



OASIS Members Form Committee to Advance Interoperability and Conformance of OpenDocument Format (ODF) Applications

*IBM, Oracle, Sun Microsystems,
Google, Novell, Red Hat, US Department of Defense,
Belgian Fedict, South Africa Dept of Science and Technology, and Others
Collaborate to Deliver True Data Interoperability for Office Applications*

Boston, MA, USA; 3 November 2008 – OASIS, the international open standards consortium, has formed a new group to help implementors create applications that conform to the OpenDocument Format (ODF) OASIS Standard. ODF defines a genuinely open XML file format for office productivity applications, including text, spreadsheets, charts, graphs, presentations, and databases. The new OASIS ODF Interoperability and Conformance (OIC) Committee will work to ensure that the growing number of ODF-compliant applications are able to interoperate and conform to the standard.

“As more and more software providers around the world are basing their office productivity products on ODF, the need to support conformance and interoperability has become extremely important,” said Rob Weir of IBM, convener of the OASIS OIC Committee. “We invite and encourage participation from all ODF stakeholders—commercial and open source publishers of ODF applications, testing and certification labs, people responsible for purchasing ODF-related tools, and regulators who specify the use of document standards.”

The OIC Committee will analyze the state of ODF interoperability today, make recommendations, and prioritize activities for advancing ODF conformance and interoperability. It will compile a corpus of ODF interoperability test documents, either contributions of existing work or tests developed by the Committee itself, and host multi-vendor interoperability demonstrations showcasing products that conform.

The group will also define ODF profiles designed to increase interoperability among implementations in specific vertical domains (e.g., archiving) and horizontal domains (e.g., pervasive devices or browser-based editors).

“The new OIC Committee will work closely with the OASIS ODF Technical Committee, which is where the ODF standard is maintained and advanced, and with the OASIS ODF Adoption Committee, which works to promote ODF use,” noted James Bryce Clark, director of standards development at OASIS. “Having ODF development, promotion, interoperability and conformance under the same roof at OASIS ensures that a cohesive, inclusive, coordinated approach is applied across the board.”

ODF is available for implementation and use, free of any licensing, royalty payments, or other restrictions. Participation in the OASIS OIC Committee—and other OASIS ODF Committees—remains open to all interested parties. Archives of OIC work will be accessible to both members and non-members, and OASIS will offer a mechanism for public comment.

Support for OIC

IBM

“The formation of the OIC Committee is very timely as the number and variety of ODF-compliant implementations is growing very quickly. We look forward to working as a member of the Committee with other ODF-supporting vendors, to develop ODF-conformance tests and assessments. We are also keenly focused on the 'call for interoperability' to ODF-supporting products, so that vendors can invest in independent innovation on top of the standard,” said Dr. Michael Karasick, Director of Lotus Software Development at IBM's China Software Development Lab in Beijing.

Oracle

“Oracle's participation in the OIC Committee demonstrates our commitment to open standards and the empowerment of customers through the creation of an interoperable IT ecosystem. ODF is a key standard for providing stability and interoperability for content creation, storage, and distribution across middleware technologies, core data infrastructure, and enterprise applications,” said Don Deutsch, vice president Standards Strategy and Architecture, Oracle.

Sun Microsystems

“As a founding member of the OASIS OpenDocument Technical Committee (TC) and the OASIS ODF Adoption TC, Sun is glad to be involved as a founding member of this third OpenDocument TC. We strongly support both open standards and open source and the increasing success of OpenDocument which is a perfect example of what happens when open standards meet open source. We are looking forward to contributing our experience to this TC and furthering the active adoption of OpenDocument,” said Jim Parkinson, vice president Developer Tools and Services, Sun Microsystems, Inc.

Novell

“Advances in collaboration, communication and software delivery are opening the door for new and diverse software tools used for document creation and sharing. Diversity amplifies the need for interoperability, and developing interoperable tools is key to preserving and enhancing the productivity of today's global work force. Open standards such as ODF and the efforts of the OIC Committee will help to provide users access with choice and flexibility,” said Alan Clark, Strategic Advisor for Industry Initiatives and Standards at Novell.

Red Hat

“Red Hat is a strong advocate of the use of royalty-free, open standards in the technology industry. We look forward to continued collaboration not only with other major technology companies, but also with important global government agencies, that as end users of technology offer a unique perspective on the importance of interoperability for office applications,” said Tom Rabon, executive vice president, Corporate Affairs for Red Hat.

Belgian Federal Public Service for ICT (Fedict)

“Fedict actively promotes the use of open standards as a means to improve interoperability and ensure information longevity. Uniting experts from leading implementers, governments and organizations throughout the world, the OASIS OIC Committee will tangibly improve the interoperability of ODF solutions, benefiting both citizens and companies,” said Bart Hanssens, interoperability expert, Fedict.

ODF Alliance

“The number of applications implementing support for ODF continues to grow rapidly. Helping implementors create applications which conform to the ODF standard and which are able to interoperate is a critical task. The formation of the new ODF Interoperability Technical Committee is but the latest example of the ODF-supporting community in OASIS rising to the challenges before it,” said Marino Marcich, Managing Director, ODF Alliance.

Additional information:

OASIS OIC Technical Committee

<http://www.oasis-open.org/committees/oic/>

OpenDocument XML.org

<http://opendocument.xml.org>

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 open standards for the global information society. OASIS promotes industry consensus and produces worldwide standards for security, Web services, XML conformance, business transactions, electronic publishing, and other applications. OASIS open standards offer the potential to lower cost, stimulate innovation, grow global markets, and protect the right of free choice of technology. OASIS

members broadly represent the marketplace of public and private sector technology leaders, users and influencers. The consortium has more than 5,000 participants representing over 600 organizations and individual members in 100 countries. <http://www.oasis-open.org>

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