4th eBIF Conference 2008 Utrecht

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The CEN/ISSS e-Business Interoperability Forum (eBIF) held its fourth annual conference titled "e-Business interoperability practice: examples, impacts and standardization challenges" on 8 & 9 December 2008 at the Equens premises in Utrecht, the Netherlands. The conference was organized by the European Committee for Standardisation (CEN) and attended by more than 70 participants.

The e-Business Interoperability Forum aims to achieve interoperability between enterprises by implementing business driven standards. . The target audience comprises IT vendors, end-users from industry - including SMEs, and public administrations interested in e-Business opportunities, benefits, problems and solutions in Europe.

The conference programme, with 14 presentations was grouped in three sessions. The first session started with two keynotes giving the view of the European Commission. One keynote titled 'ICT standardisation and eBusiness policy developments' addressed issues with regard to policies, IPR for software products and strategies how to support the integration between organisations – consortia, associations in developing industry standards. The presentation on research emphasised the vision of the future of the internet and enhancements of RFID.

In the second session practical reference solutions of e-Business in industry sectors were presented, e.g. in the paper/publishing sector (PapiNet), in the textile/clothing/footwear sector (eBIZ/TFC project) and in the financial industry. The latter is focussing on services for the interoperation of systems in invoicing, logistics and payments. In several presentations the urgent need for open standards was explicitly addressed.

Critical issues in e-Business were addressed in the third session, The e-Catalogues (ISO29002) and their implementation in different cooperating organisations, interoperability standards and education addressed by the INTEROP-VLab organisation, e-Trade standards with the view of UN/CEFACT and an upcoming international project on Methodologies for Global e-Business test beds have been presented.

With the wide spectrum of e-Business topics, the discussion in the Q+A sessions was lively and very useful. Further details such as all presentations can be found at
ftp://cenftp1.cenorm.be/PUBLIC/eBIF/Conference_2008_Utrecht/.

Comments on the INTEROP-VLab presentation
-   There is considerable interest to deploy the education modules for training of manufacturing SMEs, for education in the public administration sector (data quality) and on the standards development process.
-   Vlab should reconciliate its offerings with focus on industry business needs, and consider to develop an adapted business plan.
-   DG6 recognises a long term value in the work of INTEROP-VLab work and offers a meeting with their experts in January 2009 to discuss the VLab offerings and support opportunities.

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