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Consortium

March 13, 1992

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FORMATION OF THE ISODE CONSORTIUM

London (March 12th 1992) — The formation of the ISODE Consortium is announced.

The ISODE Consortium is a not-for-profit cooperative enterprise, whose mission is to promote and develop the ISODE package of OSI (Open System Interconnection) applications, which has been used extensively in the research community. The ISODE Consortium will be able to evolve the ISODE software more rapidly than would be possible for any single member. This will be to the mutual benefit of members of the consortium, and will help to stimulate the market for OSI products. OSI is key technology to enable open communication between and within organisations. Membership of the ISODE Consortium is open to any organisation in any country. This press release marks the official start of the ISODE Consortium.

Organisations which have so far committed as founder members of the ISODE Consortium are:

- BNR Europe Ltd.
- Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO)
- Electricite de France, Direction des Etudes et Recherches (EDF/DER)
- Microelectronics and Computer Technology Corporation (MCC)
- National Aeronautics and Space Agency (NASA)
- Performance Systems International (PSI)
- SURFnet (Dutch Research Network)
- SWITCH (Swiss Research Network)
- University College London
- University of Michigan
- X-Tel Services Ltd.

Discussions are ongoing with other organisations, in particular with a number of vendors. An up to date list of members is available from the ISODE Consortium.

The ISODE Consortium's members include the vendors and users of OSI Application Software who have based their efforts on the ISODE system. ISODE is a package of OSI Application Software, currently in the public domain. The key components of ISODE are X.400 Message Handling Services (PP) and X.500 Directory Services (QUIPU). In addition, there are other OSI Applications and the OSI upper layer services needed to support these applications. ISODE Applications operate both over a variety of standard OSI Stacks, and over TCP/IP. This approach to multiple stacks, known as the "transport switch" has enabled deployment of ISODE in a wide range of environments, and facilitated interworking between those environments. The QUIPU X.500 is the dominant component of the only large scale OSI Directory so far deployed (over half a million entries in twenty countries). The PP X.400 MTA (Message Transfer Agent) is a high volume message switch, with emphasis on protocol and content conversion, in service use at over a 100 organisations. The ISODE applications have been extensively deployed in the research community, and have been used as a product base by a number of manufacturers.

The ISODE Consortium releases of ISODE will be made exclusively available to the ISODE Consortium members or by purchase of products from ISODE Consortium members. Academic organisations, and not for profit or government organisations with research as their primary purpose, will be given zero cost access the ISODE Consortium releases, on the basis of simply signing a licence with minimal administrative overhead. This is to facilitate the continued use of ISODE within the research community, which is a major strength of the ISODE package.

The ISODE Consortium will employ engineers directly, in addition to its coordination role. Work on ISODE will be done by these engineers and by members of the ISODE Consortium. The key role of the consortium will be to act as the focus, and to undertake and to control key developments. This cooperative approach will be to the mutual benefit of members of the consortium, and will stimulate the market for OSI products. The initial engineering work of the consortium will concentrate on the X.400 MTA and X.500 DSA, and on conformance testing of those components. It is also planned to incorporate a new FTAM (File Transfer and Access Management) and VT (Virtual Terminal) from Control Data Corporation. Participation of user and service organisations in the ISODE Consortium will allow for early use of the ISODE software, and ensure the focus on meeting real user needs.

The ISODE Consortium will establish US Offices in May, located in the Washington, DC area, and plans to open a European Office in Spring 1993.

The President of the ISODE Consortium is Steve Hardcastle-Kille, who has worked extensively with ISODE, and is the architect of the X.400 and X.500 components. The board of directors of the ISODE Consortium is:

- Phil Cannata (MCC)
- Lyman Chapin (BBN) Chair of the Internet Activities Board
- Dave Farber (University of Pennsylvania)
- Dan Lynch (President, Interop)
- Hugh Smith (Chairman, X-Tel Services).

> Steve Hardcastle-Kille states "The ISODE Consortium is an important step for the ISODE package, which will allow it to continue to flourish. The ISODE Consortium will aggressively evolve ISODE, with particular focus on the X.400 and X.500 applications, which are the flagships of OSI. The Consortium aims to produce systems suitable for large scale deployment, which must be easy to configure, have extensive management facilities, and be able to interoperate both with OSI and non-OSI systems. The combination of OSI Applications running over TCP/IP is a winner, and the ISODE Consortium will promote this in parallel with pure OSI."
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> Dan Lynch, noted that "we are taking a leaf from the Berkeley Unix book. The ISODE Consortium will rapidly disseminate OSI applications by delivering a highly functional collection of working software for all vendors to emulate or copy."
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> Lyman Chapin stated that "In order for anyone to realize the potential benefits of OSI, well-engineered software must be widely available. ISODE was the first implementation of OSI's application protocols that could be used with existing TCP/IP internets; it enabled software engineers to do the experimental work that had been frustrated by the scarcity of pure-OSI networks. The formation of the ISODE Consortium ensures that this valuable resource will be preserved and extended."