

A Historic Setting for the 4th PDF/A Conference sets the stage for the future

(Berlin) PDF/A continues to win adoption as the key format for long-term archiving, as attendees learned at the PDF/A Competence Center's 4th International PDF/A Conference, held for 2010 in Rome, Italy.

The PDF/A Competence Center, the professional association of the PDF/A community, expects great progress in PDF/A adoption over the next two years. The Center's new Board reflects increasing international focus, with Germany's Olaf Drümmer as the new chairman of the Board, new vice chair Duff Johnson from the United States and new Board member Stewart Rogers from the United Kingdom.

The 4th PDF/A Conference

"No better venue could have been chosen for the conference than Rome. There are numerous myths about the history of the city's founding which resulted from poorly preserved documentation," noted Stewart Rogers from Crawford Technologies. It is precisely such dramatic losses that PDF/A can prevent, which is why PDF/A was published as ISO 19005, the International Standard for long-term archiving of electronic documents.

Over three days of workshops and seminars, the Conference featured speakers and presentations covering six distinct subject areas; "What you need to know about PDF/A", "Legal Certainty", "Accessibility and Metadata", "Archives & Libraries", "Public Administration" and "Business to Consumer". A track on electronic document accessibility was included for the first time to raise awareness of the needs of blind and other individuals who require assistive technology (AT) in order to read – an estimated 30 million in Europe and 25 million in the US. These sessions were especially well-attended.

The new part of PDF/A, ISO 19005-2, will be ready for publication soon and this subject was the emphasis of the 2010 Conference. Attendees enjoyed well-received Keynote speeches by individuals with key roles in the creation and development of PDF/A. Stephen Levenson, IT specialist for strategy and planning at the administrative office of the US Courts in Washington, D.C. described why the US Federal Courts needed and thus helped to create PDF/A. Betsy Fanning, Director of AIIM's Standards Program and the ISO-designated Secretariat for ISO 19005, discussed the standards process and presented the time table for the new PDF/A-2 and PDF/A-3.

“PDF/A Forever”, a 116 page Conference Proceedings book including 28 original articles by Conference speakers discussing PDF/A in various contexts was produced, and made available to all attendees.

In addition to the conference sessions and speakers, a number of vendors displayed their PDF/A-2 ready solutions at the Conference’s exhibit area. Attendees said that the conference met the needs of participants at all levels. Both participants who are new to the topic and the professionals familiar with the technology said they got what they came for.

PDF/A Competence Center: New Board, New Leadership

Following the close of the Conference, members of the PDF/A Competence Center met to discuss the results of work in the past year and to make plans for the future.

The members elected a new management board, including Olaf Drümmer as the new chairman and Duff Johnson as the vice chair. Drümmer said, “I look forward very much to directing the fortunes of the PDF/A Competence Center. One of the primary tasks I see for myself is to expand the exchange of information and experience for our association to other standards in the PDF environment.”

Mr. Drümmer brings extensive expertise to his new responsibilities. As the CEO of callas software GmbH and axaio software GmbH in Berlin, he has been involved in the print publishing and document management industry since 1990. Drümmer has earned recognition worldwide as a seasoned expert in PDF and color management technologies. Among other things, he has played active roles in the development of ISO standards, including PDF/X (since 1999), PDF/A (since 2002) and ISO 32000 (since 2008). He is a member of a number of international institutions and associations, such as DIN, ECI, the Ghent PDF Workgroup and PDF/X ready.

The new vice chairman, Duff Johnson, is one of the best-known figures in the PDF electronic document space, with numerous feature articles, blogs and forum contributions explaining and extolling PDF technology. “I am delighted to join Olaf and the rest of the Board in the work of promoting this important ISO Standard in North America and elsewhere,” he said.

Duff Johnson has worked with PDF since 1995, when he founded Document Solutions, Inc. (DSI), a document services firm focused on PDF technology. In 2008, Duff merged DSI with veteran PDF software pioneer Appligent to form Appligent Document Solutions, the leading PDF software and services company. Since 2005, Duff has served as chair of the US Technical Committee for ISO 14289 (PDF/UA). Since 2008, he has served as vice chair of the US Technical Committee for ISO 32000 (PDF), and as a member of the US Technical Committee for ISO 19005 (PDF/A). He represents the United States at meetings for ISO TC 171.

The previous chairman, Harald Grumser, remains on the board of the PDF/A Competence Center. Stewart Rogers of Crawford Technologies, Carsten Heiermann of LuraTech and Dr. Bernd Wild of intarsys consulting GmbH are also on the board. Thomas Zellmann of Luratech remains the managing director.

About PDF/A

The ISO 19005 standard (PDF/A) defines requirements for creating documents suitable for archiving based on the widely available PDF format. The standard specifies in detail what content is allowed and what is not. These and other specifications are intended to ensure long-term readability of the documents regardless of the application software and operating system in which they were originally produced. The advantages of PDF/A such as full-text search capabilities have led it to already replace TIFF as the preferred archiving format in numerous international governmental organizations as well as in private industries.

About the PDF/A Competence Center

The PDF/A Competence Center was established as an international association in 2006. In less than three years, over 100 companies and individual experts from over 20 countries joined as dues-paying members.

The objective of the association is to promote the exchange of information and experience in the field of long-term archiving in accordance with ISO 19005 (PDF/A). The management board is comprised of executives from callas software, GmbH, Appligent Document Solutions Inc., Compart AG, Crawford Technologies Inc., intarsys consulting GmbH and LuraTech Europe GmbH. The executive chairman is Olaf Drümmer, Managing Director of callas software GmbH. Duff Johnson, CEO of Appligent Document Solutions Inc. is the executive vice chairman.

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