

The SNIA Shared Storage Model helps give Health Service the true storage picture

Submitted by: Omarketing Limited

Monday, 24 February 2003

London, UK – 24th February 2003 – The Storage Networking Industry Association Europe (SNIA-E) today announced that the Picture Archiving and Communication Systems National Evaluation Team (PACSnet) has established the Shared Storage Model as a credible method for representing the storage technology behind a Picture Archiving and Communications System (PACS). The Shared Storage Model, developed by the SNIA Technical Council, is a tool for defining the relationships and the functions of a wide variety of storage networking technologies similar to the OSI 7-layer model for networking.

PACSnet, based at St George's Hospital, London is part of the independent medical image equipment evaluation programme supported by the Medical Devices Agency (MDA). PACSnet is to present the Shared Storage Model and its applications as part of its report on the storage area networks (SAN) technology suitable for Picture Archiving and Communications System (PACS), which will be published at the end of February 2003.

The government has made a well-publicised commitment to have PACS implemented in all 186 acute NHS Trusts by 2006. The aim is to use digital technology to improve the availability and quality of medial images such as x-rays, computer tomography (CT) scans, ultrasound and magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) scans. The average PACS needs to store 1TB of data each year.

Dewinder Bhachu, Head of PACSnet explained, "The independent information provided by PACSnet assists IT professionals within NHS Trusts with the purchasing, implementation and efficient use of their PACS. Storage provides the foundation for any PACS and it is therefore a vital component." Mr. Bhachu went on to say; "The use of the Shared Storage Model is helpful for NHS trusts to simplify inter-vendor comparisons in a clear but vendor neutral schematic. Tools such as the SNIA's Shared Storage Model make purchasers' and evaluators' lives much easier."

Vendors of the storage networking components will also be able to present their technology in the SNIA Shared Storage Model within a tender document for the purchase of a PACS.

Michel Grosbost, chairman of the SNIA Europe executive committee, commented: "The Shared Storage Model is becoming more and more widely adopted by the end user community as a useful reference model. It is successfully making the transition from a concept into a real world tool as is well demonstrated by PACSnet's interest in the incorporation of it into their SAN storage technology report, widening its access to interested parties."

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Interviews and screen shots available

NOTES TO EDITORS:

What is the Shared Storage Model?

The Shared Storage Model is an essential tool for defining relationships and the functions of a wide variety of storage networking technologies similar to the OSI 7-layer model for networking. It creates a common vocabulary that enables vendors to easily explain how their products fit into the overall architecture. The model developed by the SNIA Technical Council, clearly differentiates the roles played by storage applications, the underlying infrastructure and auxiliary services that work together to provide comprehensive storage solutions.

About PACSnet

PACSnet was established in the summer of 2001 and is part of the independent evaluation programme supported by the Medical Devices Agency (MDA), an Executive Agency of the Department of Health. The team is based in the Medical Physics Department of St George's Hospital in London.

PACSnet provides independent technical evaluations of Picture Archiving and Communication Systems (PACS) and the components of such systems. Information provided by PACSnet is intended to assist purchasers of PACS with their purchasing decisions, implementation and efficient use of their PACS.

PACSnet may advise on all areas of the technical aspects of PACS, including transfer of image data to the PACS and the storage, distribution and display of those images. The team also has expertise in the implementation of communication links between PACS and other hospital information systems (e.g. HIS, RIS).

PACSnet has had significant input into the IHE-UK "Integrating the Healthcare Enterprise (IHE)" Implementation Group. IHE is an American initiative whose objective is to define precise interpretations for existing standards within medical information systems (e.g. DICOM, HL7), in order to more easily allow hospitals to operate systems where all devices and systems are fully integrated. More information on IHE is available from PACSnet.

Working with the NHS Purchasing and Supply Agency (PaSA), PACSnet have assisted in the development of a standard questionnaire to aid in the creation of the tender document for the purchase of a PACS. This questionnaire has two objectives: to establish the requirements and expectations of the purchaser, and to obtain comprehensive information from the vendor in order to establish their abilities to fulfil such requirements and to simplify inter-vendor comparisons.

For more info on PACSnet visit the PACSnet web site at <http://www.pacsnet.org.uk>

About the Storage Networking Industry Association Europe (SNIA-E)

The Storage Networking Industry Association is a not-for-profit organisation made up of more than 300 companies and individuals worldwide spanning virtually the entire storage industry – end users, vendors and resellers. SNIA members share a common goal: to set the pace of the industry by ensuring that storage networks become efficient, complete and trusted solutions across the IT community.

To this end, the SNIA is uniquely committed to delivering standards, education and services that will propel open storage networking solutions into the broader market.

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