The Federal PKI Policy Authority tasked its Path Discovery and Validation Working Group (PD-VAL WG) to test products for accurate validation of certificates within the Federal PKI architecture, with the intent to qualify them as acceptable products for federal agencies' use.

TrustEnabler is a Web server plug-in that validates client certificates when mutually authenticated SSL/TLS is enabled. With the current version of TrustEnabler, plug-ins are available for the Netscape/iPlanet/SunONE series of web servers on Microsoft Windows, Linux, and other *NIX platforms. Support for SunONE on HP-UX and Microsoft IIS is under development as is support for certificate status checking using OCSP.

The PD-VAL WG tested Gemini's TrustEnabler product on June 21, 2005. The test results indicated that TrustEnabler is capable of performing path validation as required for use within the Federal PKI. There were some minor problems with path discovery, but solutions to these problems were identified and the vendor provided an updated version of TrustEnabler that incorporated the fixes to these problems on July 6, 2005. A detailed synopsis of the test results is provided below.

Based on these findings, the PD-VAL WG recommends the Gemini TrustEnabler product as an acceptable Web server plug-in to be posted to the Qualified Validation List.

Federal agencies are encouraged to weigh the findings and select a certificate validation solution from the Qualified Validation List based upon their specific requirements.

Detailed Technical Synopsis

TrustEnabler incorporates the Certificate Management Library (CML), which is used to perform certification path discovery and validation. Using the naming scheme from the draft NIST Recommendation for X.509 Path Validation, CML is a Bridge-Enabled PVM with Advanced CRLs, Delta-CRLs, and DSA. TrustEnabler passed all of the tests when tested using the PKITS path validation test suite as specified in the NIST Recommendation.

TrustEnabler was also tested using the Directory based and LDAP URI based tests from the Path Discovery Test Suite at both the Rudimentary and Basic levels and passed all of the tests except for one. Since the Path Discovery Test Suite is still in draft form, it is possible that this failure is a result of a problem with the test suite rather than with TrustEnabler.

The PD-VAL WG recommends the inclusion of TrustEnabler on the Qualified Validation List.