

Information release

EESPA announces completion of its e-Invoicing Model Interoperability Agreement and released it for use by its 50 plus members

Brussels, 7 January 2013.

At its Annual General Meeting in Brussels on 22 November 2012, EESPA, the European E-invoicing Service Providers Association, agreed its Model Interoperability Agreement (MIA) and released it for use by its members. EESPA's mission is to accelerate the adoption of e-invoicing based on services provided by its member community to their customers. With this announcement EESPA has achieved one of its key goals only 14 months after formal creation of the association.

Interoperability between service providers helps invoice senders and receivers who employ the services of different service providers, by facilitating the exchange of invoices through a network of interconnected parties. The MIA provides for a standardized bilateral agreement for use by service providers with their chosen service provider partners. It supports a number of legal compliance frameworks such as digital signatures, Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) and business controls, and creates a harmonized environment based on standards. The text of the MIA has the full legal blessing of a team of EESPA members' legal counsel and conforms to Belgian law, its default jurisdiction, although other legal jurisdictions are also catered for.

Tim Cole, the EESPA Interoperability Working Group leader, coordinated the efforts of many volunteers from the membership in crafting the MIA. The group also created a very comprehensive Companion to assist service providers in implementation. Tim recalled: "We started with a form of document from the European Standards organization CEN and worked through it line by line to make it 'fit for purpose'. In crafting these two documents we took practical input from all our members."

EESPA Chair, Esa Tihilä, said: "I am so pleased that we have been able to secure such a broad agreement within such a diverse membership. I believe it will accelerate the adoption of e-invoicing, throughout Europe and beyond. Trading partners can be assured that their information will be transmitted promptly, in the right format and with the necessary quality to meet compliance requirements."

About EESPA *European E-invoicing Service Providers Association acts as a trade association at European level for a large and vibrant community of E-Invoicing Service Providers, drawn from organizations that provide network, business outsourcing, financial, technology and EDI services. It has over 50 full and associate members and is an International Not-for-Profit Association (AISBL/IVZW) organized under Belgian law acting as a platform for industry cooperation on non-competitive issues. www.eespa.eu*

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