

Suppliers grasp Certification and Testing

Over recent months ITSO has experienced a rapid increase in the demand for use of the Certification & Testing Service and through the continual monitoring of the Service by the Executive, has now increased the resource yet again to meet this demand.

Background

The Certification and Testing Service has now been in operation for over a year. Initially the focus was on Customer Media testing but as more Schemes are now adopting ITSO, many Suppliers have put forward POST's and HOPS for testing.

We have now tested almost 30 Customer Media with all examples of the CMD's in the Specification (except for the Calypso CMD) have been successfully tested. One POST (sub-assembly) has been tested along with three examples of Personalisation POSTs. Currently one Minimum Functionality (Collection & Forwarding) HOPS has completed testing and a Full HOPS that is at an advanced stage in the testing process and is well on the way to completion.

The Certification & Testing Service was initially introduced to the Suppliers from the I2F Group who developed equipment whilst the Specification was being developed. This was in the form of a "Guinea Pig Scheme" which proved very successful and is now completed.

The next phase was that Suppliers who were developing their equipment further were booking slots for testing towards the end of their own development programs. However as sometimes happens in the development stage of many projects there were slippages to the schedules which culminated in slots being cancelled at the last minute. This resulted in an under utilisation of the Service and meant that managing the future resource requirements was a virtual impossibility.

By early 2005 it became obvious that the planned Certification & Testing resource would not be able to cope with the demand as Suppliers were working hard to provide their certified products to the initial ITSO Schemes that are due to commence in 2005/6. Therefore ITSO doubled the testing resource in the second quarter of 2005 to meet this demand.

The third quarter of 2005 saw ITSO introduce a new slot booking procedure that requires more commitment from the Suppliers by initially charging a Reservation Fee and increasing the deposit to 50% and the payment to 90 days prior to testing. This has been introduced with effect from November 2005 and has been well accepted by the Supplier community, so much so that we have fully confirmed slot bookings from November 2005 through to March 2006.

ITSO has seen the demand for testing increase even further, and with the present resource, the service is fully utilised until June 2006 with over 200 man days of testing booked. This represents testing of at least 10 Customer Media, 1 Personalisation POST, 4 POSTs and 4 HOPS of various categories.

The resource has now been increased even further to meet this demand and to meet the timescales for Schemes requiring equipment for their implementations in 2005/6. This will be effective during the fourth quarter of 2005 and it is envisaged that this second increase by a further 50% (representing three times the initial resource) will enable the present bookings to be moved forward and thereby release more slots in early 2006 to accommodate the demand for new products being submitted for testing.

So, if you are a Supplier with more products in the pipeline for testing, then you are advised to book your slot as soon as you can to avoid disappointment. Likewise if you are implementing an ITSO Scheme within the next 18 months, then you should ensure that your Suppliers equipment will be ITSO Certified in good time.

What is Certification?

ITSO tests all cards, equipment and software intended for use in the ITSO Environment and issues a Certificate before Licensed Operators are authorised to use it. The currently valid certificates are listed on the ITSO web-site, and Licensed Operators can verify claims by Suppliers that their equipment is ITSO certified before making any commitments to purchase or use.

Certification means the specific device or software has passed all its tests satisfactorily, including inter-operability with other already certified equipment, the specific sub-set of functionality being detailed in a Schedule to the Certificate.

The broad categories against which ITSO tests equipment are those found in the Specification Customer Media Devices (CMD), Point of Service Terminals (POSTs), and Head Office Processing Systems (HOPS). Normally, equipment and software will be certified for the full functionality of one or other of these categories. However in some circumstances, full functionality may not be either appropriate or necessary: for instance, Low Memory Cards can only support a limited IPE set; some HOPS may only provide AMS or Collecting & Forwarding services; or Personalisation Posts may only load ITSO Shells onto a single specific media. Thus certification covers both large integrated systems, and specific equipment or software designed to be used with other modules, potentially from different suppliers.

ITSO allows Licensed Operators to use software elements from a number of Suppliers or Service Providers to cover each of the different HOPS functions. Or for Operators to purchase ETMs (i.e POSTs) that service only the specific Products their scheme intends to introduce. However it must be remembered that, excluding Personalisation Posts, all POSTs must currently support all Media types, in order for ITSO to guarantee full inter-operability: any media, anywhere.

ITSO also provides a level of approval below full Certification, known as "Approval", to give 'comfort' to ITSO members who wish to assess and source from a pre-approved list or use sub-assemblies in other equipment.

To help facilitate the early implementation of ITSO based schemes, ITSO have granted derogation with regard to the requirement for all POSTs to be able to accept all CMS. Members may request this derogation for duration upto the end of 2006.

Further details can be found on the ITSO web-site www.itso.org.uk.

To book a testing slot, please contact Martyn Roper – Head of Operations operations@itso.org.uk



AILO Codes of Practice and User Guide Update

AILO is currently undertaking the production of eight Codes of Practice and two User Guides that will augment the ITSO specification and give operational guidance for Licensees.

The Codes of Practice are the following:

- Hotlist Processing;
- ISAM Management;
- Service Provider OIDs;
- Customer Services;
- Blocking and Unblocking Shells;
- Minimum Security Practices;
- The Impact of the Data Protection Act;
- Product Account Data.

The two User Guides are setting up a Scheme and Model Forms of Contracts. Terms of Reference for all of these documents are available on the AILO website.

The ISAM Management Code of Practice is nearing completion and is about to be presented to the AILO membership for comment before final release. The study of Hotlist

Processing has highlighted several concerns regarding risk, liability and the ITSO Operating Licence: it is currently on hold pending the outcome of the AILO Task Force set up to resolve these matters. The Service Provider OIDs Code of Practice has been put on hold until the ITSO membership has addressed the Service Provider ID Proposal (Member Discussion Document 0001). Work on the remaining Codes of Practice will commence as soon as the AILO membership ratifies the Terms of Reference.

A Working Group has been set up to oversee the production of the Codes and Guides. The production of Codes and Guides is dependent on input from the AILO members, in particular with regard to their experience of the practicalities of implementing ticketing systems for public transport. In addition, AILO would welcome contributions in the specialist areas of risk analysis, liability and contractual relations.



If you have any news items or features you wish to add please contact Claudette Stephenson at relations@itso.org.uk or telephone the ITSO office on 0121 233 2598.

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A timely reminder

Just a short note to remind anyone who wants to implement an ITSO based scheme in the next 6 - 9 months to apply early for your KYC. KYC (Know Your Customer) is the ITSO and RBS process which provides access to the SMS service. Approval can take up to 28 days but may be longer when we reach the expected bottleneck of applications which we know are coming.

Apply early to avoid disappointment.



Meet the Team

John Verity
Head of Security
and Compliance

John has had a wide ranging career spanning over five decades. He spent over 30 years working for BP in a range of roles covering Health and Safety, Marketing, Logistics and Supply. More recently, before joining ITSO, he was Operations and Compliance Manager for Rail Settlement Plan, the organisation managing National Rail's ticketing and settlement.

Married with three grown up daughters, he plays an active role outside work in environmental improvement and social inclusion and is a director of the local Groundwork Trust's trading company. He is a keen walker and gardener.

A graduate of Imperial College, John has Fellowships from the Institute of Energy and the Royal Society of Arts, Manufacture & Commerce. He is also Chairman of the Governing Council of Rail Industry Quality Assurance Limited.

John's role at ITSO is to oversee the governance and risk management of the company, supporting the Board, and monitoring the security environment.

Passenger Transport Solutions is the only established European exhibition that brings together Passenger Transport Executives alongside buyers and suppliers of the informative technology industry that is used in people movement. Passenger Transport Solutions prides itself in attracting the leading innovators from within the industry.

Passenger Transport Solutions has the ability to deliver such a high profile audience of interested and active individuals which resulted in many exhibiting company's securing major contracts. It is estimated that the net value of the exhibition is in excess of several million euros.

'PTS' is the only cost effective method of accessing this highly qualified relevant target market, offering you the opportunity to network and demonstrate your products and services to prospective new clients. For more information about this event visit www.aboutpts.com