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## HTNG Workgroup Charter

### Sponsoring Members/Organizations

None. By vote of the HTNG Board of Directors, this workgroup was chartered as the de facto continuation of the Microsoft Platform Exploitation Workgroup.

### Workgroup Name

Property Web Services Solutions Workgroup

### Purpose

Hotels face a complex and constrained interface environment. A single hotel may have 20, 40, 60 or even more separate systems that need to work together to deliver guest services, staff efficiency, life safety services, financial measurement, and other capabilities. Yet few of these systems can communicate with one another, and those that can use largely proprietary protocols and often archaic technologies that are difficult and expensive to acquire, install, configure, operate, and support. This situation has led to operational, technical, and financial inefficiencies that cannot be remedied with the existing interface model.

To be sure, many technology vendors have made significant strides in improving interoperability. However, the lack of a common approach to interoperability has resulted in a large set of interfaces that do not share a common infrastructure or methodology. In the extreme cases, which are very common, an interface connects exactly one version of one system to exactly one version of another. It often requires a dedicated PC and serial connections to each system. Data formats are proprietary, and message delivery is frequently accomplished in periodic batches rather than in real time. Diagnostic monitoring is usually non-existent, and when the interface fails, no one individual or company is in a position to understand why. Interface failures often result in finger-pointing, with two software vendors, multiple hardware vendors, and the hotel itself each able to "cause" problems, and with no agreed methodology for troubleshooting.

The objective of this workgroup is to provide a foundation set of services as a launch platform to achieve a higher level of interoperability through a common approach to

implementation of web services. These web services should facilitate the emergence of solution sets (groups of software programs that work together to address a business need) by providing a technical framework for service extensibility. These foundation services should support the optional use of broker services (for example Microsoft BizTalk™ Server) to manage service interaction.

An additional commercial objective of the workgroup is to promote solution sets to the hotel industry.

## Scope

This workgroup will address interoperability of systems that support operations that typically occur at hotel properties. It will include systems that may be physically located at central data centers or other locations if they support property-level operations. It will exclude systems that support enterprise-level operations. It will exclude systems that support distribution (reservations, channel management, and revenue management) except to the extent of property-level requirements not addressed by the HTNG Property/Distribution Workgroup.

The technical approach for achieving the workgroup objectives will be web services. Industry standard security needs to be incorporated as an integral feature.

The scope of the infrastructure aspects of this workgroup (SOAP Header, security, authentication, etc.) is broad, and should be general enough to support the processing of message payloads for any web services that may be developed by other HTNG workgroups.

## Anticipated Deliverables

The technical solutions to be developed by this workgroup include the following:

1. A set of use cases (starting with the set developed by the Microsoft Platform Exploitation workgroup)
2. An internal review of the existing message set by participants within the workgroup to identify gaps, problems, and opportunities for improvement
3. Additions to the existing message set to support property requirements not currently addressed
4. Development of an extensibility approach and framework
5. Definition of deployment details
6. A broad peer review within the HTNG membership base
7. Publication of the web services and infrastructure requirements as a Foundation Message Set and extensibility framework.

In addition, the workgroup will address issues required to effectively market the technical capabilities it will create. This will include:

1. Consideration of the possible requirement of a branding and certification process
2. A database, website, or other means by which HTNG and its member vendors can promote the existence, adoption, and support of particular web services

3. Definition of use cases
4. A potential HITEC presentation, demonstration, or event.

## **Duration**

The workgroup will complete its activities prior to HITEC 2005, with a target design completion date between 30 April and 15 May 2005. A post mortem will be held following HITEC to determine follow-up recommendations.

## **Process**

Workgroup meetings and conference calls. Numbers to be determined by workgroup personnel. In general, workgroups have opted for weekly conference calls and face-to-face meetings at the outset and every few months thereafter. All participants are expected to attend the first face-to-face meeting, but arrangements can be made to remotely accommodate those participants whose location makes regular face-to-face meetings impractical.

HTNG will provide facilitation of the first workgroup and will document key discussion points and decisions at workgroup meetings.

## **Membership**

This workgroup is the formal continuation, under a new charter, of the Microsoft Platform Exploitation Workgroup. Initial participants will be the companies that participated in that workgroup:

- Daylight Software
- Destination Hotels & Resorts
- Eatec
- Four Seasons Hotels & Resorts
- General Dynamics Interactive
- IDT
- InfoGenesis
- Mandarin Oriental Hotel Group
- MGM Mirage
- MICROS Systems
- Microsoft Corp.
- Newmarket International
- PAR Springer-Miller Systems
- Percipia Networks

The workgroup will at the outset actively seek participation from additional hotel companies, attempting to gain a balance of large and small, managed and franchised, domestic and international, leisure and business, and gaming companies. The workgroup may also seek additional vendor participants in one or more of the following categories:

PMS, POS, Sales & Catering, Entertainment systems; Telephony; Customer Relationship Management (account and contact management); Energy Management; Locking; and Platform.