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COMMITTEE ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF TRADE

Working Party on Facilitation of International Trade Procedures
(Item 3 of the provisional agenda of the Meetings of Experts on Data Elements and Automatic Data Interchange (GE.1) Fifty-fifth session, 19-20 March 1997)

AD-HOC GROUP 1 (AC.1)
Research, Strategic Advice and Implementation Planning Group

Chairman Report

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Submitted by the Ad-hoc Group 1 *

The Group of Experts is expected to:
- note this document as being for information and discussion.

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GENERAL
25 January 1997

AD-HOC GROUP 1 (AC.1)
Research, Strategic Advice and Implementation Planning Group

Chairman Report

SOURCE: AC.1 CHAIRMAN
STATUS: CHAIRMAN REPORT
ACTION: FOR REVIEW; GE.1; March 1997 Session

Introduction

1. The group met during 11-18 November 1996 in Concord, CA, USA. In addition to the AC.1 membership, one SC1/SC14 expert was in attendance.

Easy Guide

2. As requested during the last JRT and WP.4 session, AC.1 spent this meeting in developing an "Easy Guide" to EDI using Modelling and Object Oriented Technology.

3. In order to include all the aspects and relationships of the various IDEF Modelling techniques used the first task was to select an EDI example which was not too complex or too difficult. The example chosen was that of buying from a catalog. The example does not include how the catalog was distributed or how the item was delivered and paid for.

4. AC.1 developed, for the example, the top level activity model using IDEF0, the Process Flow and Object State Transition Network Models utilizing IDEF3, and the Semantic Model using IDEF1X.

5. The Easy guide uses these models to describe each technique and their relationship to each other and the benefits to EDI. Further, the group started to define how the current process could use the models in order to create Messages, Segments, Composites and Data Elements.

6. Because of the workload associated with such a project, AC.1 was not able to complete the guide. AC.1 has agreed to an extra meeting in London, England, before WP.4, to continue its work. It is hoped that the draft guide would be completed during that week. If this is not possible, AC.1 members will use the JRT week to do so.

7. In conclusion, because of the guide not being completed, AC.1 did not present the Draft to GE.1 since it believes that an incomplete guide would be more confusing to members than it would be helpful in understanding the work.

Future AC.1 Meetings

8. As reported by the chair of AC.1 during the last WP.4 session, AC.1 will hold open information sessions during future JRTs. In order to allow JRT members to understand and help AC.1 in its work, an issue list (see Appendix A) has been prepared. This list will be distributed to all JRT participants who than can attend the open session during the week to either obtain clarification or make a contribution.

9. The next meeting of AC.1 will be held in London England (97-03-10/14). The agenda for the meeting is attached in Appendix B.

APPENDIX A

AC.1 Issues List (AC.1/96N076)

I. Establish the link between modelling and object oriented approach to EDI.

   A. Using the current catalog order example, create objects and their methods from the model and establish how those objects can be used for EDI.

II. What are the syntax implications to object oriented EDI?

   A. What is the format of objects as they are transmitted between trading partners?

III. Do the objects and methods (as stored in a central repository) have different views according to the model scenario used?

   A. If yes, does the ability to have different views of an object allow for easier change management?

IV. List the advantages and disadvantages to using an object oriented approach for EDI.

   A. What are the benefits of object oriented EDI for SMEs?

   B. Does the use of object oriented EDI promote the use of EDI by SMEs?

   C. What, if any, problems of EDI usage are solved by this approach?

   D. Is object oriented EDI practical?

V. What are data classes and who needs them anyway?

Are data classes a necessary concept for the successful implementation of object oriented EDI?

APPENDIX B

Draft Agenda (AC.1/96N079)

London, UK, 10 to 14 March 1997

1. Welcome and Apologies (Monday, 9:00am)
2. Approval of Agenda
3. Chairman report
4. Review of the AC.1 issue list
   - 4.1. Establish the link between modelling and object oriented approach to EDI.
   - 4.2. What are the syntax implications to object oriented EDI?
   - 4.3. Do the objects and methods (as stored in a central repository) have different views according to the model scenario used?
   - 4.4. List the advantages and disadvantages to using an object oriented approach for EDI.
   - 4.6. What are data classes and who needs them anyway?
5. Finalize work on submission to WP.4 (Guide to modelling and for design of EDI using OOT)
6. Review relationships with other groups (ITT and BIM)
7. Update Issues List for JRT (Singapore)
8. Update AC.1's Strategic Work Plan (Friday morning)
9. Draft and approve resolutions
10. Other business
11. Agenda for next meeting
12. Adjournment (Friday, 3:00pm)