the public gets

the right to fashion new works from old. Over the years, however, Congress, sometimes at the behest of media companies, has erected immense barriers to derivative works by extending repeatedly both the length and the scope of copyright protection. ...[Full Story](#)



Standards in Action

Someday, my chips will come: *Elsewhere in the world, smartcards (credit cards that have a chip on board, rather than a simple magnetic stripe) have been making steady progress for years, but not in the United States, where smartcard deployment has been limited, at best, despite the fact that the standards groundwork has already been laid by a number of consortia (such as GlobalPlatform and the SmartCard Alliance) and joint ventures (such as EMV). The first article below reports on the broad introduction of this new technology in South Africa in the general population, while the second describes an early adoption usage in the United States – as a superior identification mechanism for United States federal employees and contractors.*

Chip Cards Ready to Roll

By: Iain Scott

all.Africa.com, March 17, 2005 – SA's four biggest banks are poised to issue their new chip-based cards, but some are ahead of others. Standard Bank looks to be the first to start rolling out the new EMV cards, with the group promising that new card holders will begin to receive them from May. EMV (Europay, MasterCard and Visa) is the global standard for chip-based bank cards. The deadline for EMV compliance passed on 1 January, which means banks that have not upgraded to the standard are now liable for losses attributed to fraudulent transactions that might have been prevented had they been compliant. "The bank has thousands of chip cards stock-piled and ready for processing and distribution," says Mike Olsen, head of Standard Bank's card division. "In fact, we have been ready to issue smart credit cards since early 2004, but our progress has been impacted by the readiness of other players in the market." ...[Full Story](#)



New ID Standard Announced for Federal Agencies

NIST Tech Beat, March 10, 2005– Commerce Secretary Carlos M. Gutierrez recently approved a new standard for a smart-card-based form of identification for all federal government departments and agencies to issue to their employees and contractors requiring access to federal facilities and systems. On Aug. 27, 2004, President Bush issued a Homeland Security Presidential Directive calling for a mandatory, government-wide personal identification standard. Computer security specialists at the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) worked closely with other federal agencies as well as private industry to develop Federal Information Processing Standard (FIPS) 201, Personal Identity Verification (PIV) of Federal Employees and Contractors. The standard specifies the technical and operational requirements for the PIV system and card. ...[Full Story](#)



Standards of war: *Standards have always played an enormous role in the military, although historically most of those standards were "government unique" specifications generated internally by the Department of Defense and other agencies. With the passage of the Technology Transfer and Advancement Act of 1995 (which mandates government use of voluntary consensus standards whenever possible) and the increasing reliance of the military on information and communications technology, commercial standards are becoming increasingly vital to the military and the defense industry. The article below relates to one of the most ambitious standards-based initiatives ever conceived: making available all information, from any source, anywhere, to everyone in the military sphere: a concept called network centric operations. and the endorsement of the Creative Commons' mission by the venerable Scientific American..*

French-US Defense Delegations and IPv6 Organizations Convene to Collaborate on New Generation Net-Centric Warfare Communications

MarketWire, Paris, March 9, 2005 -- Officials from the French Military Procurement Agency (DGA), the Communications-Electronics Research Development and Engineering Center (CERDEC), United States Army, IPv6 Forum, National IPv6 Task Force of France, and North American IPv6 Task Force met for two days over the last month to discuss the deployment state and technology benefits of the new Internet Protocol version 6 (IPv6). Representatives from the two defense agencies agreed to jointly explore the introduction, transition, and eventual implementation of IPv6 to help support the evolution of network centric operations communication systems. The meetings were successful, and the defense agencies, IPv6 Forum, National IPv6 Task Force of France, and North American IPv6 Task Force will pursue additional collaboration efforts on IPv6. Since 2003, both defense agencies have defined similar policies for the integration and transition to the new standard established by the IETF, since the mid-90s, following concerns regarding the limitations of the existing Internet Protocol version 4 (IPv4). ...[Full Story](#)



Multi dinero: *The magnitude of savings that standards can enable is never adequately appreciated, but the following two articles provide examples of how substantial those savings can be. The first story reports on an effort in one very large country (the United States) involving XML, which promises to save billions of dollars in Homeland Security information sharing expense, while the second shows how much one small country (Denmark) expects to save by implementing a single standard.*

DHS, Justice work on XML **By: Dibya Sarkar**

FCW.com, March 1, 2005 -- Homeland Security and Justice department officials have a new partnership to enhance development of an Extensible Markup Language model that could save federal, state, local and tribal agencies billions of dollars as they improve their computer systems to share information with one another. Officials said this represents a significant step in broadening the use of the Global Justice XML Data Model, which was started about three years ago, across the federal government. It could mean future partnerships with other departments, such as Transportation and Health and Human Services, and the intelligence community, which used the model as the basis for a schema to share the terrorism watch list. ...[Full Story](#)



Danish Government Requires Public Sector to Use UBL

Oasis-open.org, February 24, 2005 -- As of February 1, all invoicing in Denmark's public sector is legally required to be implemented through Universal Business Language (UBL) v0.7. The Danish Government estimates that it will save 94 million euro (177 million dollars) per year by standardizing UBL Invoices, and could save as much as 160 million euros (199 million dollars) per year if they standardize UBL Purchase Orders as well. ...[Full Story](#)



Coming soon to a small screen near you: More standards are being used to deliver more services to more platforms all of the time. Now, Yahoo customers will be able to access news feeds from their cell phones, using the RSS standard.



Yahoo adds syndication feature to mobile service **By: Dinesh C. Sharma**

CNETNews.com, March 11, 2005 -- The addition to the Yahoo Mobile service, announced this week, allows people to use their phones to read RSS feeds they've subscribed to via their customized My Yahoo pages. Consumers can access news headlines available on their personalized pages via the Yahoo Mobile Web site using a WAP 2.0 mini browser on their handsets. They can read summaries of stories in about 1,024 characters and get full HTML Web pages if their browser supports HTML. Yahoo said subscribers need not have a smart phone, third-party browser or a custom Java client to use the new feature. ...[Full Story](#)



Who's Doing What to Whom

One sandbox, more and more playmates: *The IETF has always been unique among important standard setting organizations for its inclusiveness and low promotional profile. Now, as described in the first article below, that model is being tested financially as well as at its technical perimeter, as the standards infrastructure of the Internet become increasingly built out – and vital to commercial interests. But while some saw the W3C (among other standards bodies) threatening the IETF's turf, the second article below describes how the W3C is having its own issues with a splinter group of browser developers, causing division in the forms area.*

IETF Leaders Urge Detente With Rivals

By: Carolyn Duffy Marsan

Network World March 15, 2005 -- Last week at a meeting in Minneapolis, the IETF installed a new leader who vowed to improve the group's outreach to other organizations, including the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C), two rivals that are sometimes ridiculed by IETF participants....With individual rather than corporate participants, the IETF is an egalitarian, all-volunteer group. At the IETF's thrice-yearly meetings, winners of prestigious computer science awards rub shoulders with grad students. In IETF tradition, the best technical ideas are chosen regardless of who suggests them, and standards aren't published without working prototypes. However, the group that prides itself on rough consensus and running code is facing challenges such as financial difficulties and declining attendance. These challenges are forcing the group to change. ...[Full Story](#)



Fight over 'forms' clouds future of Net applications

By: Paul Festa

ZDNet, February 17, 2005 -- This week, a breakaway faction of the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) said its work on the Web Forms 2.0 specification is nearly done and put out a call for final comments. The splinter group, which includes browser makers Apple Computer, the Mozilla Foundation and Opera Software, calls itself WHAT-WG, or the Web Hypertext Application Technology Working Group. The move brings a new entry into the race to take forms software to the next level, complicating efforts to create an open standards foundation for emerging Internet applications that could shape the competitive landscape in software development for years to come. It also marks a major new headache for the W3C, whose XForms recommendation, unveiled in 2003, has long been stymied amid resistance from proprietary software makers, especially Microsoft. ...[Full Story](#)



Intellectual Property

What's a software vendor to do? *Bashing of the United States trademark system in general, and of the Patent and Trademark Office (PTO) in particular, remained in vogue this month, with Microsoft (among other IT vendors) increasing the pressure for reform of the system and better funding of the PTO (see first article below). The muddled state of patent issuance and enforcement was typified by the latest decision*

in the Eolas/Microsoft patent infringement case involving the Internet Explorer Web browser, with both sides (as usual) claiming victory, each with some justification (see the second article). Meanwhile, Computer Associates, as reported in the last article, indicated that it may hop on the bandwagon set rolling by IBM, among others, that seeks to end-run the whole issue entirely, by pledging not to assert certain patents at all.

Microsoft calls for patent reform

By: Grant Gross

IDG News Service March 13, 2005 -- WASHINGTON - Microsoft executives on Thursday stepped up their calls for reform of the U.S. patent process, saying the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) too often focuses on quantity instead of quality. Microsoft also called for a patent system that is more accessible to small investors, and executives recommended that the U.S. Congress end patent filing fees for small companies, nonprofit groups, universities and individual inventors. "The system has to work for everybody," said David Kaefer, director of Microsoft's IP Licensing Program. "It's only a system that works for the largest companies." Microsoft and other tech companies have pushed Congress to end the diversion of patent fees from the USPTO to the U.S. government general budget, saying that the office needs more funding to evaluate the growing number of patent applications. The USPTO receives more than 350,000 patent applications per year, triple the number it received 20 years ago. ...[Full Story](#)



Appeals court revisits Eolas decision

By: Paul Festa

CNETNews.com, March 2, 2005 -- The patent infringement case, brought by the University of California and its Eolas Technologies spinoff, had riled the Web over potential ripple effects that could have forced changes in millions of Web pages that use plug-in applications like Macromedia Flash and Adobe Acrobat that run inside the browser. Both sides claimed victory in the mixed ruling, which reversed part of the lower-court ruling, affirmed other parts of it, vacated the decision as a whole and sent it back for a new trial. "We cleared most of the serious issues, so I would consider this a victory for the university," UC spokesman Trey Davis said. "On the issues that would have mattered most to Microsoft, they lost." ...[Full Story](#)



CA confirms plans for open source patent pledge

Computer Business Review Online, March 3, 2005 -- Islandia, New York-based CA's development architect and European open source lead, Marcel den Hartog, told ComputerWire that details of the patent pledge are being worked through by CA's chief executive, John Swainson, and CTO, Yogesh Gupta. "It's the plan," den Hartog said. "I know he [Swainson] has worked on the preliminary work to get that done." Swainson joined CA in November 2004 from IBM Corp, which in January pledged 500 patents to the open source community. Although details are thin on the ground, den Hartog said CA's motive is to remove any suggestion that the company might hold a threat of litigation over Linux or other open source projects. ...[Full Story](#)



Story Updates

***I know there's a standard for this somewhere:** In our January issue this year (Standards and the National Interest) our feature article reported in depth on the evolving support of the federal government for voluntary consensus based standards (See, A Work in Progress: Government Support for Standard Setting in the United States: 1980 – 2004 < <http://www.consortiuminfo.org/bulletins/jan05.php#feature>>) But with 28 agencies procuring goods and services in an almost endless number of technical domains,*

how is anyone in the supply chain supposed to know what standards to use? The following article reports on a new resource intended to help the ends meet.

New Web Site 'Drills Down' into Government Standards

NIST Tech Beat, March 10, 2005 -- Protracted and, sometimes, fruitless searches for government-applied technical standards may soon be a thing of the past. A new Web site, Standards.Gov, provides businesses, other organizations and interested citizens with a direct portal to sources of information on the thousands of specifications that government agencies reference in regulations or use to guide their purchasing decisions. The National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) launched the new site to further the government's progress in using private-sector standards in lieu of agency-unique specifications, whenever practical. ...[Full Story](#)



***The year of the Tiger:** In our May, 2004 issue (Standards as Trade Barriers <www.consortiuminfo.org/bulletins/may04.php>) we focused on the use of standards by governments to protect domestic industry, using a current standoff between the United States semiconductor industry and China, which had adopted a "home grown" standard in preference to the globally implemented WiFi standard (see: *Breaking Down Trade Barriers: Avoiding the China Syndrome* <www.consortiuminfo.org/bulletins/may04.php#trends>) But with or without trade barriers, China is flexing its muscles, as the selection of articles below indicate, from the first – which shows that the standards world is now willing to go to Beijing, rather than expect Beijing to go to it – to the second, illustrating the power of China's centrally managed economy to control access to its enormous consumer population -- to the last two, which illustrate that there are still issues to resolve between China and the rest of the global standards community.*

RosettaNet e-Business Process Standards Consortium to Host Global Partner Conference in Beijing, China; Registration Expected to Reach Unprecedented Levels

BusinessWire, Lawrenceville, NJ, March 8, 2005 -- RosettaNet, the high technology industry's leading e-business process standards consortium and a subsidiary of the Uniform Code Council, Inc.(R) (UCC(R)), announced today that it will hold its annual Global Partner Conference April 20-21, 2005 at the Beijing Fragrant Hill Golden Resources Commerce Hotel in Beijing, China. The two-day education and networking event will bring together a global audience of more than 400 established RosettaNet consortium members as well as prospective trading partners from the high technology, telecommunication, logistics, and other industry sectors for informative sessions and networking opportunities. Sessions will provide insight from members on global standards synergies, RosettaNet Partner Interface Process(R) (PIP(R)) developments, updates on RosettaNet Asia, Europe and the Americas, and successful RosettaNet e-business process standards implementations. In addition, attendees will receive correct, up-to-date information on new business models and promotional programs for RosettaNet standard implementations. ...[Full Story](#)



Ericsson's Svanberg Expects Four 3G Licenses in China

Bloomberg.com, March 8, 2005 -- Ericsson AB Chief Executive Officer Carl-Henric Svanberg said China is likely to hand out four licenses for fast wireless services this year and the company expects to hold on to its market share in the country. "The way we read it they are very much back into rolling out four licenses" for so-called third-generation, or 3G, wireless services, Svanberg said yesterday in an interview at Ericsson's headquarters in Stockholm. Ericsson, the world's largest maker of mobile-phone networks, has "a good chance of defending" its 35 percent market share in China, he said. China will decide how many licenses and which 3G standards to use. Ericsson, along with Finland's Nokia Oyj, belongs to a group promoting one 3G standard, while a group led by Germany's Siemens AG and Beijing-based Datang Mobile Communications Equipment Ltd., a government-owned phone equipment maker, is promoting another. ...[Full Story](#)



China Works Out RFID Standards

By: Laurie Sullivan

InformationWeek, March 3, 2005 -- A delegation of representatives from Chinese government agencies, system integrators, vendors and standards group EPCglobal Inc. gathered at RFID World in Dallas this week to discuss radio-frequency identification technology in China. The Chinese government and industries within China are working to develop RFID standards that are in line with specifications being used elsewhere in the world, representatives from the delegation told InformationWeek. "China will use EPCglobal and ISO standards, but with some modifications to satisfy special needs in China," said Qiang Bai, CTO at uniView Technologies. China plans to participate in creating a global standard but will use its own intellectual property to build a royalty-free standard. ...[Full Story](#)



ISO meeting fails to back WAPI standard

By: Liu Yan

China Daily, February 24, 2005 -- A Chinese wireless network proposal failed to make a breakthrough at a meeting of the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) due to unfair treatment, according to the Chinese delegation. The Chinese delegation to a conference of ISO/IEC JTC/SC06/WG1, a working group under the ISO, said in a written statement on Wednesday that it would withdraw from the meeting in Frankfurt over the alleged unfair treatment. A salesman tests a notebook equipped with Intel's Centrino chip as practice of China's wireless network connection standard WAPI has been off-delayed. [newsphoto] The conference is discussing a wireless network connection standard and the Chinese side proposed its Wireless Authentication and Privacy Infrastructure (WAPI), which is designed to increase the security of the wireless local area network (WLAN) and competes with the IEEE802.11i for the international standard. ...[Full Story](#)

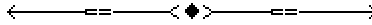


Standards and Society

Is that an orange in your ear, or are you just happy to hear from me? There have been health concerns involving cell phones almost from day one, although to date there has been little evidence of any actual increase in brain tumors or other adverse physical effects. Nevertheless, given the increasing prevalence and use of cell phones and other wireless devices, the IEC has issued new standards to help accurately test for compliance with existing standards intended to keep radio wave exposure to what are believed to be acceptable limits.

Mobile Phone Radio Wave Exposure Limited by Standard

ANSI News and Publications, New York, NY, February 23, 2005 -- Concerns over possible harmful health effects of mobile phone use have spurred standards that dictate limits on radio wave exposure emitted by phones and other wireless handheld devices. The International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) recently published a new International Standard specifying test methods for compliance with limits on radio wave exposure from mobile phones. The new International Standard IEC 62209-1 was developed jointly by the IEC, by the European Committee for Electrotechnical Standardization (CENELEC) and by the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE), who worked together informally through common membership in various technical committees. Limits on specific absorption rate (SAR) - the rate at which radio frequency energy emitted by mobile phones is absorbed by the human body - are set by organizations such as the International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection (ICNIRP), headquartered in Germany, and IEEE, an ANSI member and accredited standards developer based in the United States. ...[Full Story](#)



Open Source

Growing up and leaving home: *One year ago, IBM spun the Eclipse Foundation out into the world, after heavily funding the initiative in its infancy. It looks like the decision has paid off handsomely, although (as the following article tells) when a child grows up and leaves home, you can only stand by and watch as it finds its own way.*

Eclipse lights up Java crowd By: Martin LaMonica

ZDNet.com, February 28, 2005 -- On Monday, a sold-out EclipseCon conference will open and, unlike last year's inaugural meeting, IBM technical gurus will not be the center of attention. Instead, the open-source foundation will fete its newest board members--IBM rivals BEA Systems, Sybase and Borland International--and detail the expanding list of development-related projects under Eclipse's purview. "Eclipse is definitely the dominant Java tools platform," said Thomas Murphy, an analyst at the Meta Group. "And increasingly, the Eclipse organization will be pushing this message of a general-purpose platform." ...[Full Story](#)



If one is good, isn't 67 (and counting) better? *The (now) venerable GNU open source license has spawned a large brood of descendants, many of which have been blessed by the Open Source Initiative as being suitable for use in an open source environment. Even assuming that there are valid purposes for so many variants, however, the need for containment for coherence sake is becoming a topic of increasing concern.*

Open-source board eyes fewer licenses By: Martin LaMonica

CNET News.com, Boston, MA, February 16, 2005 -- The Open Source Initiative, an influential open-source organization, is devising ways to cut down on the rising number of open-source licenses attached to software. The issue was on the front burner at this week's LinuxWorld conference here. Open-source software makers are concerned that a proliferation of licenses could hurt the spread of open source by creating compatibility problems and complicating potential sales. The OSI, a nonprofit group that issues certifications for open-source licenses, has been investigating the topic since last year. ...[Full Story](#)



Don't do that! *As highlighted in the feature article of this month's issue, open source and open standards are converging rapidly, with some large customers beginning to view them as being joined at the hip, as noted in the following article. Not surprisingly, the Business Software Alliance, which represents hundreds of software companies (most of which have not yet jumped on the open source bandwagon) is not happy.*

BSA Criticizes EU's 'Open Standards' Policy By: Matthew Broersma

eWeek, February 17, 2005 -- The Business Software Alliance is lobbying the European Commission to loosen restrictions on the "open standards" required for a pan-European interoperability initiative, the latest such program to face industry resistance. In an open letter to the European Commission released publicly on Wednesday, Benoît Müller, the BSA's director of European software policy, said the EC's strict definition of open standards in the European Interoperability Framework for Pan-European eGovernment Services, or EIF, would prove to be counterproductive because it would exclude such widely recognized standards as DHCP (Dynamic Host Configuration Protocol), 802.1X and even the cell phone technology

GSM (Global System for Mobile Communications). Müller also said the framework shouldn't imply a link between open-source software and open standards. ...[Full Story](#)



Security Update

Your servant, ma'am: *Standards continue to be crucial to the multiple types of security concerns that are becoming increasingly urgent. The following selection of articles demonstrates the breadth of this involvement, from (in order below) browsers, to markup languages, to domain names. The last two articles address the problem globally, from the standpoint of government policy, to demands from end-users for across the board open, interoperable security solutions.*

Microsoft yielding to IE standards pressure?

By: Paul Festa

CNETNews.com, March 17, 2005 -- After a years-long drumbeat of developer complaints, Microsoft may finally be budging on its support for standards and on key missing features in its Internet Explorer browser. Microsoft last month broke with a longstanding pledge and said it would release a new version of IE before its next major Windows upgrade. Security concerns catalyzed the shift in plans, and Microsoft has kept mum about any possible standards or feature upgrades that might accompany the security improvements. But a source familiar with Microsoft's plans confirmed a Tuesday report on MicrosoftWatch that IE developers, who have code-named their project Rincon, are at work on non-security features and standards support, including tabbed browsing, support for IDN (Internationalized Domain Names), improved support for CSS 2 (Cascading Style Sheets) and PNG (Portable Network Graphics) transparencies. ...[Full Story](#)



Members Approve Security Assertion Markup Language (SAML) v2.0 as OASIS Standard

OASIS-OPEN.org BOSTON, MA, USA; 14 MARCH 2005 -- OASIS, the international e-business standards consortium, today announced that its members have approved the Security Assertion Markup Language (SAML) version 2.0 as an OASIS Standard, a status that signifies the highest level of ratification. SAML v2.0 enables the secure exchange of authentication, attribute, and authorization information between disparate security domains, making vendor-independent Web single sign-on and secure e-business transactions possible. Version 2.0 adds key functions to create and manage federated networks that combine and appropriately share pre-existing repositories of identity information....SAML provides a standard XML schema for specifying authentication, attribute, and authorization decision statements, and also specifies a Web services-based request/reply protocol for exchanging these statements....SAML leverages core Web services standards including XML, SOAP, Transport Layer Security (TLS), XML Signature (XMLSIG), and XML Encryption (XMLENC). ...[Full Story](#)



Opera Calls for Consortium on IDN Fix

By: Nate Mook

eWeek, February 22, 2005 -- Opera Software has called on its fellow browser makers and the Internet community as a whole to band together in an effort to fix the security issues related to Internationalized Domain Names. The IDN standard was called into question earlier this month following news that it could lead to domain spoofing and phishing attacks. The problem with IDN stems from its use of the Unicode character set to enable domain names that include international letters. But because the DNS system that facilitates the Internet only understands ASCII, or U.S. English characters, Unicode URLs must be converted by a Web browser into a format called "Punycode." ...[Full Story](#)



TIA Works with Government and Industry to Implement National Strategy to Secure Cyber Space

TIA Press Release, Arlington, VA, February 22, 2005 -- The Telecommunications Industry Association (TIA) announced today the February 16 release of the National Cyber Security Progress Report. The report is a product of a combined effort by members of the National Cyber Security Partnership (NCSP) and co-sponsors -- the Information Technology Association of America (ITAA), BearingPoint, VISA USA, the Center for Internet Security, and the University of Southern California's Institute for Critical Information Infrastructure Protection at the Marshall School of Business -- to work toward implementing the White House's National Strategy to Secure Cyber Space. The progress report was a compilation of results from a survey conducted by the University of Southern California's Institute for Critical Information Infrastructure Protection (ICIIP) at the Marshall School of Business. The Web-based survey drew 175 examples of cyber security-enhancing products, services or activities from 65 responding organizations including TIA. Participating organizations included cross-sectoral and vertical industry groups and trade associations; multinational and owner-operated businesses; academic institutions and professional societies. . [Full Story](#)



User group calls for open security standards

By: Daniel Thomas

VNUnet.com, March 2, 2005 -- International user group the Jericho Forum is calling on vendors to build security products based on open standards for interoperability. In a code of conduct agreement sent to all suppliers wanting to join the forum, the group says: 'Vendors should refrain from offering or promoting proprietary solutions and/or technology subjective to restrictive patents or licensing unless they are prepared to offer them as an open solution/standard.' ...[Full Story](#)



New Initiatives

Hop, skip and a jump: Action to create more and more new wireless standards, using a variety of technical approaches and frequencies, continues unabated. The following article describes yet another new initiative in this area -- with a novel technical twist.

Intel hangs mesh hopes on 802.11s

By: Rupert Goodwins

ZDNet UK, March 3, 2005 -- Intel has unveiled its first proposals for 802.11s, a new mesh wireless networking standard. Mesh networks are self-configuring systems where each node can relay messages on behalf of others, thus increasing the range and available bandwidth. W. Steven Conner, wireless network architect at Intel and technical editor of the IEEE's 802.11s task group, told engineers at the Intel Developer Forum in San Francisco on Wednesday that at present there are no standards for this. Although mesh networks are already in use for very large deployments in cities such as Taipei, and in some industry sectors, none of the systems interoperate or are suitable for domestic or office environments, Conner claimed. ...[Full Story](#)



Milestones

Transitions: Not infrequently, consortia tend to be transitory efforts, for a variety of reasons. Sometimes initiatives fail, sometimes they overlap, and sometimes they just finish what they were formed to accomplish. The following is an example of one such transition.

Ultrawideband partners merge

By: Rupert Goodwins

ZDNet UK, March 3, 2005 -- Two of the major groups in ultrawideband development, the WiMedia Alliance and the Multiband OFDM Alliance (MBOA), have merged. The two industry bodies have been closely aligned for some time: WiMedia previously endorsed MBOA's proposed UWB standard in April 2004, and the groups shared the majority of their directors. The merger was announced at the Intel Developer Forum in San Francisco on Wednesday. "Industry will benefit from a single strategic focus for specification definitions and regulatory organisations," said Kursat Kimyacioglu, director of business line development for business connectivity solutions at Philips and a vice-president of the WiMedia Alliance. ...[Full Story](#)



Is there no end to virtualism? *Modern standards have existed for over 100 years, and one of the historic examples of a standard from the earliest days is in danger of being replaced, and virtually, at that. The standard in question is the physical reference example of the kilogram – charmingly (and soon to be even more accurately) referred to as the “Kilogram artifact”. The proposed new standard would be based upon a “natural phenomenon,” rather than a physical artifact that can be seen (but not touched – skin oils would add to the artifact’s weight).*

Experts Urge Redefinition Of the Kilogram

NIST Tech Beat, February 24, 2005 -- It's time to replace the 115-year-old kilogram artifact as the world's official standard for mass, even though experiments generally thought necessary to achieve this goal have not yet reached their targeted level of precision. That the conclusion of an upcoming Metrologia journal article* authored by five eminent scientists from the United States, United Kingdom and France that was discussed at a scientific meeting of the Royal Society of London on Feb. 14-15. The authors of this Metrologia paper suggest replacing the kilogram artifact-a cylinder of platinum-iridium alloy about the size of a plum-with a definition based on one of two unchanging natural phenomena, either a quantity of light or the mass of a fixed number of atoms. ...[Full Story](#)



Standards are *Serious* (right?)

Convergence take X+n... *We have already witnessed the convergence of information and communications technology in mobile devices sound and video in multimedia and operating systems and vehicles. So why indeed not “RFID for Food Animals?”*

AIM Global Announces Draft RFID Standard for Food Animal Identification

AIMGlobal Press Release, Warrington, PA, February 17, 2005 -- AIM Global, the trade association recognized as the worldwide authority on automatic identification and mobility, today announced the development of a Draft Standard for "RFID for Food Animals." At the direction of the AIM Global Standards Advisory group, a subcommittee of the AIM North America Standards Committee developed the draft standard to extend the current capabilities of RFID animal identification. The draft standard incorporates existing ISO standards for low frequency (LF) RFID (ISO 11784, ISO 11785, ISO 14223-1), and ultra high frequency (ISO/IEC 18000-6, ISO/IEC 15961, ISO/IEC 15434) and defines expanded data content for Ultrahigh Frequency (UHF) RFID (860-960 MHz) tags. ...[Full Story](#)