

Integrating the Healthcare Enterprise

NA 2008 Connectathon

Product Managers Summary

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1 Introduction

The audience for this document is Product Managers who are considering applying engineering resources to participate in the IHE North American Connectathon in Chicago in January 2008. This document provides an overview of what it takes to participate in a Connectathon, as well as benefits of Connectathon participation. You will find additional details in these resources:

- **NA 2008 Connectathon Rules Document** – a comprehensive description of NA Connection 2008 rules, fees and testing requirements. The audience for this document is the managers who are responsible for registering systems for Connectathon testing and the engineers who will participate in the Connectathon.
- **NA 2008 Connectathon Fact Sheet** – a set of facts, definitions and dates with collected information designed to prepare engineers for the NA 2008 Connectathon. Read this in conjunction with the Rules Document. The target audience for this document is the participants who will test their systems in the 2008 IHE North American Connectathon, and the engineering managers who oversee these resources.
- <http://ihe-kudu.wustl.edu/na2008/> - home of NA 2008 Connectathon registration and test management. Will be available August 15, 2007.
- <http://www.ihe.net/> - all general IHE information
- <http://wiki.ihe.net> - used for collaborative creation of IHE materials and for documenting ongoing activities. Contains engineering and other material that will primarily help developers.

2 What is the IHE Connectathon?

The IHE Connectathon is a week long testing event managed by sponsoring organizations. Currently there are events annually in North America, Europe and Asia. The major goal of the Connectathon is to promote the adoption in commercially available healthcare IT systems of the standards-based interoperability solutions defined by IHE. The Connectathon serves as an industry-wide testing event where participants can test their implementations with those of other vendors.

Successful completion of Connectathon testing is a requirement for participation in IHE demonstrations. By signing up for an IHE demonstration, the company is accepting the part of the IHE process that is the Connectathon testing.

Many vendors participate in the Connectathon without any direct plans to participate in a demonstration. Even in cases where vendors are participating in preparation for a demonstration, the major goal of the Connectathon is to refine the implementation of IHE Actors and Integration Profiles in the systems being tested.

3 How are Connectathon results reported?

In order to foster testing, the IHE sponsors only report those systems that have successfully completed the Connectathon tests. IHE does not report failures. This removes “risk of embarrassment” as an impediment to participation.

The sponsors record the results of the testing and produce a results matrix that lists the Integration Profile and Actor combinations that each participant has successfully tested. These results are published and promoted by the sponsors to inform the healthcare community about the breadth of adoption of IHE solutions by industry and to encourage purchasers of healthcare IT systems to require support of IHE Actors and Integration Profiles in their requests for proposals and purchasing specifications.

Connectathon participants are encouraged to offer the IHE features they test in commercially available products as quickly as possible. When they do, they are encouraged to publish IHE Integration Statements to describe for prospective purchasers the IHE capabilities offered in these products. IHE maintains a page of links to company sites where Integration Statements are published and encourages purchasers of healthcare IT systems to consult these documents to identify IHE-compliant systems. It is the responsibility of the vendor to provide IHE with the direct link to its web page listing the Integration Statements. A vendor is NOT required to participate in a Connectathon in order to publish an IHE Integration Statement.

Companies are encouraged to refer to their participation in the Connectathon in marketing and promotional materials. The appropriate language to use is to indicate that the vendor has “*completed testing of <<one or more specific IHE actors in one or more IHE integration profiles>>*”.

Companies are strongly discouraged from using IHE participation to make unsupported product claims, including comparisons with other vendors. Claims using such words as “gold stars,” “certification,” and “validation” are not appropriate, as the Connectathon is not a certification event and IHE is not a certifying body. Companies using references to their IHE participation in ways that, in the view of the sponsoring organizations, violate the spirit of the initiative will risk having their names removed from the official list of IHE participants.

4 Benefits of Connectathon Participation

1. Unparalleled testing opportunity

- Your engineers will be able to test your implementation with numerous peer applications in a short, one-week period. Arranging the same test coverage with those other participants would require weeks if not months.
- Participants frequently find problems early in the week that they are able to fix and retest with multiple partners before the Connectathon week ends.
- Your engineers have the opportunity to learn subtleties of the profiles or implementations as well as test. There will be a large collection of engineers with valuable implementation experience. Your engineers and organization will benefit by making these contacts and learning more about the profiles and implementation issues.

2. Participation in showcase demos

- Showcase demonstrations are important public events that show your products support key integration features with partners and competitors. IHE requires successful Connectathon testing to participate in these demonstrations.

5 Keys to Successful Connectathon Participation

The experience of annual North American Connectathons since 1999 equips us to offer some advice for successful participation in the Connectathon:

1. **Understand the use cases** and scope of the IHE Integration Profiles you're considering testing in your product. How?
 - Attend the June workshop
 - Participate in the Public Comment period on the new Integration Profiles. IHE Technical Framework documentation is found at http://www.ihe.net/Technical_Framework/index.cfm. Public Comment notices are sent to ihenews@rsna.org each year during the spring and summer.
 - Consult with your engineering staff prior to registration. Every year we encounter engineers who are surprised about what the marketing department signed them up to test.
2. **Register for a reasonable number of profile/actor pairs** to test. Overloaded systems run a high risk of not completing the required tests during Connectathon week.
3. **Commit engineering resources** to complete the pre-Connectathon development and unit tests for new IHE features in your product. Your engineers will need to:
 - **Starting in August (or earlier!)** - Develop features in your product. Companies that wait until November to get started struggle in their Connectathon participation, are a burden to their testing partners in other companies, and often fail the required tests.
 - **Mid-October to December 31, 2007** - Run pre-Connectathon unit tests and submit results in the Connectathon webtool. This is a requirement for participation.
 - **Jan 28 – Feb 1** – Participate in the Connectathon
4. **Make IHE features part of your product roadmap**, not just for prototype development or demonstration participation.

6 How does my company register to participate in the Connectathon?

Connectathon registration consists of an electronic registration system, a printed/signed contract, and payment. Questions about the registration process should be sent to moores@mir.wustl.edu or felhofer@charter.net.

Each participating organization will register with the on-line system (<http://ihe-kudu.wustl.edu/na2008>). This system will be open for registration from August 15 through September 14. You can work on your registration over a period of days; you can add and delete systems during the registration month. You will not be allowed to add new actor/profile combinations or new systems after the registration deadline (Sep 14, 2007). Please make your selections based on proper estimates on effort required to complete the work.

After you have completed the electronic registration, use the on-line system to print a completed contract that lists all of your registered systems. Print the contract, have the responsible person in your organization sign the contract, and send payment to the address listed on the contract. Signed contracts with payment are due September 14, 2007.

7 What are the fees for Connectathon participation?

1. A company pays fees based on the number of registered systems and the number of domains represented by those systems.
2. The first system and domain shall incur a charge of \$8000.
3. Each additional system shall incur a charge of \$4000.
4. The first system includes one domain (Cardiology, ITI, PCC, PCD, Radiology). Each additional domain shall result in a charge of \$4000.
5. Each system that is registered shall include Connectathon registration for two staff members. Additional staff member may be added at a rate of \$50 for each day of Connectathon participation. The sponsoring organizations reserve the right to place these additional staff members at tables that are not directly adjacent to your test equipment.

8 Connectathon Process Rules

There is a separate document - **NA 2008 Connectathon Rules** - that provides the fine-print for rules and regulations. We summarize the top rules here.

1. Organizations participating in the Connectathon are required to test with test software provided by the sponsors and return successful results to the Project Managers by the published deadlines. This pre-Connectathon testing occurs from October through December and is a requirement for Connectathon participation.
2. Participating organizations are required to send staff members to the Connectathon location (Chicago) for the duration of the Connectathon testing period. You are not allowed to arrive late

and/or leave early. You cannot have your staff members remain in your home city and test remotely.

3. Individuals will be required to sign a non-disclosure document to protect the confidentiality of details about vendor implementations that might be revealed during testing.

9 What dates do I have to pay attention to?

We highlight these dates because we know they might conflict with other things on your engineering schedule. Like a trade show, dates for Connectathon are fixed. There are no provisions for extending dates, and there is no partial credit assigned for incomplete assignments.

Jun 11-13, 2007	IHE Workshop 2008: Changing the Way Healthcare Connects
Aug 15, 2007	Electronic registration for Connectathon opens; paper registration for Connectathon 2008, HIMSS and ACC 2008 is based on this on-line registration. Electronic registration: http://ihe-kudu.wustl.edu/na2008 (available Aug 15, 2007)
Sep 21, 2007	Registration for NA 2008 Connectathon closes. By this date, you should have completed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Electronic registration for Connectathon • Sent paper contract for Connectathon, with payment, to RSNA • Sent paper contract for HIMSS showcase, with payment, to HIMSS (if applicable) • Sent paper contract for ACC showcase, with payment, to ACC (if applicable)
Oct 2, 2007	Pre-Connectathon testing period begins for all participants in NA 2008 Connectathon. The first to perform are installation tests to make sure you have installed the test software.
Oct 3-4, 2007	Two day mandatory meeting for participants involved in ACC 2008 and HIMSS 2008 Interoperability Showcase demonstrations. Any Connectathon participant <u>not</u> involved in those demonstrations should attend this meeting.
Dec 31, 2007	All pre-Connectathon tests required of your organization need to be completed and entered in the electronic system run by the Project Managers.
Jan 28, 2008	System setup begins at 8:30. Connectathon testing begins promptly at 11:00.
Feb 1, 2008	Connectathon ends promptly at 12:00.
Feb 24-28, 2008	HIMSS 2008 IHE Showcase Demonstration

10 Contact List

There are many individuals involved in managing the Connectathon. We maintain the Contact List in the **NA 2008 Connectathon Fact Sheet** document.