

WS-I Frequently Asked Questions

Q – What is WS-I’s mission?

A – WS-I is an open industry organization chartered to establish Best Practices for Web services interoperability, for selected groups of Web services standards, across multiple platforms, operating systems and programming languages.

Q – Who is WS-I and what does it do?

A – Our organization comprises a diverse community of Web services leaders from a wide range of companies and standards development organizations (SDOs). WS-I committees and working groups create Profiles and supporting Testing Tools based on Best Practices for the selected groups of Web services standards. The Profiles and Testing Tools are available for use by the Web services community to aid in developing and deploying interoperable Web services.

Q – Can anyone join WS-I?

A – Yes. We encourage all companies interested in helping to establish Best Practices for Web Services to join WS-I.

Q – Isn’t WS-I just for large global organizations?

A – No. Companies of all sizes are welcome to participate and we believe our membership dues are within the reach of many if not most organizations.

Q – Why should my organization join WS-I?

A – As a WS-I member, your company can:

- Participate in the creation of Profiles and other materials to support Web services Best Practices and standards interoperability;
- Provide your organization’s business scenarios and requirements to WS-I to influence future Profile development;
- Interact with key vendors and service providers supporting WS-I; and
- Access WS-I deliverables prior to public release.

WS-I also provides opportunities for members to learn about new industry developments, network with each other, and uncover new business opportunities.

Q – How is WS-I organized?

A – WS-I is an independent legal entity, a 501(c)(6) tax-exempt organization incorporated in the state of New York in the United States. Representatives from member organizations serve on the Board of Directors, the Working Groups and the committees.

Q – What are the levels of membership and their privileges? How much does each cost per year?

A – WS-I offers two levels of membership: Contributing Membership and Associate Membership. Contributing Membership is open to any interested company. Contributing Members create WS-I deliverables within organized technical working groups; they actively promote WS-I through participation in various committees and special interest groups; and they move the industry toward the critical objective of widely implemented Best Practices and true Web services interoperability.

Contributing Membership includes voting rights and eligibility to run for WS-I offices and participate in the speakers’ bureau. WS-I Contributing Membership dues are \$2,000 (U.S.) per year per company.

Because WS-I welcomes and values collaboration with non-profit SDOs, Associate Membership at no charge is available for these groups, by invitation only.

Q – How do I join WS-I?

A – A WS-I Contributing Membership application is available for download from <http://www.ws-i.org/join/membership.aspx>. Please complete it and return with payment as instructed.

If your SDO is interested in becoming an Associate Member, please contact the WS-I Membership Coordinator at membership@ws-i.org. The WS-I Liaison Committee will review your request.

Q – What is expected of my company if we join?

A – WS-I encourages all member companies to participate actively, in order to gain the most value from your membership. Members are also strongly encouraged to attend the Plenary meetings, currently scheduled twice a year.

Members are also encouraged to add the WS-I logo to their Web sites and to distribute WS-I promotional materials.

Q – What is the WS-I Advocates Program?

A – Because not all companies interested in Web services interoperability are able to commit the time and resources that formal membership requires, we offer another avenue for involvement: the WS-I Advocates Program, for companies that support the work of WS-I and the business and technical value of the WS-I deliverables. WS-I encourages Advocates to promote the use of WS-I deliverables within their industries and with their customers and partners. You may register your company for the Advocates Program at no charge at www.ws-i.org/join/advocateform.aspx.

Q – What are the WS-I Profiles and what is their purpose?

A – Profiles are guidelines based on Best Practices for the selected groups of Web services standards to assist the Web services community in developing and deploying interoperable Web services. They are available to the public for download at no charge from <http://www.ws-i.org/deliverables/Default.aspx>.

Q – Which WS-I Profiles have been completed so far?

A – The key Profiles are the Basic Profile 1.1, Attachments Profile 1.0, Simple SOAP Binding Profile 1.0 and the Basic Security Profile 1.0.

The WS-I Basic Profile establishes core Web services specifications (SOAP, WSDL, UDDI, XML Schema, HTTPS) that should be used together to develop interoperable Web services. To date, WS-I has produced the Basic Profile 1.0 and 1.1.

The Attachments Profile 1.0 complements the Basic Profile 1.1 to add support for interoperable SOAP Messages with attachments-based Web services.

The Simple SOAP Binding Profile consists of those Basic Profile 1.0 requirements related to the serialization of the envelope and its representation in the message, incorporating any errata to date.

The WS-I Basic Security Profile 1.0 is an interoperability Profile that addresses transport security, SOAP message security and other security considerations, and composes with other WS-I Profiles. It references existing specifications and standards, including the OASIS Web Services Security 1.0 and SOAP Message Security 1.0 specifications, and provides clarification and guidance designed to promote interoperability of Web services created according to those specifications.

Q – What is WS-I currently working on?

A – WS-I is currently working on Basic Profile 1.2, a revision of BP 1.1 that is adding in WS-Addressing and Message Transmission Optimization Mechanism (MTOM), addressing the requirement for interoperable asynchronous messaging. Work is underway on Basic

Profile 2.0, which builds on Basic Profile 1.2 and is based on SOAP 1.2 with MTOM and XML-binary Optimized Packaging (XOP).

Also in progress, Basic Security Profile 1.1 is an enhancement to Basic Security Profile 1.0 that provides guidance on the use of Web Services Security: SOAP Message Security 1.1, as well as the REL, Kerberos, SAML, Username and X.509 security token formats.

Additionally, WS-I is working on the Reliable Secure Profile 1.0 (WS-ReliableMessaging and WS-SecureConversation), an interoperability profile that focuses on secure, reliable messaging capabilities for Web services. The Reliable Secure Profile Working Group is developing and selecting a set of usage scenarios and their component message exchange patterns to guide the profiling work. The supporting Test Tools and the SCM Interoperate demo will be updated to reflect the new Profiles.

Q – Why is it a lengthy process for Profiles to be completed?

A – In order to complete a Profile, all identified standards must be designated as final by their respective SDOs. Additionally, the Testing Tools and Sample Application must be completed, and at least five WS-I member companies must be able to demonstrate that they can achieve interoperability using the Profile. While timeliness is a major consideration in everything we do, ultimately WS-I's greatest responsibility is to ensure that our Profiles and Testing Tools provide accurate guidance for achieving interoperability for the Web services standards contained in the WS-I Profiles.

Q – I'm not sure my company needs to become a WS-I member. Can we still have input into the content of Profiles?

A – Yes. There is always an opportunity for public comment on work in progress, which is published at certain stages especially for this purpose. Check the Profiles section of the WS-I Web site to see which items are open for comment at any time.

Q – How often will WS-I write new versions of its Profiles?

A – As new Web services standards are developed and published, we will review their content, and determine whether additions or changes to existing Profiles are required. However, there can be no set timetable for this review or update process, as WS-I can neither predict nor control the schedules for other organizations' deliverables, nor the extent of any revisions or enhancements (and hence the length of any WS-I review).

Q – Will new versions of Profiles be backward-compatible with previous versions?

A – While we will endeavor to maintain compatibility where possible, our goal is to offer Best Practices for use of the most-current standards, and setting the version compatibility of other organizations' standards is not in our hands.

Q – Can WS-I demonstrate that its Profiles are interoperable?

A – Yes. WS-I uses a Supply Chain Management (SCM) example to demonstrate interoperability. Several of WS-I's members – such as BEA, IBM, Novell, Microsoft, Oracle, SAP and Sun Microsystems – have recently participated in public interoperability demonstrations at industry conferences. Using a Supply Chain Management example, WS-I demonstrators guide attendees through the ways in which the WS-I Basic Secure Profile 1.0 (BSP1.0) achieves interoperability for WS-Security 1.0 and the supporting WS-Security Token profiles. Demonstrators reinforce that BSP1.0 composes with the WS-I Basic Profile 1.1 (SOAP, WSDL, UDDI), supporting the development and deployment of secure Web services.

Q – Does WS-I certify that vendors' tools comply with the WS-I Profiles?

A – No. WS-I is not a certification organization. WS-I develops Testing Tools that are available to the Web services community to assess whether a service is consistent with WS-I Profiles.

Q – What is WS-I's relationship with standards organizations such as OASIS and W3C?

A – We work closely with organizations that develop Web Services standards. WS-I integrates groups of selected Web services standards that may come from OASIS, or W3C, or other SDOs. OASIS and W3C are the owners of their standards. If WS-I identifies a problem with a standard, feedback is provided so that the error can be corrected, and the correction is then applied to the WS-I Profile.

In addition, WS-I has an Associate membership category, which is reserved exclusively for standards development Organizations (SDOs). Engaging with SDOs is an important aspect of WS-I's mission, and we value the input of these standards organizations. We look forward to an ongoing collaboration with SDOs to broaden Web services interoperability.

For More Informationwww.ws-i.org

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