



**ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL
COUNCIL**

Distr.
LIMITED
E/ESCWA/ID/1999/WG.1/14
25 January 1999
ORIGINAL: ENGLISH



Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia
Expert Group Meeting on Standardization in the Arab Countries
Amman, 2-5 February 1999

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION
FOR WESTERN ASIA
10 FEB 1999
LIBRARY + DOCUMENT SECTION

UN/EDIFACT STANDARDS

Prepared by
Abdulilah Dewachi

Note: This document has been reproduced in the form in which it was received, without formal editing.

UN/EDIFACT Standards

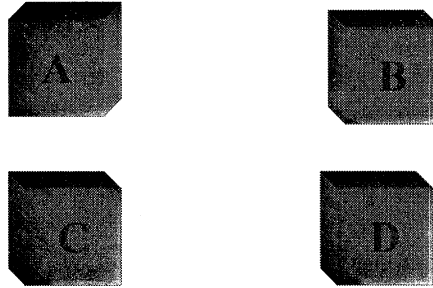
Abdulilah Dewachi
Regional Advisor
UN-ESCWA

6 November 1998

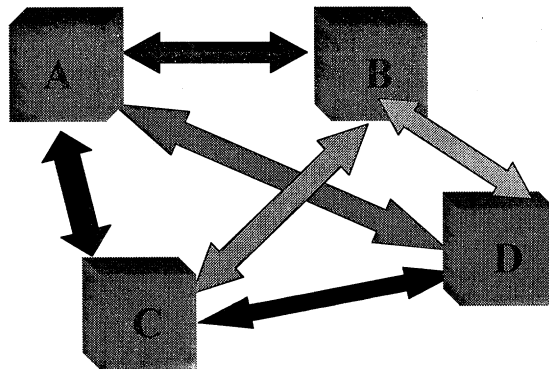
What is E.D.I ?

**The transfer of structured
data by agreed message
standards from computer to
computer by electronic
means**

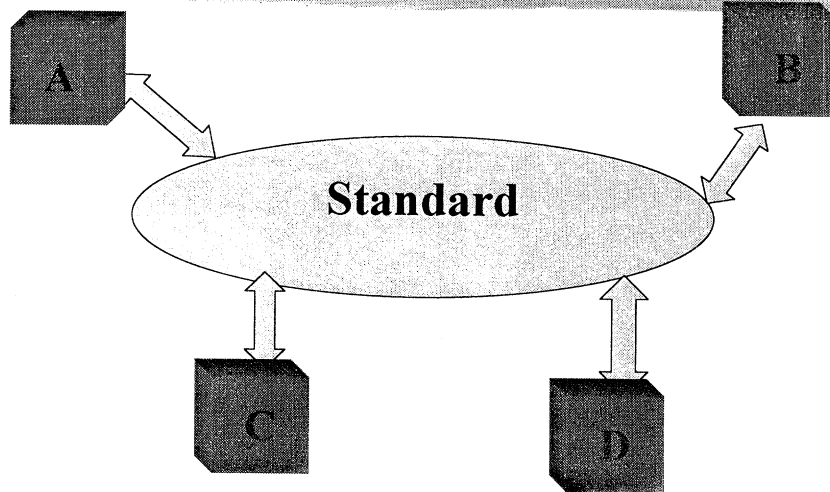
Four independent organizations



Simple interrelationships ?



Common Standard



Basic parts of the definition

- Structured data
- message standards
- electronic means

EDI Standards

Many standards were developed, but one has achieved some kind of superiority when it was adopted by the United Nations and later in 1987 by the International Standards Organization (ISO)

UN/EDIFACT

The United Nations Electronic Data Interchange for Administration, Commerce and Transport

EDIFACT is an EDI Standard

Developed from 2 widely used standards, the American JEDI and the United Nations Standard for Europe

EDIFACT is:

- application independent
- communication media independent
- machine independent

EDIFACT Structure

- Data elements = Words
- Segments = Sentences
- Syntax = Grammar

EDIFACT Aspects

- Data Elements
- Syntax
- Message Structures

EDIFACT and Communication

**Historically, EDIFACT
messages are usually
transported using**

Value Added Networks (VAN)

**Now, where does EDI stand
with respect to the Internet?**

The Internet

- 1994 3 million
- 1998 100 million
- 2005 1000 million

Electronic Commerce

- Only two years old
- Significant productivity improvement
- \$300 billion commerce between businesses by 2002

EDIFACT and Software

■ **Sending system**

- I data extracted from in-house application files, ordered according to the message format and placed on a record based, user constructed "Interface file"
- I The translation software's programs transforms the "interface file " to a file formatted according to EDIFACT syntax

EDIFACT and Software

■ Sending system

- I Formatted data is written to file ready to be transmitted, the Interchange file.**
- I Data enveloped by a communication protocol and transmitted. This is the Communication Interface.**

EDIFACT and Software

■ Receiving system

- I Receiving the data can be direct or by calling it down from a VAN mailbox through the Communication Interface**
- I Received file deformatted according to the message specification, validated and converted to those used in-house**

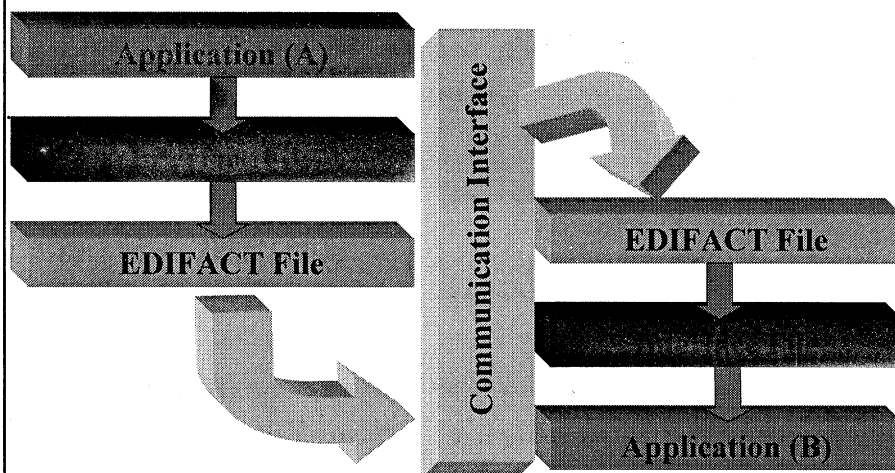
EDIFACT and Software

■ Receiving system

I Required data placed on an interface file for use in-house.

I Data passed to the application

Application to Application Linkage



UN/CEFACT

**The United Nations Centre for
Facilitation of Procedures and
Practices for Administration,
Commerce and Transport**

Participants

- Member States**
- Intergovernmental organizations**
- Sectoral and industry associations**
 - I many private-sector associations**
 - I hundreds of private-sector technical experts**

Mission

To improve the ability of business, trade and administrative organizations, from developed, developing and transitional economies, to exchange products and relevant services effectively - and so contribute to the growth of global commerce

Focus

The worldwide facilitation of international transactions, through the simplification and harmonization of procedures and information flows

Who uses UN/CEFACT's work?

■ Industrial sectors and key trade associations

- electronics industry (IBM, HP, etc.)**
- International Chamber of Shipping (ICS)**
- International Air Transport Association (IATA)**
- International Article Numbering Association (EAN)**

Who uses UN/CEFACT's work?

■ Banks who are members of the Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunications (S.W.I.F.T.)

- Over 50 types of national administrations such as customs, transport, health care, social security and taxation**

Who uses UN/CEFACT's work?

- National statistical administrations and central banks for the exchange of statistical data among themselves and with organizations like Eurostat, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the Bank for International Settlements

UN/CEFACT's Goals

- Expanding global commerce
- Reducing bureaucracy and increasing transparency
- Creating better data flows through electronic commerce
- Lowering transaction costs

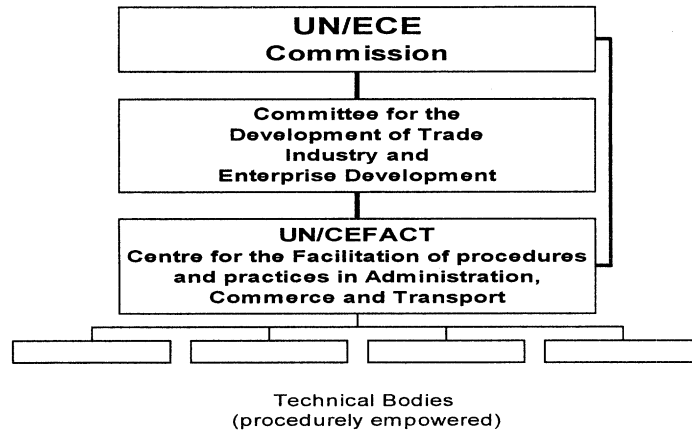
UN/CEFACT's Goals

- **Developing a network of supporting institutions**
 - the World Trade Organization (WTO)
 - the World Customs Organization (WCO)
 - the UN Conference on International Trade Laws (UNCITRAL)
 - the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)

UN/CEFACT's Goals

- **Improving private and public sector management**
 - how we collect data
 - how we manage and exchange information

UN/CEFACT Structure



adewachi

UN/EDIFACT Seminar

31

CEFACT WEB PAGE

<http://www.unece.org/cefact/>

EDI and Electronic Commerce

**EDI is the inter-process
(computer application to
computer application)
communication of business
information in a standardized
electronic form**

EDI and Electronic Commerce

**Electronic Commerce includes
EDI, but recognizes the need for
inter-personal (human to
human) communications. EC is
much broader than EDI.**

Benefits of Internet for EDI

- **Adoption of common standards**
- **Adoption and deployment of a distributed Directory Service capability, so that one can readily contact electronically any other organization in the world**
- **Ubiquitous (anytime, anywhere) network coverage**

Benefits of Internet for EDI

- **Layering of EDIFACT over existing, proven, applications**
- **Accessibility to all**
- **Widely available public domain software**

EDI Application with a multiplier effect

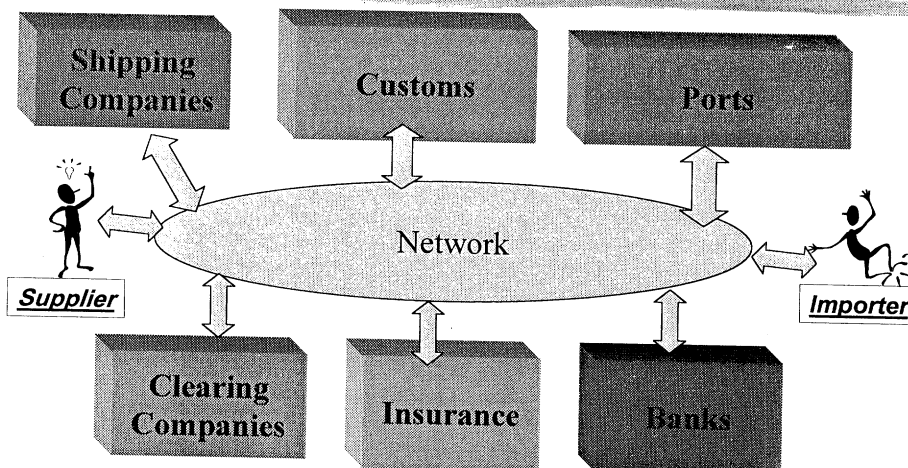
- Customs
- Ports
- Shipping companies
- Clearing companies
- Insurance
- Banks

adewachi

UN/EDIFACT Seminar

37

Possible Application - Manifest Management



adewachi

UN/EDIFACT Seminar

38

