defining the Internet architecture for learning

WHAT WE DO

IMS defines and delivers interoperable, XML-based specifications for exchanging learning content and information about learners among learning system components. IMS members are implementing and adopting these specifications to make learning easier and cheaper to deliver anywhere and anytime, as well as to create new mechanisms, new contexts, and new products for education and training. IMS specifications already are becoming worldwide de facto standards for defining acquisition requirements and for delivering learning products and services.

HOW WE DO IT

IMS Working Groups gather functional requirements, technical capabilities, and deployment priorities from end users, vendors, purchasers, and managers. These requirements are consolidated into one or more specifications as the groups follow a proven, open process to develop a specification package consisting of a definition, XML binding and best practice guide.

Working Group documents undergo detailed internal review by the IMS Technical Board before public drafts or releases are made available to the public via the IMS Web site (www.imsproject.org). Feedback from test beds, product developers and adopters is incorporated through systematic revision cycles.

WHAT WE HAVE DELIVERED

IMS Working Groups set aggressive timetables for developing, testing, revising and releasing specifications. Specifications for Content Packaging, Question and Test Interoperability, Enterprise Data Exchange, and Meta-data have been released. Specifications for Content Management and for Learner Information Packaging and Exchange are nearing completion. Working Groups, which will gather requirements and develop specifications for Instructional Design and for Accessibility by Disabled Learners are being formed.

WHO BELONGS TO IMS

The IMS Consortium is a neutral forum in which members with competing business interests and different decision-making roles collaborate to satisfy real-world requirements for interoperability and re-use. IMS cooperates with other organizations to promote the use of IMS and other specifications and encourage their accreditation by international standards bodies. Over 250 organizations already have joined IMS in order to participate in meeting its collective objectives. These members come from every sector of the global e-learning community. They include hardware and software vendors, publishers, web service providers, e-commerce companies, educational institutions, government agencies, network providers, systems integrators, multimedia content providers, and other consortia.

WHY THEY JOIN IMS

New participants in the global on-line learning economy, as well as traditional providers of learning resources confronted with new technologies, find membership in IMS a valuable and efficient means for tracking and influencing key industry developments. Government organizations and corporations who are making investments in online learning and knowledge management programs join IMS to ensure that their policy requirements, e-learning infrastructure, and specific program objectives exploit the potential of technology and trends in the field. Vendors of products and services join to contribute to growth and innovation and ensure that their offerings conform to broad market requirements for interoperability and standards based features. Deliverers of education or training services join to inform their decision-making and reduce the risk of obsolescence for critical investments or organizational changes.

HOW TO BECOME AN IMS MEMBER

Visit the IMS public web site at http://www.imsproject.org or contact any IMS staff member to discuss how IMS membership will benefit you.

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