

PIDX Europe Paris, May 2005

About 20 attended the Spring meeting of the API Petroleum Industry Data Exchange (PIDX) committee in Paris, probably one of the last oil industry meetings ever in Schlumberger's Montrouge center which has been sold. PIDX Europe chairman John Boardman (Shell) welcomed SAP as the latest of PIDX Europe's 25-strong membership. PIDX' mission is to establish global business standards for the oil and gas industry and its trading partners. The organization also works on business processes and documentation. PIDX has established EDI-based standards which are used in North America. In the last few years, the PIDX committee has been migrating the EDI standards to a more modern, XML-based protocol. At the same time, the standard's scope has been extended to 'complex products and services' (ComProServ) to support whole chunks of oil field activity like a cement job or well completion.

In reality, the move away from the established EDI standards is slow, both in oil and in the API's chemical industry sister organization, CIDX. Meanwhile, generic standards – particularly the Internet Engineering Task Forces's AS2 standard – have come along. AS2 maps the EDI standard to XML and is a low cost, peer-to-peer deployment used by Wal-Mart. AS2 is to be an alternative messaging system for PIDX – the previous implementation used RosettaNet¹.

PIDX has initiated a liaison with the European standards body [CENORM](#) and opened a Pandora's box of e-business standards for e-government, e-procurement, e-business etc. PIDX has also extended the UNSPSC classification for use in the oil sector.

PIDX is engaged with CIDX and RAPID on a Joint Technology Plan – to collaboratively track generic e-business standards from OASIS, UPC, CEFACT and web services. On the topic of web services, the arrival of SAP in the PIDX fold will likely have significant impact. SAP is touting its Industry Speak package as B2B enabler².

Schlumberger is a big believer in e-business and uses industry standards 'end-to-end' in its field operations. But this requires a new kind of understanding and demarcation between buyers and sellers as to who does what in the e-commerce world and who pays!

Highlights

[PIDX Activity](#)

[E-business in Schlumberger](#)

[SAP Industry Speak](#)

[IETF AS2 platform](#)

¹ It is interesting to recall the original 'rationale' behind the move from EDI to XML-based e-business. EDI was 'expensive' and a barrier to entry to smaller companies. There was a need for a low cost XML-based alternative. But to carry the XML across system boundaries and firewalls, you need fancy middleware. So the first generation XML solutions ended up being rather expensive to deploy!

² Industry Speak is a potential 'hub killer' – allowing companies to automate transactions without intermediaries. But its position with respect to standards, whether generic W3C, or vertical like PIDX, is debatable.

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