



DGI Update: Your Guide to Interoperability & Conformance Test Services

December 2007

Happy Holidays from the Drummond Group team!

As the year comes to close, we want to thank you for your continued support of our work. Drummond Group celebrated its eighth year this year and we are successful because of each of you. We wish you and your family a wonderful holiday and a prosperous New Year!

- **AS2 Reliability: the New Kid on the Block**

When AS2 was introduced, the first goal was to foster interoperable products and increase adoption. Great progress has been made. And now, industry groups continue to approach DGI about adding Optional test profiles to the AS2 certification as a way to introduce new functionality needed by their members. The GS1 eTG (eCom Technology Group) has been working on drafting an AS2 Reliability specification in order to further enhance AS2. Before we get into the details of the specs, let's first define what exactly is AS2 Reliability?

As a starting point, let's look at what the AS2 Reliability draft specification itself says: "AS2 Reliability has the goal of ensuring that the AS2 protocol succeeds in exchanging business data payloads exactly once." Duplicate messages such as duplicate invoices or purchase orders can wreck serious havoc with business operations. So, from a technical view, the draft specification states: "The goals for reliability are, first, that errors associated with HTTP server operation and server initiated sub processes do not prevent delivering messages or their receipt responses (MDNs) at least once and, second, that retry or resending operations made to compensate for these errors do not result in the same message payloads being submitted for further processing more than once."

Two key items mentioned in AS2 Reliability is Retry and Resends. What do these terms mean? Retries are related network related failures. The sender may 'retry' the "same" AS2 message if it encounters a network error, that is it can automatically send the same message again in order to recover from the error, thus guaranteeing delivery. Resends is related to a sender sending an AS2 message that requested an Asynch MDN. If the Asynchronous MDN is not received by the sender it may 'resend' the original message in order to recover from this failure.

The AS2 Reliability specification also mentions Message-ID. What is a Message-ID? Each AS2 message carries with it a unique Identifier called a Message-ID. It is used to identify each AS2 Message that is sent or received. In AS2 Reliability, retries and resends MUST use the same Message-ID. As a result, the recipient, upon receiving an AS2 message, can now detect if this subsequent (second, third, fourth, etc., depending on how many retry or resends attempts have been configured on the originator side) incoming message is a duplicate because the same Message-ID is now guaranteed to be used. This allows the recipient to detect duplicate messages and not deliver the same payload to the back-end system for processing, thus guaranteeing once and only once delivery. The AS2 receiving system can tag these as duplicate messages.

Other B2B standards, like Web-Services also include Reliability in their specifications with similar goals, so the need is recognized not only in AS2. Within AS2, we hear of millions of transactions being exchanged globally per day with a wide variety of document types and sizes over heterogeneous environments. Given these numbers, AS2 Reliability is very important to business-to-business transactions and that need continues to grow.

Drummond Group just completed an AS2 Interoperability test where vendors were offered the opportunity to certify on an optional test on the AS2 Reliability specification (phase one). Check out the press release link below in this newsletter.

[For more information on AS2 Reliability](#)

- **Press Release: Liberty Alliance Announces First Companies to Pass Full-Matrix SAML 2.0 Interoperability Testing**

Tuesday, December 18, 2007 – Liberty Alliance today announced that products from Hewlett-Packard, IBM, RSA, The Security Division of EMC, Sun Microsystems and Symlabs, Inc. have passed Liberty Alliance testing for SAML 2.0 interoperability. These vendors participated in the November 2007 Liberty Interoperable™ event administered by the Drummond Group Inc. and are the first to pass full-matrix testing Liberty Alliance incorporated into its interoperability program this year. All of these vendors also passed Liberty Alliance testing against the US GSA SAML 2.0 profile, meeting the prerequisite interoperability requirements for participating in the US E-Authentication Identity Federation.

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- **Press Release: Drummond Certified Program Introduces**

Drummond Certified Program Introduces Reliability Testing for AS2 Software Certification *AS2 is the "workhorse" of most Fortune 500 Internet messaging: safe, secure and reliable*

AUSTIN, TX--Dec 11, 2007--Drummond Group Inc. (DGI), the global leader in B2B software certification, today announced the availability of 26 newly certified AS2 products from 19 software companies which have completed the Drummond Certified(TM) AS2-3Q07 Interoperability test.

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