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CEFACT

Techniques and Methodologies Working Group

Chairman Report

SOURCE: TMWG CHAIRMAN
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14-16 September 1998, agenda item 4

TMWG Report 23-27 March 1998, McLean, VA

TMWG Chair Klaus-Dieter Naujok noted that the priorities for the week were to:

- Develop deliverables to support the CSG (CEFACT Steering Group) resolution to adopt modelling, where the date to require modelling will be determined collectively by TMWG, EWG (UN/EDIFACT Working Group) and CSG,
- Select the modelling technique to be used,
- Update the TMWG work plan, assigning responsibility for deliverables.

The CSG requested that working groups provide for electronic membership and participation. A document N041Rev.2, Electronic Membership Guidelines for Working Groups, was drafted that, when adopted by CSG, will apply to all CEFACT working groups. Key points were:

- Electronic membership should have the same criteria as for regular membership,
- All communication on a list server should be issue-based (using work item references) under the management of a work item moderator,
- Electronic communication is seen as a consensus building process rather than vote mechanism, where decisions are made at face-to-face meetings,
- Group membership is open according to agreed procedures, i.e., has to be designated as an expert by the appropriate Head of Delegation per CEFACT requirements.
- Web site, to be maintained by the TMWG Chair, will include all public documents.

Four ad hoc task groups were established.

TG1: Education and Awareness (in response to CSG's request for organised promotion and publicity), Jack Hunter, convener

- Information and communication resource to other task groups and working groups

TG2: OO-edi (former AC.1 work), Paul Levine, convener

- Responsible for OO-edi methodology development

TG3: Liaison to Business Analysis and Trade Facilitation Work, Jean Kubler, interim convener

- Initiate working relationship with these groups

TG4: Modelling for EWG as prerequisite for UNSM's, Colin Clark, convener

- Progress key deliverables of the TMWG work plan for EWG

Task group convenors will be moderators of list servers dedicated to the work of each task group. Between meetings, all TMWG members are participants of all task groups and will be included on each list server.

After a half day of discussion, Unified Modelling Language (UML) was selected as the modelling technique for CEFACT. It was noted that UML is the modelling "notation" or technique that will be applied to the model-driven standards development process (the methodology) yet to be formulated.

It was determined that the TMWG presentation at the Miami JRT meeting will be at a high level, including:

- Analysis of Current EDI, associated problems and customer requirements,
- Advantages of a modelling approach,
- Modelling technique selected,
- Organisational structure necessary to deliver model-driven standards,
- Resources required,
- Skeleton of the development process.

Key points in the presentation should include:

- The desirability of pursuing the liaison with organisations such as the NMF to gain knowledge, and to leverage the experience of industry groups and individual companies,
- The influence of TMWG on UML enhancement through UML tool suppliers that are members of the OMG,
- Dual track standards development requires a single modelling methodology using a single modelling technique,
- Within UN/EDIFACT, the decision to move from IDEF to UML is irreversible. (It should be noted that PLATINUM Technologies' decision to purchase LogicWorks may open the door for building an IDEF to UML converter, if needed.)

Dennis Bern of PLATINUM Technologies demonstrated the Paradigm Plus modelling tool with UML Ver. 1.0. UML Ver 1.1 is expected to be released the second quarter of this year. The OMG is close to completing an interchange capability to allow diagrams to be interchanged between tools. TMWG members can expect to be furnished with an evaluation version of Paradigm Plus on CD ROM. As the TMWG progresses work using UML, full license (as per CSG agreement) will be provided by PLATINUM Technology free of charge.

Two ad hoc groups were formed to complete the deliverables for EWG:

- Group 1, led by Colin Clark produced document N042, Analysis of current EDI process and problems and customer requirements. Issues were identified on adjusting the regional aspects of current EDI, and on the need to attach a level of importance for each customer requirement.
- Group 2, led by Peter Wilson produced document N043, Modelling for UN/EDIFACT, An Impact Study. Central to the document was a functional diagram of the standards process that shows how the future EDI process relates to the current process.

The CEFACT Working Group Key Deliverables Activity Work Sheet was revised (N044) to incorporate more OO-edi detail and updated to reflect current status. (It was agreed that we should be consistent in using the term OO-edi, rather than many terms (e.g., NGEDI, open-edi).) New tasks, document numbers of items in progress and resources were assigned. It was agreed that the TMWG will recommend that the CSG change the work plan template to add another level, changing 'task' to 'sub activities' and add a work item column. (In the work plan discussion, it was observed that the implementation of OO-edi doesn't depend on the implementation time frame for model-driven current EDI that will be decided by EWG, CSG and TMWG.) Jim Werner will continue as permanent editor for the project plan.

Marco Johnson (DoD) provided a presentation on a database of IDEF models used to deliver health care to the military. Web access will be demonstrated.

Issues List

1. Establish a link with the Business Analysis Working Group (BAWG) to discuss how the business analysis phase is carried out.
 2. Incorporate text in N043 about attracting the right level of experts into the process.
 3. Present the report to BAWG and then identify if there is subsequent work. TMWG will request a 1-hour joint meeting with BAWG on their third day (they are meeting the week of Apr 27-May 1) to establish a link at the beginning of the process rather than later.
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