

EPCglobal Chief to Push Standards

Margaret Fitzgerald, the new president of EPCglobal, says she will work toward “open, consensus-based, global standards.”

Nov. 14, 2003— Margaret Fitzgerald, head of EAN New Zealand and the newly appointed president of EPCglobal, the nonprofit organization charged with commercializing EPC technology, says one of her main goals will be to work toward “open, consensus-based, global standards.”

“As head of EAN New Zealand, I’ve seen firsthand how the implementation of EAN-UCC global standards can benefit companies and drive costs from the supply chain,” she says. “Moving EPC technology from the lab to real world supply chain applications will require timely and effective standardization. My standards background and perspective provides a natural fit with the mission of EPCglobal.”

Fitzgerald has been CEO of EAN New Zealand since 2000. She will take over as president of EPCglobal in January 2004 and will be based in Boston, Mass. EPCglobal is setting up its international headquarters in Boston to facilitate close communication with Auto-ID Labs, the research-oriented successor to the Auto-ID Center. Fitzgerald will work closely with Dicki Lulay, head of EPCglobal U.S. and the heads of local EAN organizations worldwide, which will help to commercialize EPC technologies.

EPCglobal is a joint venture between the Uniform Code Council and EAN International. Its goals are to turn the EPC specifications for data structures and air-interface protocols—how tags and readers communicate wirelessly—into open standards and to encourage users to adopt the technology. Both of these tasks are huge, but Fitzgerald seems confident they can be achieved.

“EPC technology has strong support from the world’s largest and best-known companies and solution providers,” she says. “That is an important first step in gaining a critical mass of users. This is going to be a user-driven initiative. Users will identify the critical business requirements, and they will have a clear voice in the standards development process. Companies and industries around the world want to adopt EPC technology; we will help them develop the standards to make broad, timely implementation possible.”

Fitzgerald has been closely following developments around RFID technology. EAN New Zealand was the secretariat for the initial RFID standards that were being considered, and EAN was part of the initial research and development work on the EPC technology devised by the Auto-ID Center.

“Margaret brings a unique set of credentials to the EPCglobal organization,” says Michael Di Yeso, the UCC’s executive VP and chief operating office. “She combines proven business experience with a truly global approach to commerce. As the head of EAN New Zealand, she’s been respected worldwide for her standards leadership and her commitment to improving supply chain management practices. Taking EPC from the lab into the marketplace will take global consensus and industry cooperation, and Margaret possesses the skills and energy to make that happen.”

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