



# Southern Minnesota Section Newsletter

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## **XML -- A WAY COOL Way to Enhance Your Business Applications**

by Rick Stevens

XML is an acronym for eXtensible Markup Language, which is fast becoming this year's hot new e-business technology. So what is XML and what does it mean? XML provides a standard for creating specific markup languages used to describe information. Being extensible means that there is no predefined, "limited" tag set (like HTML); each industry or business environment can define a tag set that fits its particular needs. This is a pretty powerful concept.

The objective of this presentation is to provide an overview of the suite of technologies that make up XML, and to describe the value of XML both from business and technical perspectives. There are four key areas where XML is going to help reshape the way business applications will operate, in the very near future:

- 1) integrating thin client and pervasive computing devices with business applications;
- 2) simplifying Electronic Data Interchange capabilities;
- 3) encouraging application integration;
- 4) enhancing the utility of web content.

The reason XML will help reshape the way business applications operate is this: once business data is placed in a self-describing data model (via XML), that data can be exploited in ways unimaginable using current technology. For example, when described in XML format, the same information could be used to communicate with handheld devices, to support sophisticated search methods on a web site, and to provide data interchange with other applications across the Internet.

After describing key terms and standards which define XML, and discussing some of the many ways that XML will be used to solve current and future business problems, the presentation will cover some of the key enabling tools available for XML that make it easy for applications to produce, consume and manipulate data in XML format. A couple of sample applications will be examined to illustrate how easy it is for applications to work with data in XML format, and to demonstrate the value a standardized data representation provides to all applications concerned with data manipulation and interchange.

## **IEEE Section Meeting**

Rick Stevens

### **XML (eXtensible Markup Language)**

*Monday, September 20, 7:00 pm  
Mayo Medical Sciences Building  
(321 3rd Avenue SW, Rochester)*

*🍕 Pizza & socializing at 6:30 pm 🍷*

*Rick Stevens is a Senior Software Engineer at IBM's AS/400 development lab in Rochester, MN. He is the Technology Chief Engineering Manager for AS/400 Application Development (AD) technologies, and he is responsible for defining strategies and plans for AD on the AS/400 platform, including support and exploitation of XML-based technologies.*

*Rick has a B.S. in Computer Science from the University of Iowa. He is currently pursuing an M.S. in Software Engineering at the University of Minnesota.*

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