Learning Industry Leaders Agree to Be Initial Investors in Testing Platform for Open Standards-based Digital Learning Materials

IMS Global Learning Consortium announces development of community source software for testing content in the Common Cartridge format

Lake Mary, FL 22 January 2008 - The **IMS Global Learning Consortium (IMS GLC)** today announced the launch of a new project that will produce a community source testing tool for the **Common Cartridge** (CC) format. Nine industry-leading organizations have agreed to be the anchor investors in the project, sponsored by the Common Cartridge Alliance. Those organizations include: ANGEL Learning eCollege, JISC, McGraw-Hill, Microsoft, The Open University United Kingdom, Pearson Education and Ucompass.com.

The Common Cartridge Alliance is a community of interested organizations and individuals promoting adoption of the CC format, including developing and sharing community source tools. The clarion call of CC of "Free the Content" reflects the benefits offered to end-users and learning delivery organizations in terms of cross-platform support, content portability and more effective learning materials.

The Common Cartridge format is based on the world's most widely used specifications for interchange of learning content and assessments: IMS Content Packaging and IMS QTI. CC also includes standards for metadata, discussion forum initiation, content authorization, and data exchange with web learning applications. CC enables interchange of the digital materials used to support online or hybrid learning, that utilizes an instructor.

"A number of organizations have recognized the community benefit in having a common format for both publisher-sourced materials and in-house production by learning institutions," said Rob Abel of IMS. "I'm delighted to announce that such is the level of commitment to this goal, nine organizations have already stepped forward to fund and participate in a project to develop a cartridge testing tool that will be distributed free-of-charge by the CC Alliance."

The CC testing tool will enable anyone to ensure their cartridges are valid. In November 2007, IMS launched the Common Cartridge Testing Service to help publishers and content providers ensure that their released titles comply with the Common Cartridge format. The current project will adapt these tests so that they can be applied to a cartridge automatically by a non-expert user. The testing tool project will commence immediately. As an open industry standards consortium, IMS GLC invites additional organizations to join in the sponsorship of this important effort. Additional sponsors will be accepted through the end of February 2008.

For more information about the Common Cartridge Alliance, go to:
http://www.imsglobal.org/cc/alliance.html

For further information on participating in or sponsoring the CC Testing Tool project, contact:

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About IMS Global Learning Consortium (IMS GLC)
IMS GLC is a global, nonprofit, member organization that strives to enable the growth and impact of learning technology in the education and corporate learning sectors worldwide. IMS GLC members provide leadership in shaping and growing the learning industry through community development of standards, promotion of innovation, and research into adoption practices. For more information, including the world's most comprehensive set of learning technology interoperability standards, information on the annual Learning Impact conference and awards program, and free community resources for learning technology leaders, visit www.imsglobal.org.

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