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Ericsson to give world's first SyncML demonstration

Ericsson will give the world a preview of SyncML technology in action at the first ever SyncML Supporter Summit, to be held in Los Angeles on 23 June 2000. The demonstration will show how the SyncML synchronization specification uses WAP to achieve instant updating and backup of data between wireless and fixed-line devices.

Although at present Ericsson products support the IrMC synchronization platform developed by the Infrared Data Association (IrDA), the company is leading the way in establishing the globally interoperable SyncML specification.

"Interoperability is the key word when discussing wireless synchronization," says Ericsson Synchronization Developer Manager Lars Novak. "That is why Ericsson is a leading sponsor of the SyncML initiative and why Ericsson is the first to debut a SyncML-enabled prototype."

The SyncML initiative, which is putting on the Los Angeles summit, is an industry-wide effort founded in February 2000 by wireless leaders Ericsson, IBM, Lotus, Motorola, Nokia, Palm Inc., Psion, and Starfish Software. With nearly 250 corporate members, the SyncML initiative seeks to develop and promote an open global specification for mobile data synchronization.

"Until now data synchronization has been based on a variety of different proprietary protocols," says SyncML initiative chairman Douglas Heintzman. "This has complicated things for manufacturers, service providers, developers, and most important, end users. The SyncML specification will change that."

Unlike other synchronization platforms, SyncML is an open industry specification that affords universal interoperability. Moreover, because it uses a common language, called XML, for specifying the messages that synchronize devices and applications, SyncML has been called the only truly "future-proof" platform for enabling reliable and immediate update of data. The benefit is that SyncML technology can be used almost anywhere and in a wide array of devices, regardless of application or operating system.

The SyncML Supporter Summit, held at the historic Regal Biltmore Hotel in Los Angeles, is expected many of the SyncML Supporters from around the wireless industry. While the Ericsson SyncML demonstration will be the highlight, the summit will also give delegates the opportunity to attend briefings on related technological innovations and consolidate relationships within the industry. It is expected that the large international presence and industry-wide participation at the summit will solidify the position of SyncML as the most viable data synchronization specification for the future.

In simplest terms, mobile data synchronization means that e-mail, calendars, to-do lists, address books, and other databases remain consistent and up to date at all times among networked devices—a critical capability if mobile data usage is to become as widespread as generally predicted. It is important to remember that the term network in this context includes wireless systems in addition to infrared, Bluetooth, cable, and traditional fixed line networks. A calendar entry made on a wireless device, for example, is immediately accessible by a desktop computer on a traditional office network.

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