

Integrating the Healthcare Enterprise

IHE European 2007 Connect-a-thon Fact Sheet

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1 Description

The IHE Connect-a-thon is a week long (**6 days**) testing event managed by sponsoring organizations. These organizations are different in North America, Europe and Asia, but the overall intent and management of a Connect-a-thon remains consistent. A Connect-a-thon has two major goals:

1. The Connect-a-thon serves as an industry-wide testing event where participants can test their implementations against those of other vendors. The output of the testing is a “scorecard” that lists the Integration Profile and Actor combinations that each participant has successfully tested. The goal of the scorecard is to illustrate to industry and the user community that there is wide support for the profiles. Participants tend to take the scorecard as an indication of their performance relative to other participants; the sponsors would rather the participants focus on the results from an industry-wide perspective.

Connect-a-thons can be held without any link to a demonstration. In that case, the event is truly just a testing event and an opportunity for participants to find inconsistencies in the IHE Technical Framework and/or their implementations.

2. The second purpose of a Connect-a-thon is to prepare for a demonstration at a meeting held by a sponsor. Near the end of the testing period, systems that are registered for public demonstrations are organized into demonstration groups and walked through the demonstration process. This happens after the systems have completed their Connect-a-thon tests.

The important note for demonstration companies is that normal Connect-a-thon testing is required for demonstration systems. By signing up for an IHE demonstration, the company is accepting the part of the IHE process that is the Connect-a-thon testing. Rather than just preparing for a demonstration, the company is required to complete Connect-a-thon testing with all other participants.

There is an underlying assumption that participants in IHE Connect-a-thons will bring these systems to market with these IHE Integration Profile/Actor combinations. This is not a written requirement as it would be difficult to police. However, for the long term health of the IHE process, it is important for vendors to bring real products to market and not just demonstrate concepts.

Connect-a-thon Results

Each IHE actor/profile combination is assigned a series of tests to perform. An actor is said to have successfully completed Connect-a-thon testing for a profile when it has completed three instances¹ of each test with other participants. In order to foster testing, the IHE sponsors only report those systems that have successfully completed the Connect-a-thon tests. This removes one aspect of risk and an impediment to participation.

The sponsors propose that participants indicate they have “**successfully completed testing**” for a specific actor in a profile. Claims using the words certification, validation or other similar terms are not to be made; **the Connect-a-thon is not a certification event nor is IHE a certification service.**

¹When the number of partners is large enough to be able to run the 3 instances of the test.

In prior years, we have euphemistically referred to systems passing tests as having earned “gold stars.” That term, used in jest, was picked up and used as marketing material by participants. We will not indicate that a participant has “completed testing” and make no further claims. Please be careful in your marketing.

The sponsors do not want participants to use the number of successful tests to be used as marketing material. “The ACME IT company completed testing for 15 IHE actors. This is 5 more than our closest competitor”. The problem with this type of statement is that your competitors may have already tested in previous years and decided to focus resources on other areas. Please point to your products with published IHE Integration Statements.

IHE publishes the connect-a-thon results at the following URL :

http://www.ihe-europe.org/con_result

Connect-a-thon Results and IHE Integration Statements

Publication of IHE Integration Statements is the responsibility of vendors. IHE will publish links to vendor Integration Statements but makes no claims about the validity of such statements.

A vendor is NOT required to participate in a Connect-a-thon to publish an IHE Integration Statement.

IHE provides a wizard (<http://www.ihe-europe.org/IS/wizard.php>) to write valid IHE integration statements.

2 Definitions

This section contains a list of selected definition that might be usefull in the context of the organization of a connectathon , a more exhaustive list of IHE terms can be found at the following URL : http://ihe.univ-rennes1.fr/TF/glossary.php?highlight=3_6

Sponsor: One of the professional societies who convene/manage/sponsor the activities in a specific domain. With committees, they set the overall vision for IHE, Connect-a-thon and demonstrations. Implementation is left to committees, participants and project managers.

Connect-a-thon Manager: Responsible for the overall Technical Project Management of the Connect-a-thon. For Europe 2007, the project manager is Eric Poiseau.

Technical Project Manager: Responsible for Technical Project Management in a specific IHE domain. Will work with Connect-a-thon Managers during Connect-a-thon. For Europe 2007, these are Steve Moore, Marco Eichelberg and Eric Poiseau.

Connect-a-thon Monitor: A member of the user community or standard specialist, independent from any participating vendors who will serve as in independent tester during the Connect-a-thon. Monitors will examine tests during real time or will examine evidence after the fact.

Demonstration Manager: Responsible for organizing demonstration at an annual conference. These are **unknown at the time of this writing**.

System: A reasonable collection of IHE Actors and Profiles that one would bring to market. The definition is intentionally vague so that sponsors and project managers do not limit collections of actors. However, the term “reasonable” is used to prevent a company from registering one “system” with a combination of 20 actors and profiles to get around registration fees.

Kudu: A web based Connect-a-thon registration and management system. With the exception of email lists, most other communication and management processes are handled by this system.

3 Registration

Connect-a-thon Registration

Connect-a-thon registration consists of an electronic registration system, a printed/signed contract and payment. Questions about the registration process should be sent to eric.poiseau@inria.fr

1. Each participating organization will register with the Kudu system (<http://www.ihe-europe.org>). This system will be open for registration from November 10th 2006 through January 7th 2007.
 - a. Each organization should create one login for the entire organization/company. Use the same name that is listed in the IHE online results if possible. If not possible, use a name that identifies your organization (Siemens) and not an individual (Moore).
 - b. Add an entry to the Kudu web system for each system you wish to register. Make sure you add all combinations of actors and profiles that you support. For some actors/profiles, the Kudu web system will remind you that you are missing a required actor. The Kudu web system is not guaranteed to find all such requirements; **you** are responsible for that level of detail.
 - c. For each system in Kudu, you shall make sure you add all of the options in the profiles you support. That will be important for testing.
 - d. You can work on your registration over a period of days; you can add and delete systems during the registration month. Once the registration is closed, you will not be able to change the systems registration by yourself.
2. **For each registered system, arrange a telephone interview with the engineer responsible for that system and the Connect-a-thon Managers (Eric Poiseau). Send email to eric.poiseau@inria.fr to arrange the interview. This needs to be completed before January 7th. The purpose of the telephone interview is to make sure your engineers understand the requirements and their responsibilities.**
3. After you have completed the Kudu electronic registration, use the Kudu system to print a completed contract that lists all of your registered systems. Print 2 copies of the contract, have the responsible person in your organization sign the contracts, send one copy of the signed contract to each of the following address :
 - Eric Poiseau, INRIA/IRISA Campus Universitaire de Beaulieu, F-35042 Rennes Cedex, France
 - Sylvie Sergeant, COCIR, Diamant Building, Bd A. Reyers 80, Brussels, 1030, Belgium
 - Signed contracts are due January 10th, 2007.
4. Payment shall take place before March 15th 2007. Please mention the invoice number and the company name (as registered) so that we can clearly identify your payment.
5. Invoice will be send to the address specified in he contract.
6. **Companies that have not paid there fees will NOT be accepted to the connect-a-thon.**
7. **Companies that have not paid there fees for 2006 will not be able to register.**

8. Companies outside of Belgium with a European VAT number may not be charged for the VAT. Make sure to provide your EUVAT number in Kudu at the time of registration.

Thorough vs Supportive Testing

Some participants have previously tested combinations of actors and profiles. They bring those systems to new Connect-a-thon and do not desire to retest those combinations. However, we find it useful to the community to have those systems registered in a “Supportive” role, meaning they are available to help other participants with their testing. Supportive testing is registered on a per actor/profile basis. A system needs to register at least one combination for Thorough testing before Supportive testing will be allowed.

In order to register for Supportive testing:

1. The participant must have previously tested the combination at a prior connect-a-thon (Europe, Japan, North America) listed in the Connect-a-thon results.
2. The participant must have a published IHE Integration Statement for the system.
3. The participant must confirm this registration with the Connect-a-thon Project Managers (Poiseau). Participants will not be allowed to register for this role without confirmation from the Project Managers.

Supportive actors do not submit MESA test results. However, they also do not receive credit for participating in the Connect-a-thon under the normal “completed” category. They will be listed in the Supportive category, but need to participate in at least one set of tests rather than the normal three sets.

4 Connect-a-thon Fees

General Fee Structure

First System : 2300 €

Second System and followings : 2800 €

Domain : 600 € (IT-I is free as a second domain)

Single Systems / Copy Systems

In the 2005-2006 cycle, the sponsors allowed an organization to register a single system for the Connect-a-thon and then bring duplicate hardware and extra personnel to complete testing.

That will not be allowed for the European 2007 Connect-a-thon.

Participants are responsible for registering a reasonable number of actor/profile pairs and for completing all required tests. The sponsors do not guarantee that a registered system will have all of its tests reviewed by Connect-a-thon Monitors or Project Managers. These are shared resources that have limits.

5 Rules

The golden rule is to work in a cooperative manner and respect your peers. The fine print rules are:

1. The Connect-a-thon is hosted by the IHE Germany and is a considerable burden to their staff. Please be considerate of the staff during the week. Procedural problems or complaints during the connect-a-thon can be raised with Andreas Kassner or Eric Poiseau.
2. Registration is open from November 10th through January 10th. Participants are charged fees depending on the number and types of systems registered (see definition above). Technical Project Managers will review applications to make sure that participants do not attempt to circumvent the intention of the registration process by loading up actors.
3. Each system that is participating needs to have a technical representative schedule a telephone interview with the Connect-a-thon Manager (Poiseau) during the registration period. The purpose of the telephone interview is to make sure the participant has a reasonable combination of actors/profiles, that the registered system includes all profiles required (e.g, XDS requires ATNA, CT), and that the participant understands the Connect-a-thon rules and intentions.
4. In previous years, a participant was allowed to bring a copy of a registered system to help the participant complete more Connect-a-thon tests. This practice will not be allowed this year. If your system has too many actors/profiles to test, you need to register another system (according to the Connect-a-thon fees) or lower your expectations.
5. Connect-a-thon Managers are not responsible for making sure your system completes all of its Connect-a-thon tests. We will attempt to assist you, but **you** are responsible to manage your own schedule and to remove actors/profiles in the event that you run short on time.
6. Some profiles are considered “at risk” if there are few or not enough participants registered. It is **your** responsibility to monitor the at risk profiles. Those profiles might not be tested if subscription is too low.
7. No integration profiles, actors or options will be added to the Kudu web system at the Connect-a-thon. Participants will be allowed to add these before March 1st, 2007 at the discretion of the Project Manager. In general, obvious combinations will be allowed (“I registered for Radiology SWF and forgot PIR”). Participants wanting to “sneak in” new functions will not be allowed. Participants will only add combinations to existing systems and will not be allowed to add new systems.
8. Project Managers will not answer these questions at the Connect-a-thon:
 - a. What is my host name?
 - b. What is my IP address?
 - c. What is the default gateway?
 - d. What is the DNS?
 - e. Where are my test partners?

9. Participants should arrive on time for all meetings according to the schedule listed in “Connect-a-thon Scheduled Meetings.” Given the size of the group, managers cannot spend their time reminding participants of the time.
 - a.
 - b.
10.
 11. Connect-a-thon testing ends Sunday-Thursday at 1800 and Friday at 12:00 (noon). The sponsors need to clear the building and managers need to review daily problems. Please leave the building at the end of the testing period each day. If you need to perform more development, bring a laptop or other system and work in your hotel room.
12. Power supply at the connect-a-thon will be 220 V 50 Hz.
13. Each system to be tested shall be staffed for the entire duration of the Connect-a-thon (Sunday 11:00 – Friday 12:00). Staff members shall be technical staff able to configure and test their system and produce evidence of tests as requested by Project Managers. One person shall not serve as the sole technical contact for more than one system. Bring qualified personnel!
 - a. Do not bring unqualified personnel. The space is limited; do not bring other people who will merely sit around and watch.
 - b. Do not train your employees on the equipment at the Connect-a-thon.
14. Project Managers understand the IHE Integration Profiles, but may not necessarily understand your product or your specific market niche. Please constrain your conversations to Project Managers using the language of the IHE Technical Framework whenever possible.
15. Individual participants will understand their products better than the Project Manager, but the Project Manager will many times understand a larger picture than the participant. This larger picture may include other participants who need to test a feature or problems that have been noticed. In general, follow the directions of the Project Manager and do not try to steer the manager to fit your needs.
16. The Connect-a-thon is not the time to review the test plans and suggest changes or to suggest changes to the overall test process. Participants should review test plans in advance of the Connect-a-thon and suggest changes in advance. If there are Connect-a-thon process problems, please see Steve Moore for discussion. The answer during the Connect-a-thon week is likely to be “send me an email”. Changing test plans or process is difficult during that week; communication with 200-300 participants is challenging.
17. The Project Managers will communicate with participants in English. We understand this is not the first language for many participants. If this presents an issue, please bring a staff member who can assist in translation. If your members are better at reading English, please bring notepads so we can write instructions.
18. Participants will have signed a non-disclosure agreement prior to arrival. Participants are not to use the Connect-a-thon to gain competitive knowledge of competitor systems. Wide-view photographs will be allowed. Closeup photographs of any system will not

- be allowed; even of your own system. We cannot always tell who owns which system, so we will apply a blanket rule and prohibit all close-up photographs unless taken by a demonstration manager.
19. Participants will assist other participants during the testing process. Even if you are convinced the problem is with “the other system”, the Project Managers will require you to help with testing and some debugging. Project Managers will assist in determining reasonable efforts.
 20. Participants are responsible for determining how many tests are required to “complete” the connect-a-thon for an Actor/Integration Profile. Project Managers will score systems using the Kudu web tool, but will not spend time asking participants to review the score card.
 21. Participants who feel they are unfairly judged or treated by a Project Manager have 2 methods for appeal:
 - a. Contact Steve Moore first for review/appeal/discussion. Steve Moore is responsible for the overall Connect-a-thon management.
 - b. If you are not satisfied with your first review, you can ask for review by a committee of sponsor (ACC, HIMSS, RSNA) staff members. Again, contact Steve Moore to arrange for review.
 22. In general, systems are required to pass 3 instances of each required test. Each instance will be performed with a different partner from a different company. A system is not allowed to test with a partner from the same company as one of the 3 systems. In the event that fewer test partners are available, Project Managers will make appropriate allowances.
 23. Friday is to be used for completing demonstration tests and to complete any unit tests or larger system tests needed for a system to “pass”. If a system has not completed at least 1 instance of a test by Thursday evening, Project Managers will not validate the 3 instances of that test on Friday. That is, you need to make sure you get through at least one copy of each test before Friday so you are not terribly surprised on Friday to find something is broken.
 24. Some systems register for multiple profiles and actors. These owners need to manage their time appropriately and not monopolize the time of Project Managers at the expense of other participants.
 25. During the Connect-a-thon, Project Managers may advise systems to drop Actor/Profile pairs. This will be done on a case by case basis. Participants are encouraged to manage their time and complete testing for a full Actor/Profile pair rather than perform spot tests and not complete testing.
 26. Systems that want to merely test on their own schedule and not complete all 3 instances are welcome to do so. Please advise the Project Manager so we understand your desires.
 27. Some systems have signed up for Supportive testing rather than Thorough testing. A supportive system has tested this Actor/Profile in previous years and is attending the Connect-a-thon to test new combinations. You can test against these systems, but please respect their desires. Try to find other “Thorough” systems first before testing with Supportive systems.
 28. Do not ask for special consideration for your system for non-emergency reasons. These reasons are not excuses for showing up late, leaving early or not following directions:

- a. My management did not allocate enough resources to cover this event
 - b. I am only testing one profile and one actor
 - c. All of my test partners are busy
 - d. I am a committee member
 - e. I am a Cubs fan
29. Do not count on help at home to solve Connect-a-thon problems. Past history indicates they will be in a meeting when you need to call and ask for help. Bring the right people.
30. It is highly recommended that you bring a set of printed documents that lists your configuration information. It is helpful to give one page to a test partner to confirm your configuration. This is available in the Kudu web tool, but the paper serves as backup. One thoughtful person last year brought that information on index cards.
31. Project Managers reserve the right to publish new rules during the Connect-a-thon in reaction to unforeseen events. We hope not to do this.

6 Important Dates

November 15, 2007	Electronic registration for Connect-a-thon opens; paper registration for Connect-a-thon 2007, is based on electronic registration. Electronic registration: http://ihe.univ-rennes1.fr/europe2007
November 15 2006 – January 7th, 2007	Telephone interviews conducted by Technical Project Manager for each Connect-a-thon system. No system can complete registration without a 15 minute telephone interview with the Connect-a-thon Technical Project Manager (Eric Poiseau).
January 7, 2007	All registration for EU 2007 closes. By this date, you should have completed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Electronic registration for Connect-a-thon • Sent paper contract to COCIR for Connect-a-thon • Sent paper contract to Eric Poiseau for Connect-a-thon • Sent paper contract to demonstration organizing committee (if applicable)
April 1st, 2007	MESA results are due. This is for all participants in EUR 2007 Connect-a-thon. Enter these in Kudu : http://ihe.univ-rennes1.fr/europe2007
April 1 st , 2007	Configuration information due for all participants in NA 2007 Connect-a-thon. Enter these in Kudu : http://ihe.univ-rennes1.fr/europe2007
April 15 th , 2007	Connect-a-thon begins promptly at 11:00. Participants responsible for knowing network information and connecting to network. Doors opens at 8:30, testing starts at 11:00
April 20 th , 2007	Connect-a-thon ends promptly at 12:00.

7 Connect-a-thon Scheduled Meetings

To be completed at a later time

9 Important Web Addresses

Function	Owner	URL
All general IHE Information	ACC/HIMSS/RSNA	http://www.ihe.net
IHE Europe Web Page	IHE Europe	http://www.ihe-europe.org
EUR 2007 Connect-a-thon Electronic Registration (Kudu)	INRIA	http://ihe.univ-rennes1.fr/europe2007

10 Kudu Description

The Kudu system has a user's manual associated with it. You can read the manual pages using the 2006 version (<http://ihe.univ-rennes1.fr/europe2006>) until November 1st and the 2007 version once registration opens (<http://ihe.univ-rennes1.fr/europe2007>).

These are the main functions you need to understand:

1. Create a login account for your organization
2. Register one or more systems for the Connect-a-thon
3. Enter configuration information for your systems
4. Enter MESA test results for your system
5. Find test partners before the connect-a-thon
6. Find the profiles that might be at risk because there are insufficient test partners
7. Find configuration information for all other systems
8. Find the network configuration information.