April 20, 2005

Agreement on Joint Study of Ubiquitous Service Platform
Contributing to the Early Realization of a Ubiquitous Network Society with an "ID Commerce Platform"

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NTT DATA Corporation

Fujitsu Limited

NEC Corporation

Hitachi, Ltd.

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On April 20, 2005 the four companies NTT DATA Corporation (head office: Koto-ku, Tokyo; president and CEO: Tomokazu Hamaguchi), Fujitsu Limited (head office: Minato-ku, Tokyo; president and representative director: Hiroaki Kurokawa), NEC Corporation (head office: Minato-ku, Tokyo; president: Akinobu Kanasugi), and Hitachi Ltd. (head office: Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo; president and CEO: Etsuhiko Shoyama) announced an agreement to jointly advance investigations of a ubiquitous service platform (ID commerce platform) that can seamlessly link diverse IT systems and equipment using ID as a linkage key, toward the early realization of a ubiquitous network society.

In a ubiquitous network society, computers will be present in all aspects of daily life, and linking them together via a network will make it possible for businesses and consumers to enjoy convenient services. Various approaches are presently being pursued toward the realization of a ubiquitous network society, beginning with RFID tags, and the establishment of standards by standardization organs is moving forward.

Nevertheless, comprehensive system platforms and solutions for the provision of ubiquitous services are being independently developed by any IT vendors, and the continuation of such separate development will pose issues concerning user convenience and compatibility among different systems. On this occasion the four companies have launched an ID Commerce Platform Development Initiative and agreed to implement joint examinations on the development of an "ID commerce platform" as next-generation ubiquitous service infrastructure.

Specifically, in compliance with the standards specified by standardization organs, the four firms will examine the interface and functional requirements for the ID commerce platform,

seek the participation of additional companies, construct a prototype system, implement empirical trials, and verify system interoperability. The findings will be broadly disclosed in the future so they may be utilized by many IT-related enterprises to help prepare the environment for the further development of ubiquitous business and contribute to the early realization of a ubiquitous network society.

Based on this agreement, the four companies will promptly begin joint investigations of the interface and functional requirements of an ID commerce platform. The companies are scheduled to construct a prototype system and move forward with the technical verifications (empirical trials) in the second half of FY 2005. Once these trials are completed, the results will be broadly disclosed via standardization organizations and also commercialized by each of the companies.

Through such activities, the companies hope to contribute to the rapid realization of a ubiquitous network society and to the development of ubiquitous businesses and markets.

Figure: Position of the ID Commerce Platform Development Initiative
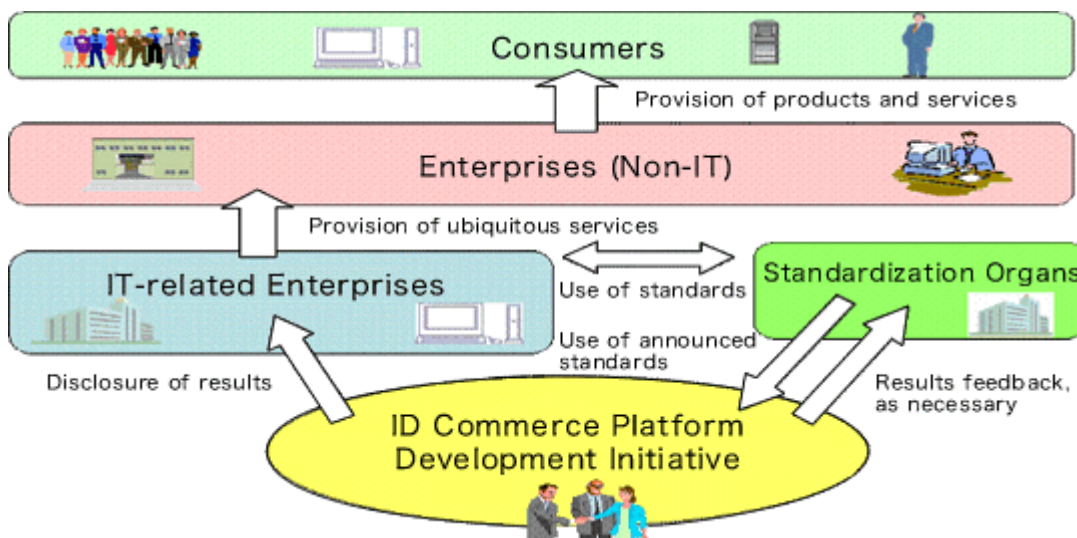
Joint Investigations Contents

The four companies NTT DATA, Fujitsu, NEC, and Hitachi will examine the functional requirements for the four platform functions of node management, ID management, event management, and service linkage, as well as the interface linking all four.

(Regarding each Function)

- Node Management

Node management is the function that realizes secure connection among terminals by verifying and registering RFID and sensor terminals. This enables the secure registration of information in a terminal via the network.

- ID Management

ID Management is the function that manages the preservation and registration of information attached to IDs, and links together dissimilar ID data. It enables the exchange of ID information among diverse systems.

- Event Management

Event management is the function that integrates condition-, data-, and status-based processing of goods with IDs as events, and implements requests. It enables the exchange of ID and processing information among terminals and services.

- Service Linkage

Service linkage is the function that realizes service integration by linking business applications with existing systems. It enables the linkage of ID information systems that send ID data with business applications and other IT systems.

Technical Verifications (Empirical Trials)

The empirical trials will elicit the participation of IT vendors, device manufacturers, telecommunications carriers, distribution companies, and various product manufacturers, construct an actual prototype system at user enterprises in the distribution sector, and verify compatibility at stores and other field locations.

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