NASPL Standards Initiative

Join the NASPL Standards Initiative
Help Define the Future of the Lottery Industry

The NASPL Standards Initiative (NSI) was approved and funded by NASPL and the vendor community as an intial two-year collaborative development effort with participation from the lotteries, gaming vendors, and retailers in the development of standards, best practices and certification programs for the Lottery Industry. The Open Group, a technology-neutral and vendor-neutral consortium, is working with NASPL to provide the collaborative development infrastructure, manage the collaborative development processes, and facilitate the creation of best practices, technical standards, and associated certification programs for the NSI.

The NSI Vision is to provide an interoperable lottery environment that is based on a set of open technical standards, approved best practices and certification programs that, when implemented, will improve the quality and integrity of the lottery environment, and will provide increased efficiencies, resulting in reduced costs and increased profit margins for lotteries, vendors, and lottery retailers.

The NSI Mission is to establish a resilient organizational structure, set of processes, and procedures that will engage all constituents (lotteries, vendors and retail representatives) in an environment of open discussion, and cooperative development. Included will be fair and equitable processes for review and approval of the best practices, technical standards, and certification programs that are developed within the NASPL Standards Initiative.

The NSI Progress, in just a little over sixteen months, through the commitment of extremely competent individuals from lotteries, vendors and the Retail Council all working together, facilitated by The Open Group's very

professional project management team, and under the strategic direction of a dedicated and talented Steering Committee, has been unbelievable. The NSI is currently working on two Best Practices and two Technical Standards, each moving toward fruition, and on related Retail Council activities – a summary of progress for each follows:

Best Practices for Quality Assurance (QA) covers a complete product development cycle, which includes three phases: Requirements Definition, Product Development, and Acceptance Testing. – Progress Update: The QA Best Practice Task

Group has written a Business Requirements Document, issued a Call For QA Best Practices, and completed a QA Best Practice Document. In December 2003, the QA Best Practice was submitted to a formal review process, which will conclude with final voting and approval in April of 2004. Currently, the group is working on defining the QA Certification Program, which will be completed in May of 2004. Following approval, the certification program will be ready for implementation.

Best Practices for the Request for Proposal (RFP) includes the following phases: RFP Development, Format and Procedures, Communications, Evaluation, Notification, and Establishing Common Requirements for the RFP through the NSI. – Progress Update: This group has completed a near-final draft of the RFP Best Practice, and will submit that for informal review, opened to all NASPL lotter-

ies in March of 2004. The formal review and approval process, open to all NSI participants, will run from May to July 2004. The Certification Program definition for this Best Practice should be completed in August 2004.

Technical Standards for Bar Codes on Instant Tickets includes three key areas: the existing Universal Product Code (UPC), the Non-UPC (lottery-specific information) bar-code, and an integrated UPC and non-UPC bar code to enable future expansion for new bar code technology. – Progress Update: The group produced an on-line Bar Code Survey to determine practices used by the majority of lotteries and retailers for bar-code parameters. All NASPL lotteries and the Retail Council were invited to participate. Then, based on statistical analysis of the results, standards that would best fit with the current and future usage of the majority of lotteries and retailers were selected. A final draft of the Technical Standard was completed and will be submitted for informal review, open to all NASPL lotteries, in March 2004, and for formal review in April 2004. The approval is expected by July 2004, with Certification definition to follow.

Technical Standards for Lottery-Retail Accounting are being investigated by the Working Group and the Retail Council and there is growing support to explore further a Lottery-Retail accounting standard that is based on an existing XML Standard. – Progress Update: In response to the Group's Call for Accounting Standards, a proposal advocating the adoption of XML as an NSI endorsed standard was submitted jointly by John Hervey from the National Association of Convenience Stores (NACS) and Petroleum Convenience Alliance for

Technology Standards (PCATS), and by the California and Georgia Lotteries. Based on that submitted proposal, the Steering Committee approved a set of next steps for further evaluation, to include educational activities to increase understanding of the technology and the benefits to lotteries and retailers. The NSI is expected to draft a formal endorsement for adopting NAXML as an NSI standard and specify a formal approach for the NSI to participate with NACS/PCATS in the evolution of that standard to meet lottery requirements. The informal review, open to all NASPL lotteries, is expected to be in May 2004, followed by formal review in June 2004, and approval in August 2004. Approval will be followed by the definition and implementation of a Certification Program for lotteries and retailers in the use of the approved standards and best practices.

The Retail Council: In order to provide guidance from a retail perspective, NSI established the Retail Council. To ensure key constituents were represented, NSI conducted a survey with all NASPL lotteries, determining the largest retail chains in multiple jurisdictions and invited their corporate representatives to participate on the Council. Currently, the representatives come from the following organizations: 7-11 Corporate, 7-11 Franchise, Albertsons, Big Diamond, Conoco-Philips (Circle-K), Safeway, ARTs, Food Marketing Institute, NACS/PCATS, National Grocers Association, and several independent stores. John Hervey, CTO of NACS and President and CEO of PCATS, was elected Chair of the Retail Council and will represent the Retail Council perspective on the Steering Committee. He will focus on bringing other top chains to join the Retail Council, and help in educating the lotteries and Retail Council on XML. – Progress Update: The Retail Council has been very active since its inception and has already participated in the Call for Accounting Standards, the Retail Survey for Barcode Usage, two Web-Ex sessions (a "live" on-line presentation), one on Reduced Space Symbology (a new bar

code technology), and one on XML technology and how it applies to lotteries and retailers. They are planning on providing more training activities and to sponsor a second Web-ex session on XML, which will be open to all NASPL lotteries. The Retail Council is also working on a survey for Retail-Lottery Accounting Practices, which will be launched in March 2004.

Join Us to Help Define the Future

The time and effort put forth by our NSI volunteers, most of whom are employees of North American Lotteries and Lottery Vendors, is truly beginning to define and establish business models for the future of our industry. We continue to seek more participants for this important project. If you would like the opportunity to mold the future of our industry, notify your lottery director or company CEO that you would like to work on NSI. They in turn can contact one of the following people to include you in the project:

Alan Yandow, NASPL President
802-476-0100

Tom Shaheen, NASPL 1st Vice-President and NSI Steering Committee Chair
505-342-7611

Arch Gleason, NASPL Immediate Past President, Ex-Officio NASPL Representative on the NSI Steering Committee
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We would like to acknowledge the following individuals for their contributions to the NSI:

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