

FIPA	97/10/08
FOUNDATION FOR INTELLIGENT PHYSICAL AGENTS	Munich
Source: Board of Directors	fipa7a02.doc

Press Release

FIPA, a non-profit organisation established in 1996 to promote the deployment of emerging agent-based applications, services and equipment, has released FIPA 97, its first specification. It is a matter of great pride for the members of FIPA to have produced these specifications, a pioneering effort in its own right within a very short space of time of one year.

This is an important moment for the industry: existing products and applications can now be innovated radically and new ones can be offered to the market, because FIPA 97 provides a benchmark for products that are interoperable.

FIPA has resolved to further extend the existing FIPA 97 functionalities. To this end FIPA has issued a new call for technologies to incorporate into a new set of specifications called FIPA 98 to be delivered in a year's time.

Description of FIPA 97

FIPA 97 has been produced in seven parts, as follows.

Part 1 provides a normative framework to manage a set of agents, both static and mobile. It deals with agent registration and life cycle issues. It defines an agent platform reference model containing such capabilities as white and yellow pages and message routing.

Part 2 specifies the agent communication language basing it on speech act theory in which messages are actions performed by agents, so-called *communicative acts*. A comprehensive set of message types has been defined. The specification also provides the description of a set of interaction protocols for negotiations and establishment of contracts among agents.

Part 3 defines standard mechanisms to incorporate non-agentised software within an agent-based software. For this purpose an Agent Resource Broker service is defined which allows non-agent services within the agent domain.

These three parts are definitional and have a normative value in the sense that compliant products need to adhere to these specifications. FIPA 97 further provides information to users about the use of FIPA 97 technologies to make a few well-defined applications. Four of these have been defined in parts 4 to 7.

Part 4 is concerned with Personal Travel Assistance in which user agents and service provider agents interact in order to assist in travel planning and travel execution.

Part 5 deals with Personal Assistance that offers a unified, intelligent interface to the management of a personal schedule, e.g. by setting up meetings with several participants, possibly involving travel for some of them.

Part 6 provides to the user an intelligent interface with new and improved functionalities for the negotiation, filtering and retrieval of audio-visual information. This set of functionalities can be achieved by collaboration between a user agent and content/service provider agent.

Part 6 utilises agent technology to provide dynamic Virtual Private Network (VPN) services where a user wants to set up a multimedia connection with several users. The service is delivered

to the user using the Personal Communication Agent, the Service Provider Agent and the Network Provider Agent as cooperating and negotiating agents.

The text of FIPA 97 is available at <http://cseit.it/fipa/>

FIPA 98

The Call for Proposals for FIPA 98 specifications deals with the following major extensions to the current specifications. In addition to extending the existing functionalities FIPA 98 will support two additional application areas that will benefit substantially from agent technology: electronic commerce and manufacturing. Specifically the following technologies are being requested:

- Support for agent mobility
- Security issues within agent communities
- Enhancement of agent communication language
- Social rules of agent behaviour
- User profiling
- Management of ontologies

The text of the call is published at <http://cseit.it/fipa/>