



Governments, Users and Providers of Office Applications Unite to Advance Adoption of OpenDocument Format (ODF) OASIS Standard

*IBM, Novell, Oracle, and Sun Microsystems
Join with Government Agencies and Other Users to Build Support for
Open XML Format for Office Applications*

Boston, MA, USA; 7 March 2006 - Members of the OASIS standards consortium are collaborating to provide expertise and resources to educate the marketplace on the value of the OpenDocument Format (ODF) OASIS Standard. By raising awareness of the benefits offered by a truly open file format—one that has been advanced and approved by an internationally recognized standards body—the new OASIS ODF Adoption Committee will increase the demand for and availability of ODF-conforming products, resulting in a greater choice of tools and platforms and expanding the ODF community of users, suppliers, and developers.

“The life of a document may far exceed that of a particular software product or vendor. Users have a right to retain control over their work—no matter when their documents were created or what tool was used to create them. Open standards in general, and ODF in particular, can help ensure that right,” noted Don Harbison of IBM, convenor and proposed chair of the new OASIS ODF Adoption Committee. “Our team will work to help users understand what's really at stake here and the advantages ODF offers for platform- and application-independent documents.”

ODF was approved as an OASIS Standard in May 2005 and was submitted by OASIS to the ISO/IEC JTC1 (International Organization for Standardization International Electrotechnical Commission's Joint Technical Committee) for further approval as a de jure standard. ODF is maintained and advanced by the OASIS OpenDocument Technical Committee, which was formed in November 2002. The new OASIS ODF Adoption Committee will work closely with the consortium's technical committee to align market-based requirements and help guide future enhancements to the standard.

Other activities of the OASIS ODF Adoption Committee include the creation of white papers, FAQs, overview documents, case studies, and other educational materials. The group will serve as a community-building resource by providing ODF information through the OASIS and XML.org websites, collateral, newsletters, webinars, conferences, and other outreach venues. The Committee will also host proof-of-concept demonstrations to highlight use cases of ODF with XML schemas and industry vocabularies that can be integrated with Web services.

The OASIS ODF Adoption Committee will also coordinate its efforts with other ODF promotional groups around the world, including the OpenDocument Foundation, which has joined the ODF Adoption Committee, and the recently formed ODF Alliance, which intends to focus efforts on influencing public policy through governments.

“The mission of OASIS extends beyond development to encompass convergence and adoption,” explained James Bryce Clark, director of standards development at OASIS. “By promoting ODF awareness and education through this new committee, participants maximize their collective resources within the security of the OASIS open process. Coordinating our centralized agenda with the efforts of ODF support groups around the world will further leverage and fuel the ODF momentum that continues to build.”

Members of the OASIS ODF Adoption Committee include representatives of IBM, Novell, and Sun Microsystems, as well as government agencies such as the National Informatics Center of the Government of India and the Netherlands Tax and Customs Administration and other ODF advocate organizations. Participation remains open to all. In order to accommodate worldwide interest in this work, the Committee's first meeting will be held 28 March 2006 by teleconference. As with all OASIS projects, archives of the Committee's work will be accessible to both members and non-members, and OASIS will host an open mail list for public comment.

Support for ODF Adoption

IBM

“The community effort to accelerate the adoption of the OpenDocument Format around the world will be greatly enhanced by the work of this new OASIS ODF Adoption Technical Committee,” said Dr. Bob Sutor, Vice President, Standards and Open Source, IBM. “We at IBM look forward to working hand-in-hand with others in the industry who believe as we do that the OpenDocument Format will provide a revolutionary and long overdue positive effect on innovation around the creation and use of office documents.”

Novell

“History has repeatedly shown that widespread adoption of a technology standard leads to greater value-added technical innovation and presents new opportunities for business,” said Markus Rex, chief technology officer, Open Source and Platforms for Novell. “The Internet is the best example of this. Promoting the adoption of ODF as a standard will lead to similar innovation in office applications. Novell is firmly committed to open standards and working within OASIS to promote ODF. We are helping customers maximize their investment through choice and flexibility.”

Oracle

“Oracle believes open standards provide the best way to create and evolve sustainable IT ecosystems,” said Don Deutsch, vice president of Standards Strategy and Architecture, Oracle. “Encouraging adoption of the OASIS OpenDocument Format standard is an excellent way to highlight the benefits of standards that promote choice and provide users with the necessary flexibility to use their critical documents independent of any particular application or enterprise platform.”

Sun Microsystems

“As an advocate and supporter of open standards and open source, Sun recognizes the importance of choice, innovation and access to information. Companies that share technologies and collaborate on open standards create new markets in which everyone can participate and no one is excluded - which is why Sun originally donated the know-how that started the OASIS OpenDocument Technical Committee, granted a perpetual covenant to free the specification for all, and is now fueling the OASIS ODF Adoption Committee. As an active OASIS member and as a founding member of both the OpenDocument TC and the ODF Adoption Committee, Sun will continue to provide its expertise to help ensure the success of the OpenDocument Format,” said Eduardo Gutentag, Technology Director - Corporate Standards, Sun Microsystems, Inc.

About OASIS

OASIS (Organization for the Advancement of Structured Information Standards) is a not-for-profit, international consortium that drives the development, convergence, and adoption of e-business standards. Members themselves set the OASIS technical agenda, using a lightweight, open process expressly designed to promote industry consensus and unite disparate efforts. The consortium produces open standards for Web services, security, e-business, and standardization efforts in the public sector and for application-specific markets. Founded in 1993, OASIS has more than 5,000 participants representing over 600 organizations and individual members in 100 countries. Approved OASIS Standards include AVDL, CAP, DITA, DocBook, DSML, ebXML CPPA, ebXML Messaging, ebXML Registry, EML, OpenDocument, SAML, SPML, UBL, UDDI, WSDM, WS-Reliability, WSRP, WS-Security, XACML, XCBF, and XML Catalogs. <http://www.oasis-open.org>

Additional information

OASIS OpenDocument Technical Committee <http://www.oasis-open.org/committees/office>
Cover Pages Technology Report <http://xml.coverpages.org/odf.html>

Press contact

Carol Geyer
Director of Communications, OASIS
carol.geyer@oasis-open.org +1.978.667.5115 x209