

## **VICS Internet Commerce Model Approved**

*Association publishes standards recommendations for business-to-business and business-to-consumer Internet commerce initiatives.*

The board of directors of the Voluntary Interindustry Commerce Standards (VICS) association has approved the publication and distribution of an Internet Commerce Model to its members. VICS developed the model to guide members in the selection of technical standards to support the growing array of business-to-business and business-to-consumer initiatives. By selecting common standards for Internet communications, members can accelerate adoption throughout the industry. They can also avoid an explosion of proprietary, conflicting schemes.

“The Internet creates great opportunities for electronic commerce initiatives,” said Ralph Brisikin of Levi-Strauss, co-chairman of the VICS Internet Standards Committee, “It can reduce costs and improve access for existing business practices, such as EDI, as it makes exciting new business practices possible.”

“These standards recommendations will drive technical convergence and broad use of Internet commerce practices in our industry,” added John Davis, of VF Corporation.

The committee published recommendations in seven areas, including transport, directory services, data format, and presentation standards. Business examples illustrate the use of these standards for order status checking, collaborative forecasting and replenishment, and EDI.

The model is available electronically on the Internet at [www.vics.org](http://www.vics.org).

A great deal of work lies ahead for the committee. While many fundamental Internet standards are mature and widely accepted, others are still under development. There are still several competing approaches to public key encryption, for example. In other areas, companies still must choose among legitimate, standards-based alternatives for their work—such as the use of FTP, SMTP, or HTTP to exchange EDI messages. VICS Internet Standards Committee members do not want these gaps and alternatives to hamper interoperability of the technology as its use becomes more widespread. “It’s vital that we push for continued progress in standards so the Internet’s potential for commerce is realized,” concludes Sandy School, of Schneider National, Inc. Schneider’s Internet-based EDI initiative is one of several pilot projects that the committee will monitor over the next several months.

781-272-7393