

# 2007: A Marquee Year for ebXML

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by David Webber



The adoption and use of ebXML has finished 2007 stronger and deeper with significant new product and project wins achieved. The plans for 2008 already hold out expansion on what 2007 has accomplished and particularly in Asia an ambitious programme with several governments contributing to projects taking advantage of what ebXML V3 offers to implement lower cost extended cross-boundary communications solutions. Europe too is seeing expanding use through adoption in EU funded projects. Meanwhile the US is broadening use more especially in the government healthcare sector. The adoption by HL7 of the new ebXML V3 messaging will be key in 2008 and especially when combined with SOA techniques and technology needs.

## New Tools and Capabilities

Three standout milestones in new software were delivered in 2007. First Oracle shipped ebXML messaging and CPA support in their **Oracle A/S suite** and used this for a key project in the agricultural chemical industry in the USA (see Helena Chemicals project report in resources below).

Next IBM provided ebXML messaging and CPA support in their **Web Sphere 6.1** product release, primarily to support customers in the medical services industry interfacing with the DHS/CDC PHIN nationwide health reporting system in the USA.

Then Hong Kong University CECID (Center for E-Commerce Infrastructure Development) shipped their new **H2O** "Hermes V2" ebXML messaging system as an entirely new replacement for their original Hermes system. As an open source project this not only achieved huge momentum being deployed in over 40 countries worldwide but more importantly it rapidly evolved into a very stable and capable solution with the code base working in a wide variety of environments with solid support for core ebXML functionality.

## The Supporting Cast

Added to this was the release of two more very capable and stable messaging open source solutions – the NexusE2E used originally in the chemical industry and the OrionSMG (Secure Messaging Gateway) from healthcare.

Further more the ebXML Registry V3.0 was formally completed and Webswell Inc. combined this with Hermes H2O to make provide a whole B2B-enabled orchestration system for SOA deployments.

Then OASIS approved the Content Assembly Mechanism (CAM) standard and this allows development of content templates to simplify transaction exchange between ebXML systems using the jCAM open source rule engine. The OrionSMG comes with this capability built-in. CAM delivers on five years of work that started in ebXML and UN/CEFACT as the BRIM requirements for message exchange definitions in business processes.

## **Standout Projects in 2007**

Of particular note in 2007 was the continued expansion of use of ebXML in the UK NHS "Connecting for Health" system. This system is the world's largest e-Business system and the underpinning for this is ebXML messaging. Electronic transmission of prescriptions message exchange volume reached five hundred messages per second in 2007 and is projected to reach up to seven hundred. That is over 2,000,000 messages an hour.

Another area in healthcare is the US IHE/XDS secure document exchange project where ebXML Registry is the foundation technology. This project involves over twenty key providers in the healthcare services industry being able to exchange patient documents between their product offerings and is being coordinated by NIST.

In Asia Axway have implemented a large scale deployment of ebXML messaging for the exchange of customs documents between Thailand and the Philippines; via service providers, this link connects many thousands of exporting and importing companies.

## **Better Standards Coordination for 2008**

OASIS is launching the new OASIS CORE technical work that will provide better coordination and support for ebXML technology standards in 2008. Also UN/CEFACT is completing initiatives defining the requirements for context driven support for core component based transaction exchanges and design. This will make semantically more capable XML transactions possible using technologies such as OASIS CAM templates and W3C schema.

## **Leading Forward in 2008**

Fujitsu and Axway are both leading into 2008 with new ebXML V3 service offerings. These will be particularly important to their projects in enabling SOA integration between legacy systems, B2B systems and web service WSDL exchanges. The ebXML V3 specifications are addressing the extended and expanded interchange requirements that today's distributed national and international level systems require.

The available capabilities in Oracle and IBM solution suites combined with open source lightweight ebXML message solutions can now provide plug-and-play opportunities between existing ERP systems and extended networks of suppliers systems.

The opportunity for ebXML use in 2008 at all levels will continue to accelerate delivery of solutions based around the proven open standards that ebXML provides.

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David Webber is editor of ebXMLforum, and a contributor to the continuing ebXML development and standards.

## Resources

Oracle A/S ebXML Helena Project report - <http://dotnet.sys-con.com/read/318418.htm>

IBM Web Sphere 6.1 feature support – <http://www-306.ibm.com/software/integration/wspartnergateway/>

Fujitsu – <http://events.oasis-open.org/home/sites/events.oasis-open.org.home/files/lwasa.ppt>

Axway - <http://events.oasis-open.org/home/sites/events.oasis-open.org.home/files/Rizk.pdf>

H2O Hermes project - <http://www.cecid.hku.hk/index.php>

NexusE2E project – <http://www.tamgroup.com/www/10012002.jsp>

OrionSMG – <http://www.orionsmg.com/>

jCAM rules engine – <http://www.jcam.org.uk>

Webswell – <http://www.webswell.com>

ebXML Registry project – <http://www.freebxml.org/registry.htm>

HL7 ebXML V3 guidelines – <http://www.hl7.org/v3ballot2007sep/html/infrastructure/transport/transport-ebxml.htm>

IHE/XDS project – <http://www.eclipse.org/ohf/>

UK NHS ebXML – <http://events.oasis-open.org/home/sites/events.oasis-open.org.home/files/Jagdip.v2.ppt>

UN/CEFACT CCTS/UCM work – <http://xml.coverpages.org/ni2007-04-20-a.html> and <http://www.unece.org/cefact/>

OASIS – <http://www.oasis-open.org> and <http://ebxml.xml.org>