

The Wireless Application Protocol

Wireless Application Protocol (WAP) is a wireless protocol that allows mobile devices to use data service and access the Internet. WAP can work with a variety of different wireless technologies, each of which connects at the bottom of the WAP stack as a bearer. Bluetooth simply provides another possible bearer beneath the WAP stack.

In the same way that Bluetooth has the SIG which defines standards and helps to ensure interoperability of Bluetooth devices, WAP has the WAP forum. The WAP forum brings together companies from all parts of the wireless industry to define WAP standards and to help ensure interoperability between WAP products. WAP standards can be downloaded from the WAP forum Web site at <http://www.wapforum.org>.

WAP supports many wireless networks: CDPD, CDMA, GSM, PDC, PHS, TDMA, FLEX, ReFLEX, iDEN, TETRA, DECT DataTAC, and Mobitex, but at the time of writing, Bluetooth has not been formally adopted as a bearer layer by the WAP forum. This does not mean that there will be no standards for interoperability between WAP-enabled Bluetooth products. The Bluetooth specification includes a section on how to interoperate with WAP, and the Bluetooth SIG is working with the WAP forum to help ensure interoperability of Bluetooth and WAP.

WAP supports a client/server architecture. The client communicates with a server (or proxy) using the WAP protocols. WAP-enabled client devices can use micro-browsers, which are specially designed Web browsers that fit onto mobile devices such as mobile cellular phone handsets. A micro-browser is designed to work with a small screen,