



InSight

February 2005

CITE Diary

General meeting

12th April 2005 at:

Taylor Woodrow,
Technology Centre, Stanbridge Rd,
Leighton Buzzard, LU7 4QH

CITE/IAI summer event and AGM

23rd June 2005 at:

Institute of Physics,
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The Way Forward

Financial issues that have plagued us as an organisation over the last two years, and have to some extent blighted progress, are now thankfully resolved. Our only remaining debt is to Peter Vice, our former Community Manager and here we have negotiated a significantly reduced billing that will be settled by instalments over this following financial year.

That said we now need to focus on our agenda moving forward and, in that context, may I refer you to the framework that was set out in the document: CITE Vision & Objectives. It was originally sent out as part of the 2004 AGM pack, but a further copy has been included with this mailing.

Key amongst those objectives we believe is the re-establishment of user groups and it is our suggestion that there should initially be three - covering Products, Tendering and Trading. Importantly though, and this needs to be emphasised, the focus of the groups shouldn't necessarily be on the creation of messaging standards. To maintain industry credibility and address commercial needs we must focus more on integration with business processes and industry software, implementation & any issues limiting uptake.

In order that we may define Agendas and determine the Scope & Terms of Reference of these groups, we will be holding a general meeting of the membership at the Taylor Woodrow Technology Centre on 12th April 2005. This really is the opportunity to start to drive matters forward, and we do hope that you'll be able to attend to represent your company's views.

CITE User Groups

Tendering User Group

During 2004, CITE has been involved with the UN/CEFACT TBG6 group that is developing an **eTendering ebXML standard**.

Over the past year there has been considerable convergence and agreement on the structure of a Bill of Quantities document bringing together the best of the German,

French and UK standards, both draft and published. Working with the Japanese and Koreans extends the opportunity for the same exchange standard being used internationally.

As 'owners' and contributors to the TBG6 UML Model, CITE have direct access to the model and can influence future standards work. CITE's involvement on the TBG Modellers Reference Team has provided the opportunity to develop a model-driven standards approach for creating any future CITE standards. Furthermore the building-block approach to standards, by using Core Components, has also been a long-standing objective for CITE.

CITE also has close contact with those that have/are defining the translation between UML and XML Schema on the naming and design rules. Consequently any CITE standards developed in the near future will be closely aligned with the UN/CEFACT schema than would be otherwise be the case.

Working with UN/CEFACT will provide much needed recognition for CITE standards. Ultimately UN/CEFACT standards will become CEN standards and therefore EU/Government requirements.

What is UML and UMM?

These are different although related methodologies. UML stands for the Unified Modelling Language and UMM the UN/CEFACT Modelling Methodology. The UMM uses UML. The UMM sets out the way to capture business requirements for the development of sustainable exchange standards and is part of the ebXML framework. It is not, however, just about the development of XML schema as the methodology can equally be applied to any other technical solution and therein lies the re-usability of any requirements modelling that is undertaken using the methodology.

For more information on the UN/CEFACT eTendering ebXML standard see:

http://www.etendering-tbg6.net/abt_tor.html

If you require any further information please e-mail kevin@cite.org.uk

Trading User Group

Currently there are a range of standards in existence in this space.

Some are industry specific, like the CITE flat file or eBuild-XML standard, whereas others are proprietary or generic. But, to a greater or lesser extent mainly amongst our industry's larger players, they are being successfully used!

Whilst our longer term strategy is currently to utilise, or develop a subset from, the emerging UN/CEFACT ebXML standard this is still some way away from fruition. We therefore need to address how we can 'ramp-up' collaborative trading now.

What current constraints are there? Arguably inter-operability between trading hubs is a major issue and it is currently preventing a whole range of suppliers from 'dipping their toes in the water'. Then why use a standard if individual contractors/suppliers have different interpretations of the use of data elements? In terms of business process how practical is the use of sending trading documents as e-mail attachments? How, and at what level, should matching occur in Purchase to Pay processes? And how should matching errors be accounted for? Are there any legal issues? Do we need a framework to create standard trading agreements between supplier and customer?

And, as I am sure you can identify, there are many more issues. Having identified them though how do we set about resolving them? Can major clients 'assist' in 'unlocking' some of the apparent intransigence that exists amongst software vendors? What role can education and the trade press have in driving our agenda forward?

At this stage I guess none of us necessarily have all the answers. But this is the whole purpose of this group – working together to identify issues and importantly pragmatic and cost effective solutions.

If you require any further information please e-mail david.west@rmc.co.uk

Products User Group

The content of eTendering, eBusiness and eCatalogue messages has much in common. The Products User Group will support both CITE and IAI members with an interest in the use of electronic standards for the distribution of material and product

data. Material and product data is intended for use in Design, Specification, Tendering and Commissioning processes.

A common schema would allow efficient browsing and searching of catalogues of products and services. Using simple drag-and-drop methods accurate and comprehensive product data can be bound into the project drawings, documents and models, and delivered to both the contractor and the building owner.

The group plans to examine recent pilot demonstrations using IFC and ifcXML that have shown the potential with a view to contributing to international developments.

If you require any further information please e-mail nick@nicknisbet.com

CITE and the CITB Special Measures Project

'Accelerating change through supply chain management and integration, including supply logistics'

The objective of CITE working with CITB in this project is to identify the technological and systems requirements for successful eTrading. CITE is concentrating on the 'interoperability' aspect, ensuring that all trading partners in a supply chain are able to communicate with one another in an efficient electronic manner. Since the start of the project, suppliers such as Travis Perkins, Tarmac, RMC and Hanson have all expressed an interest in streamlining and automating the 'proof of delivery' process, as current business practices result in many disputes and wasted effort on the part of both customer and supplier.

Mobile technology, flexible business processes, seamless networks – all of these concepts have been heralded as fundamental to the advance of business efficiency, delivering considerable improvements in employee productivity and greater business freedom.

According to a new report from analyst group Gartner, however, in many cases the reverse is true. A lack of integration and coordination

between IT systems, tools, procedures and policies, it says, is starting to impede – not assist – people in their work. Moreover, it says, the failure of companies to help people absorb new applications, technologies and information flow is undercutting by half the business value of their IT investments.

In order that we may establish whether or not this is a true account of the situation, a sub project for 2005 will focus on inviting a cross section of contractors, suppliers and software service providers to provide information about their individual experiences of electronic trading, obtaining from them detailed information regarding their current use of electronic information exchange in the construction industry supply chain.

Asking such questions as:

- Are you aware of any electronic trading facilities currently offered by your trading partners?
- Do you make use of trading hubs?
- Can you receive sales invoices and what information exchange formats do you use?
- What do you see is holding back the extensive use of eTrading within construction?

If you would like to be selected to take part in this project please contact Sue Langley: e-mail: suelangley@hextons.fsnet.co.uk

At the end of the project CITE will develop a report based upon the results of the questionnaire and any projects that successfully demonstrate the use of new technology available to the industry. This will be placed on the Constructing Excellence web site.

The project concludes in September 2005

CITE's New web site

CITE has recently created a new web site. It provides an easy means to manage and publish content – so the CITE management and administration team will be able to keep the web site updated with up-to-the minute information on events

and information relating to the various CITE User Groups.



It is still under construction so keep an eye on the site in the future as more content is added.

To access the site visit:
<http://www.cite.org.uk>

Joining the Modelling world with the Business Message world

The International Alliance for Interoperability (IAI) have developed specifications called Industry Foundation Classes (IFC) that define the information that can be exchanged between different software applications. Today, there are many software applications that support the current IFC2x IFC specification and these include all the major CAD systems, but also more importantly, enable project information to be exchanged between different design disciplines. For example exchanging an architectural model between a CAD system and energy analysis software as was demonstrated in the IFC-mBomb project that was described in the last IAI Newsletter.

CITE on the other hand have developed a number of standards that support the exchange of business information that include support for Trading messages and Tendering bills of quantities data.

The IAI and CITE standards can be viewed as complementary to each other in that they support different aspects or views of a projects information. If you look at the technologies that were used to support and develop the standards you would find that they used ISO STEP and EDI/Edifact respectively. In the past this could be seen as a barrier to easily exchanging or

reusing information between the two worlds.

However, today with the emergence of XML schema based definitions for the exchange of information, this issue is a thing of the past. In the future both IAI IFC's and CITE's business messages will be utilise XML based technologies. For example, IFC model information can be exchanged using ifcXML and the CITE Tendering messages will be based on ebXML.

This will ensure that the information that is created in the CAD modelling and Business message worlds will be able to be easily shared and re-used. To ensure that this vision will be a reality a technical team has been set that will be formed by technical experts in both the IAI and CITE.

CITE Technical Team

During 2004, a technical specialists team has been formed, which has developed a plan for the direction of future technical work within CITE. It has taken a realistic view of what can (and should) be done with available resources that are available.

Over the past 12 months the topics addressed include:

- Review of eTendering activity
- Review of ebXML as a strategy objective
- eTrading activities and relationships with other standards bodies, for example the Building Services Trading Community
- ifcXML library schema
- The CITE and IAI web sites

CITE Standards

CITE EBQ File Reader 2004

CITE have updated the Microsoft Excel spreadsheet that will enable you to import or read a Bill of Quantities, in CITE 4.2 format (EBQ), into Microsoft Excel.

To download the software visit:
http://www.cite.org.uk/Software_Bill_Of_Quantities.html

CITE Standards Accreditation

The CITE Standards software accreditation procedure has been reviewed this year. The

documentation that is used to record the results of the accreditation tests have been updated. A new accreditation certificate has been created that identifies the CITE Standard to which the software has been certified – so look out for it on software in the future.



The most recent software to be accredited is:

- Building Software Services Ltd, **Global Estimating v5.99w7** to the standard: CITE ASCII BoQ version 4.2

Membership Matters!

Subscriptions for 2005

The membership subscriptions for the period 1st January 2005 to 31st December 2005 are now due.

New Members

CITE welcomes the following new members to the Community:

- Liquid Knowledge Limited
- V B Johnson & Partners

Dates for your diary

CITE User Group General meeting

12th April 2005, at Taylor Woodrow, Technology Centre, Stanbridge Rd, Leighton Buzzard, LU7 4QH

CITE/IAI Summer Event & AGM

23rd June 2005, at: Institute of Physics, 76 Portland Place, London, W1B 1NT