

CEN/ISSS Workshop on harmonization of data interchange in tourism

Draft Business Plan (version 1.1)

Source: CEN and proposers

Status: Approved at the kick-off meeting on 6 February 2008
including follow-up comments up to 12 February

1. Workshop proposed title

“Harmonization of data interchange in tourism”¹.

2. Workshop proposers

The Workshop is proposed by the CEN/ISSS Workshop on “Multilingual Electronic catalogues and classification used in eBusiness” (eCAT) ². The originators of Workshop eCAT are organizations involved in electronic catalogues, classification, eBusiness standards and multilingual issues like Termnet, Infoterm, eCl@ss, etc.

This is one of the three projects proposed by Workshop eCAT, the two others deal with electronic product property server and interoperability of computer sensitive product dictionaries and classification system³. Therefore the Workshop on eTourism has to be considered in the context of a wider initiative to increase awareness and guidance to industry – in particular SMEs – and public administration on these technology issues.

3. Business case

“Tourism is in the vanguard of ICT adoption and eBusiness in the area of eMarketing and online sales (B2C). Yet, in a ranking of various sectors, the tourism industry only achieves a mid-level score in the overall use of ICT and eBusiness. It is still lagging behind especially regarding the deployment of ICT infrastructure and the adoption of e-integrated business processes”⁴.

Tourism is an important growing sector of the European economy, with a large presence of SMEs. ICT is an enabler to strengthen efficiency, reduce costs and improve competitiveness of the industry.

For these reasons, it is important that companies and associations in the tourism sector understand the benefits they can reap from eBusiness, enhance their ICT infrastructure and adopt eBusiness processes.

Electronic data interchange and the interoperability between systems of different parties are critical for eBusiness processes in all industry sectors. This Workshop wants to focus on approaches for reaching global interoperability, i.e. seamless data interchange and execution of business processes in the tourism sector.

In eBusiness implementations, the tourism sector has some specificities; some are described below.

Data quality and reliability are critical issues (i.e. updated opening hours for a museum, reliable on-line booking). Other critical issues are territorial definition and coordination between regional or local groups and national sites.

Commercial information (B2B, B2C, B2G) and “touristic information” (information to the end user G2C) are both concerned. All involved parties provide information at different levels (e.g. Government – travel warning; B2C the mentioned opening hours, B2B distribution prices and their meanings). The Workshop will focus on revenue generating information (e.g. events, museum, etc.). Four main processing steps to

¹ A brief explanation of the terms used is in annex.

² <http://www.cen.eu/cenorm/businessdomains/businessdomains/iss/iss/activity/wsecat.asp>

³ http://www.cen.eu/cenorm/businessdomains/businessdomains/iss/iss/activity/wsecat_epps.asp

⁴ Source: eBusiness W@tch report 2006/2007

convert information into revenue are recognized here: discovery (of the event, etc.), validation, booking creation, and booking management.

4. Workshop objectives

The CEN/ISSS Workshop on eTourism aims at producing guidelines for reaching global interoperability i.e. enabling seamless data interchange and execution of eBusiness processes in the tourism sector.

The Workshop's main deliverable will be a CEN Workshop Agreement (CWA) on "Guidelines for reaching global interoperability in the field of tourism".

The CWA will cover the following topics under a pan-European interoperability perspective:

- a) analysis and identification of the needs of B2B partners as well as B2C partners for harmonised data interchange
- b) analysis of the gaps in the design of current interoperability approaches;
- c) description of the metadata and principles and requirements for data modelling;
- d) analysis of business models and legal issues (IPRs⁵, DRMs, Personal data protection and privacy);
- e) analysis of existing initiatives and approaches for flexible harmonization and global interoperability (including process interoperability);
- f) recommendations concerning a general framework for eTourism related information exchange;
- g) best practice case.

The Workshop will not deal with terminology aspects, it will use terms already agreed in CEN/TC 329, relevant ISO committees or other existing initiatives.

Harmonization of classification of service providers in tourism is out of the scope of this Workshop. The fact that the systems should reflect diversity in services should be taken into account.

The Workshop's main focus is on interoperability issues in electronic data interchange. It will analyse and further build on the results of the already completed European projects Harmonise (Tourism Harmonisation Network), HarmoTEN and Satine (Semantic based interoperability infrastructure for integrating web service platform to peer to peer networks). The Workshop's aim is to validate and disseminate their results to a wider audience than the project partners. The CEN Workshop will use the work done by previous projects on metadata frameworks and ontologies.

The CEN Workshop will focus on data integration and discovery as well as seamless execution of eBusiness processes. Application of the above would support end-user satisfaction/consumption of travel products, increase data reliability, revenue generation and margin contribution, motivating early adoption and roll out to market.

5. Workshop work programme

The CEN/ISSS Workshop on eTourism is proposed for a period of fourteen (14) months⁶. A preliminary meeting was held at CEN on 20 November 2007.

⁵ IPRs over contents of databases

⁶ Preparatory work for this activity started in August 2007. Counting 6 months preparation, the entire duration of this activity becomes 20 months.

The activity will be organised with the following tasks:

Task 1: Start-up activities

Task 2: Workshop management

Task 3: Research and analysis of existing interoperability approaches and future needs and enhancements

Task 4: Drafting part 1 of the CWA

Task 5: Analysis and recommendation of concepts and approaches for reaching interoperability

Task 6: Drafting part 2 of the CWA

Task 7: Best practice case

Task 8: Finalization of CWA (parts 1 and 2)

Task 9: Dissemination activities

Table: Workshop Timescale

Activity	When	What	Who
Workshop launch	2008-02-06 at CEN in Brussels	Workshop kick-off meeting	CEN and Standards Norway
Project Team selection and appointment	2008-02	Project Team kick-off meeting	Selection Panel
First draft CWA Part 1: description of interoperability approaches and future needs and requirements	2008-06	2nd Workshop plenary meeting	PT
WS comment on first draft CWA Part 1	2008-07		WS
Second draft CWA Part 1	2008-08		PT
First draft CWA Part 2: recommendation of concepts and approaches for reaching interoperability	2008-10/11	3rd Workshop plenary meeting	PT
WS comment on first draft CWA Part 2	2008-12		WS
Best practice case – report to be added to draft CWA	2008-10/12		PT
Second draft CWA Part 2 and merge with part 1	Mid 2009-01		PT
Public comment period (60 days)	Mid 2009-01 to Mid 2009-03		All
Final draft CWA (Parts 1&2) – preparation and endorsement	2009-04	4th Workshop plenary meeting	PT + WS

The first part of the CEN Workshop Agreement will contain description of existing and best practice interoperability approaches as well as current gaps and corresponding requirements for future extensions. This part will contain an analysis and identification of the needs of B2B partners as well as B2C partners concerning data interchange.

The second part of the CEN Workshop Agreement will contain recommendations of concepts and approaches for reaching interoperability and a general framework for eTourism related information exchange, IPRs, DRMs, personal data protection and privacy issues and business models.

A best practice case is proposed to be shown. A few hotels, small tourist service providers, one national or regional tourist organization and a cultural heritage institution in Austria have already indicated their interest. A demonstration will be given at the final Workshop plenary meeting.

The following dissemination activities are planned:

- Presentation of the CWA to pertinent organizations and industry fora;
- Presentation of the CWA and results of the best practice case to tourism associations and companies in Europe;
- Production of a flyer illustrating the main results of the project to be distributed to tourism companies and their associations.

6. Workshop organization⁷

The Workshop appointed a Chair, who works on a voluntary basis (estimated effort: 30 man days).

The Chair main responsibilities are:

- to chair Workshop plenary meetings;
- to ensure that the Workshop delivers in line with its Business Plan;
- to manage the consensus building process;
- to interface with the Secretariat and CEN CMC regarding strategic directions, problems arising, external relationships, etc.

The Workshop Secretariat has the following main tasks:

- preparation and support of Workshop meetings;
- management and distribution to participants of documents;
- management of an electronic document repository.

The working language is English. CWA will be published in English only.

7. Resources

Funds from the European Commission and EFTA are available for the Project Team and the Workshop Secretariat, provided that the Workshop meets enough participation.

The Workshop will be supported by a Project Team of four (4) experts for a total of 120 man-days. The Project Team will be selected following CEN rules for the

⁷ Information on a CEN Workshop is available at:

http://www.cen.eu/cenorm/businessdomains/businessdomains/iss/iss/about_workshops.asp

selection of a Project Team. The call for experts was announced on the CEN web site in October 2007 and it is open until Mid-February 2008⁸.

8. Workshop participants

The Workshop is open to any entity (company, association, administration, research centre) interested in the subject. Participation is free of charge and more than one person from the same organization can participate. No travel costs will be covered to participate to Workshop meetings and any other events.

The following organizations will be invited to participate:

- “On-line forum” of DRV (German touristic association)
- ETOA eCommerce Committee
- Harmonise, HarmoTen and Satine project partners plus other relevant European research projects
- Travel Trade Initiative
- CEN national members committees related to tourism
- Service providers to tourist sector

9. Liaisons

The following liaisons are proposed:

- CEN/ISSS Workshop eCAT;
- CEN/ISSS Focus Group on interoperability of computer sensitive product dictionaries and classification systems (FG/CDC);
- CEN Technical Committee 329 on tourist services.

The Workshop will take due account of results achieved in other European projects like Harmonise, Harmo-TEN and Satine and work under development in other organizations like OTA (including HEDNA).

10. Contact points

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⁸ URL: <http://www.cen.eu/iss>

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Annex: Terminology

eTourism

ICT (Information and Communication Technology) and eBusiness applications in the tourism sector.

Metadata⁹

Metadata is data about data. An item of metadata may describe an individual datum, or content item, or a collection of data including multiple content items.

Metadata (sometimes written 'meta data') is used to facilitate the understanding, use and management of data. The metadata required for effective data management varies with the type of data and context of use. In the context of an information system, where the data is the content of the computer files, metadata about an individual data item would typically include the name of the field and its length. Metadata about a collection of data items, a computer file, might typically include the name of the file, the type of file and the name of the data administrator

Service providers in tourism (non-exhaustive list)

- Accommodation (hotels, apartments, motels, B&Bs, camping & caravanning, etc.)
- Destinations (cross border, national, regional)
- Activities (winter activities, summer activities, wellness activities, etc.)
- Events/MICE (concerts, meetings, conferences, exhibitions, etc.)
- F&B (restaurants, bars, pubs, etc.)
- Intermediaries (travel agencies, tourist offices)
- Tour operators
- Transport (car rental, boat rental, airlines, railways, shipping, etc.)

IPR

Intellectual Property Rights

DRM

Digital Rights Managements

CWA

CEN Workshop Agreement; It is a consensus document published by CEN (European Committee for Standardization)

OTA

Open Travel Alliance

HEDNA

Hotel Electronic Distribution Network Association (now part of OTA – to check)

⁹ Source: Wikipedia