

A New Paradigm for Developing Standards

Carl Cargill
Sun Microsystems

Purpose of Presentation

- Inform VITA about an alternative method of developing standards
 - Would not affect launch or final approval of VITA standards
 - Would affect text generation and resolution of comments

Traditional Process

- Strengths
 - Identifiable developers
 - Well-known procedures
 - Open
- Weaknesses
 - Not all affected interests may be able to participate (missed requirements)
 - Relatively expensive (travel, time)
 - Long cycle time

Current Capabilities

- Technology today allows for truly web-based development
- Examples of relevant features are:
 - collaborative development
 - sharing of electronic documents
 - commonly available tools
 - near instantaneous communication

Web-based Process

- An editor maintains the draft standard document that is available to any member of the development group
- Working documents available via web
- Frequent consensus decisions due to virtual (not physical) meetings
- Ballot comment processing via web

The Prototype

- Java™ Community Process (JCP)
 - Members may request development project
 - Single expert assigned as process czar
 - Any interested party may participate in development group (once formed, it is closed until spec is ready for review)
 - Members of development group sign non-disclosure agreement
 - Three expanding levels of review (development group, JCP, public)
 - Require test specification and reference implementation before final approval

Results from Prototype

- Under way for 12 months
- More than 125 projects submitted
- 16 in final approval phase
- 7 completed
- Over 400 participants in development groups
- Most development group meetings are electronic

Summary

- Web-based processes are a viable way to develop standards.
- VITA may want to conduct an experiment.
- Sun offers to help.