

Top Vendors, Users Launch Calendaring and Scheduling Consortium

Goal: End the Problem of Incompatible Calendaring and Scheduling Products

McKinleyville, CA – December 14, 2004 – Seven vendors, six universities, two open source foundations, and a research facility form the founding membership of the Calendaring and Scheduling Consortium (www.calconnect.org), which named David C. Thewlis the first Executive Director. The Consortium focuses on the interoperable exchange of calendaring and scheduling information between dissimilar programs, platforms, and technologies. The founding members are (in alphabetical order) Duke University, EVDB, Isamet, Jet Propulsion Laboratory, Meeting Maker, M.I.T., The Mozilla Foundation, Novell, Open Source Application Foundation, Oracle Corporation, Stanford University, Symbian, UC Berkeley, University of Washington, University of Wisconsin Madison, and Yahoo! Inc.

“Our members’ intent is to enable calendaring and scheduling tools and applications to enter the mainstream of computing,” said Dave Thewlis. “After email, the World Wide Web, and instant messaging, calendaring and scheduling capabilities are what business people and consumers will really care about.”

“This isn’t simply about calendar programs,” noted Patricia Egen, Interop manager and member of the Board of Directors, who originated the idea of the Consortium. “This is about seamlessly connecting your calendar with others so that your professional and personal life runs more smoothly.”

The Consortium, planned to have a three- to five-year lifespan in which to achieve its objectives, builds on work already accomplished or in progress within the Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF). Currently, large consumers such as universities and corporations face costly problems coordinating resources because departmental calendaring and scheduling applications may not be based on open standards that allow interoperability. Even standards-based systems from different vendors may not work together. With sets of IETF specifications as the heart of a solution, the Consortium provides a forum for vendors to mitigate conflicts between their competing products.

The Consortium has a schedule of activities that give the relevant standards commercial value, that is, promotion, requirements setting, and validation. Events on the agenda include

- Three to four interoperability testing events (“Interops”) a year, with the next one scheduled for January 11-12 in Seattle, WA.
- Roundtables and Technical Committee meetings of the Consortium; the next is scheduled for 11-13 January in Seattle, WA, co-located with the Interop event.
- Ongoing Technical Committee work, intended to provide feedback or information to IETF standards activities
- Presentations at related conferences

Non-members are welcome to participate in the Interops, but Roundtables and Technical Committees are for members only.

Quotes from Members of the Steering Committee

Duke University (www.duke.edu)

“The Calendaring and Scheduling Consortium appears to be re-invigorating the development of calendaring standards that became stalled for a few years,” Michael Gettes, senior IT architect at Duke University, said. “We now have customer involvement along with all the important calendar standards leaders and vendors to ensure we develop interoperable solutions as quickly as possible. It is an exciting time for the calendaring industry.”

The Mozilla Foundation (www.mozilla.org)

“The launch of the Calendaring and Scheduling Consortium represents a promising step forward in the development of critical calendaring standards,” said Mike Shaver of the Mozilla Foundation. “The Mozilla Foundation is excited to participate in the Consortium's efforts to link users, vendors and protocol architects in pursuit of universally interoperable calendaring.”

Open Source Application Foundation (www.osafoundation.org)

“OSAF is pleased to be able to support the development of interoperable calendaring solutions by becoming a founding member of the Calendaring and Scheduling Consortium,” said Lisa Dusseault, Development manager, standards architect, OSAF. “The Consortium plays an important role in enabling the dialog between partners that is essential for the establishment of open and interoperable standards.”

The University of Washington (www.cac.washington.edu)

“For years there has been a large need within higher education for interoperable standards-based calendaring,” noted Oren Sreebny; Director, Client Services and Learning Technologies; Computing & Communications; University of Washington. “This need is growing with the proliferation of online scheduling and pervasive portable devices. The ability for an organization like CalConnect to provide a neutral forum to encourage all interested parties to collaborate on solving these sets of issues and to demonstrate the usefulness of interoperation is critical for moving this mission forward. We are proud to be part of the founding of this organization, and look forward to working with the members to advance the state of the art in calendaring and scheduling.”

The University of Wisconsin (www.doit.wisc.edu)

“The University of Wisconsin-Madison became a founding member of the Calendaring and Scheduling Consortium to help our campus customers,” explained Bill Scheuerell Director of Enterprise Internet Services, Division of Information Technology, University of Wisconsin-Madison Campus. “Departments rely on integrated calendaring to organize university schedules. The consortium will help all of us set interoperability standards and system features, and communicate them to potential vendors.”

Contact: Maryann Karinch, 970-577-8500, maryann@karinch.com