Industry Trends and Associations Flow Together at UniForum '96

The Open Systems Pavilion will clarify the missions of some key industry players with its theme "Turning Technologies into Tools."

You'd be forgiven for not seeing immediately the common links among associations like the Open Software Foundation (OSF), X/Open Co. Ltd., the UnixWare Technology Group (UTG) and UniForum. As one wag put it, getting such organizations into the same room could just as easily become "open season" as an opportunity to focus on open systems.

At UniForum '96, however, the ties that link these organizations and others will be made crystal clear at the first joint public effort among the associations: the Open Systems Pavilion.

The unifying theme of the Open Systems Pavilion is "Turning Technologies into Tools." The participating associations agree that powerful, proven technologies are at the heart of today's open systems. But technologies alone aren't enough. They need various types of industry support to turn them into tools with which people can run their enterprises, today and tomorrow.

The goal of the pavilion, which will occupy premium floor space at the UniForum show, is to present a common, consistent message of enthusiastic support for open systems. Another goal is to delineate the specific roles of each pavilion participant in turning technologies into tools for building and deploying open systems successfully. Here's a synopsis of what each of the key participants brings to the party.

Who and Why

OSF focuses on advancing research and development in open systems, and on facilitating collaboration among developers and users of open systems technologies. At the pavilion, you'll see examples of OSF's work in demonstrations of products incorporating such technologies as the Distributed Computing Environment (DCE) and the Common Desktop Environment (CDE).

X/Open helps developers and users of open systems by integrating industry standards and licensing the X/Open brand, which hundreds of organizations worldwide use to ensure consistency and compatibility among X/Open-branded products and to reduce confusion about standards conformance.

UTG provides a forum in which OEMs, ISVs and others collectively promote, influence and advance the development of technologies based on a common Unix implementation. UTG works closely with its member companies—most notably the Santa Cruz Operation and Hewlett-Packard, the leaders in Unix systems for business—to ensure that Unix technologies from multiple vendors remain open, interoperable and responsive to business needs.

As most readers of *UniForum's IT Solutions* already know, UniForum is the only user-focused, nonprofit industry association focused on promoting open systems solutions and educating users and others about them through conferences, publications and other programs.

Each organization brings unique strengths and contributions to the open systems movement. But all share common goals, constituencies and (in some cases) members. The pavilion will help visitors understand more clearly what each organization does, and which can be most helpful in meeting specific needs for open systems products, promotion, support or information.

Industry Support

Other organizations are supporting the Open Systems Pavilion as sponsors, including the Object Management Group and vendors, among them Digital Equipment Corp., Hewlett-Packard, Siemens Nixdorf and Sun Microsystems, each of which will exhibit separately from the pavilion at the UniForum show. This broad industry support underscores the value of the pavilion as a source of information and reaffirms the commitment of each participant and sponsor to the success of IT systems that are "open for business."

Another example of this cooperation is the ease with which the primary participants came together and worked as a team to make the pavilion a reality. Frankly, we were all at least a little surprised by the speed with which we were able to agree on common messages, exhibit design and other elements.

The pavilion will include separate areas for each primary participant, a technology demonstration area and a theater, where an entertaining, interactive presentation will emphasize the cooperation and synergy among pavilion participants.

Of course, the pavilion is at a trade show, so there will also be giveaways. These will be attractive, useful and related to the pavilion's "tools" theme. Visitors who attend presentations and/or other exhibits will be entitled to these prizes.

In addition to ads for the pavilion in this publication or others, the World Wide Web site of each primary pavilion participant contains information about the pavilion and a link to UniForum's Web site for further details.

If the pavilion is the success its organizers anticipate, expect to see versions of it at future trade shows. Success also could spur further collaboration among the various member-driven associations represented, pavilion participants and other organizations focused on open systems. We look forward to getting feedback from our members and pavilion visitors, and to exploring these opportunities. **IT**

—Michael Dortch
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