1 Project Overview

1.1 The Consortium

The AIDA Consortium has a clear structure based on the objectives of the project. It includes:

- one leader in internet security: INFONOVA
- one big hardware equipment manufacturer: HP
- two universities: Politecnico di Torino working on the application side and Technical University of Graz, working in cryptography and software research
- An innovative telecommunication-applications company with great know how in market access: I&T
- Four organizations willing to support the design process and to implement and validate the services and technologies. Euro Info Correspondence Center Ljubliana, Ministry of economic affairs of Slovenia, Mestna Obcina Celje,

1.1.1 INFONOVA

INFONOVA is one of Austria’s largest companies for the development of Internet-based telecommunication services and networks. Founded in 1989 by a small group of engineers, it has grown considerably and is now one of the biggest companies in telecommunication research and development in Austria and technology-leader for Public-Key-Infrastructure, E-Business and network integration.

Role in Project

Beside the project management, INFONOVA developed the WYSIWYS-software and deployed AIDA’s core-platform.

1.2 General Objectives

AIDA’s objective is to implement Advanced Interactive Digital Administrations by providing them with an infrastructure which supports administrations and other public bodies, to improve businesses’ and citizens access to information and regulation and facilitate contacts, exchanges and feedback between administrations and between administrations and third parties, i.e. citizens, institutions and business.

The European Signature Guidelines as well as digital signature laws in different countries will lay the foundation for the issuing of electronic documents by public
institutions such as administrative bodies, professional associations or universities, which – digitally signed – will be held equal to conventional paper-documents. This will enable these institutions e.g. to issue innovative forms of conventional documents, such as electronic certificates of birth, electronic trade licences, electronic diplomas and many more. Electronic documents like these can then be used instead of paper-documents.

1.2.1 Advantages of Electronic Documents
Using electronic documents has a lot of advantages - for the purpose of this proposal, documents providing certain qualities will be called e-documents:

- Electronic documents can be sent by means of the internet, thus enabling future applications for situations in which one would have to show up in person today – just for presenting paper-documents. Examples are: car-registration, registration of birth etc.
- Quite a lot of e-commerce activities require proof of identity, legitimization or authorization – which can easily be realized by presenting e-documents
- In combination with ITU-T X.509 digital certificates, the application and distribution of which are currently encouraged all over Europe, e-documents provide significant additional value to e-administration or, more general, to e-business environments.

1.2.2 Aims of the Project
Such electronic documents will only be valid if the digital signature they contain has been created by using a special environment. The European Signature Guidelines as well as national legislations recommend or even require the use of a trustworthy environment for the generation as well as for the verification of advanced digital signatures generally.

Now, this project has all these aims:

- to define and implement a trustworthy environment by means of a signature terminal, which does not only provide a secure solution but is also easy to handle by users,
- to define and develop machine-readable datastructures for electronic documents which can be used for national and international purposes,
- to define and develop electronic documents to replace conventional documents used at demonstrator sites and make proof of the usability of such documents in their electronic form for electronic administration environments, and, furthermore, to implement an environment and an infrastructure where such electronic documents can be used.

Summarising one can say, trustworthy digital signatures will be fundamental for various next generation services in the digital era. One of these services shall be an “e-Administration Service Provider” – and to achieve this, all components, environments and techniques required shall be developed resp. integrated.

1.3 Technical Objectives
To enable Advanced Interactive Digital Administrations an infrastructure has to be developed, that consists of the following entities: