



PRESS RELEASE

Connectathon Goes to Austria in 2009

The Ninth annual European healthcare interoperability testing event known as the IHE Connectathon will be held in Vienna, Austria, on 20–24 April 2009 at the 'Remise', a historical building which was formerly a coach house for tramways located near Vienna city centre.

In parallel, a series of workshops "Getting IT done in healthcare: Practical Solutions from 'Integrating the Healthcare Enterprise'" will be organised to inform health professionals and vendors on how to make most of the efficient and cost-effective implementation of health IT and more specifically on the benefits of using content profiles in clinical work.

The Connectathon is a 'connectivity marathon' for healthcare applications during which IT systems exchange information with complementary systems from multiple vendors, performing all of the transactions required for the roles they are implementing in order to optimise clinical workflows.

At the IHE Connectathon, all the companies which have implemented IHE's Technical Framework specifications in their products have the opportunity to test them with many other companies' products in a real interoperability environment. Tests done during the Connectathon are accompanied by product specialists of each company as well as standards specialists and users.

The registration fee from the participating companies is being reinvested by IHE to develop test tools to further develop testing capabilities and include new applications in the future.

The results of the Connectathons are published in the Connectathon Results Table on the IHE-Europe website. Vendors may use the IHE Integration Statements to show the compliance of their products with the IHE Integration Profiles. Users may find it useful to include compliance to IHE Profiles in their Requests for Proposals and benefit from more options for the configuration of systems tailored to their specific needs.

IHE-Europe is the European organisation of the international IHE organisation. 'Integrating the Healthcare Enterprise' (IHE) is a joint initiative of healthcare professionals and industry to improve the way computer systems in healthcare share information. IHE promotes the coordinated use of established standards such as DICOM, XML and HL7 to address specific clinical needs in support of optimal patient care. Systems developed in accordance with IHE specifications communicate with one another better, are easier to implement, and enable care providers to use information more effectively.

For more information on IHE-Europe go to: www.ihe-europe.net



Connectathon Overview

The IHE Connectathon is the healthcare IT industry's only large-scale interoperability testing event. Connectathons are held annually in Asia, Australia, Europe and North America.

During the Connectathon, systems exchange information with complementary systems from multiple vendors, performing all of the transactions required for the roles they have selected, called IHE Actors, in support of defined clinical use cases, called IHE Profiles. Thousands of vendor-to-vendor connections have been tested overall, and tens of thousands of transactions passed among the systems tested. The sponsoring organisations publish the results of this testing for public review (see below).

The Connectathon provides detailed validation of the participants' interoperability and compliance with IHE Profiles. Participating companies prepare for the event using testing software - the MESA test tools - developed for this purpose. It offers vendors a unique opportunity for connectivity testing, removing barriers to integration which would otherwise have to be dealt with on-site, at the customer's expense. Companies taking part have responded overwhelmingly that the IHE process addresses important issues in their product development plans.

Organisations interested in participating in future European Connectathons are encouraged to refer to www.ihe-europe.net.

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