



# **“OpenDocument Format and the Public Sector”**

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# Agenda

- Standards and information ownership
- What makes a standard open?
- OpenDocument Format
- Governments and ODF
- “Open” XML
- Red Hat's work on ODF
- Importance of ODF

# Standards and Software

- I want to build a house
  - I need a blueprint to tell me how
  - But, I want a blueprint that people know will produce a functional and safe house
  - I need to find a standard
  - Then, I'll implement it and build my own house
- The blueprint isn't a house
- A standard is just a description, not software

# Importance of Standardization

- Samuel Morse sends first telegraph in 1844
  - No interconnection among nations, messages transcribed by hand and then cross borders
  - Prohibitive costs to bilaterally negotiate standards
  - International Telegraph Union formed in 1865 to set international standard
- “Discussions to coordinate national standards development in an effort to avoid **duplication**, **waste** and **conflict** date back to 1911.”
  - American National Standards Institute 1865

# Standards and Ownership of Information

- Proprietary standards put information behind a lock with no certainty about having a key
- You create the information, but store it in a manner that turns ownership over to a single vendor
- Your need to use the information will outlive the application and maybe even the vendor
- “Here we have a true conflict between the notion of intellectual property and the notion of sovereignty, and I'd say that 100 percent of the time in a democracy, sovereignty trumps intellectual property.”  
*-Eric Kriss former Massachusetts  
Secretary of Administration and Finance*

# Standards and Networks

- Standards allow for interoperability
- Interoperability allows networks to be constructed
- Users of networks add value for all other users
- However, closed standards can take control of the network
  - Users are locked into a self-preserving vendor
  - The community cannot develop the standard
  - The value of the network is stagnant
  - e.g., Non-functional differences in railroad gage

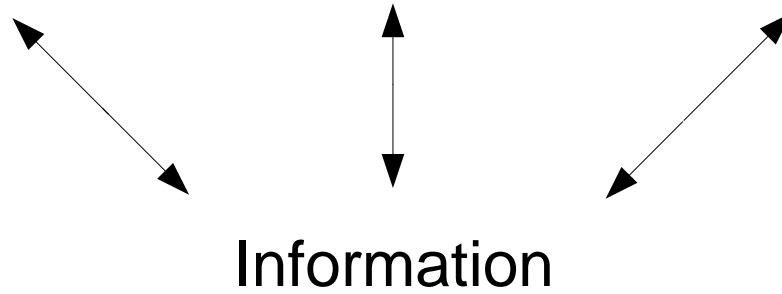
# What Makes a Standard Open?

- Developed and maintained by a vendor-neutral body
- Publicly available for anyone to implement
- No economic barriers to implementation (royalty-free)
- No technical barriers (free of IP restrictions or hooks)
- Broadly implemented on competing platforms

## Closed Standard

## Open Standard

Information





# Benefits of an Open Standard

- Increases innovation and competition the next step up in the application
- Users retain ownership of information, not the vendor and the original application
- Information flows among applications (office applications, e-mail, portals etc.) lessening potential lock-in from a single vendor
- Imagine if only one builder knew how to build a “house”

**Open standards mean everyone is better off. The individual owns the information, and the public owns the network.**

# OpenDocument Format (ODF)

- XML-based specification for documents (.odt), presentations (.odp) and spreadsheets (.ods), et al.
- Developed and maintained by Organization for the Advancement of Structured Information Systems (OASIS)
  - “...a not-for-profit, global consortium that drives the development, convergence and adoption of e-business standards.”
  - Foundational Members: BEA, EDS, IBM, Primeton, SAP and Sun
- ISO/IEC Approved in May 2006

# ODF is Broadly Implemented

## Documents

Abiword  
KWord  
OpenOffice.org Writer  
NeoOffice  
NextOffice  
StarOffice  
IBM Workplace  
TextMaker  
Google Docs  
Zoho Writer  
ajaxWrite  
TextEdit  
Ichitaro

## Spreadsheets

EditGrid  
Gnumeric  
KSpread  
OpenOffice.org Calc  
NeoOffice  
NextOffice  
StarOffice  
602Office  
IBM Workplace  
Google Spreadsheets

## Presentations

KPresenter  
OpenOffice.org Impress  
NeoOffice  
NextOffice  
StarOffice  
602Office  
IBM Workplace

# ODF Makes Sense for Government

- Unencumbered future access to information
- Choice of applications within and across agencies without hindering interoperability, especially in times of emergency
- Citizens are not forced to use costly software to communicate with their government
- Liberated from a forced upgrade schedule
- Cost savings when migrating to open source applications



## Office Professional 2007 - Windows

Release Date:01/30/2007

✓ Free  
Shipping

**Our Price:  
\$499.99**

**ADD TO CART**

**Shipping:** Usually leaves our warehouse in 1 business day [Estimate arrival time.](#)

# Widespread Adoption of Open Standards

- National: Belgium, Brazil, Croatia, Denmark, France, Germany, and Norway
- Regional: Extremadura (Spain), Misiones (Argentina), Massachusetts (USA), Hong Kong, Kerala (India)
- Agency-level: Finnish Ministry of Justice, Singapore, Delhi commercial tax office
- In U.S., states of California, Minnesota, Texas and Oregon have bills under consideration

# What Governments are Saying

- “The native support of OpenOffice.org to the OpenDocument ISO standard ISO/IEC 26300 for office documents is an important factor in order to achieve interoperability between organizations and citizens...”  
*-Ministry of Justice, Finland (February 2007)*
- “...We can direct more money into improved service to our public. The increased take up of ODF over the past 12 months, and the growing range of systems that use it, will support our continued drive to build openness into Bristol's technology infrastructure.”  
*-Stewart Long. Head of ICT, Bristol City Council (UK)*

## Focus on Brazil

- Published version 2.0 of “e-Ping Interoperability Framework” November 2006
- .doc, .xls, .ppt are labeled in “transition” and non-compliant
- ODF specifically recommended as official government format
- Banco do Brasil, Computers for All project, State of Parana all adopted OpenOffice.org



## Focus on Massachusetts

- Led the way in the U.S.
- Phased migration, using plug-in, of all Executive agencies to open formats by June 2007
- “Open formats for data files ensure that government records remain independent of underlying systems and applications thereby preserving their accessibility over very long periods of time.”  
*[Enterprise Technical Reference Model, Sept. 2005]*
- Accessibility issues at forefront of debate

## Focus on India

- Election Commission adopted ODF on a national basis
- State of Kerala, Allahabad High Court, Delhi state tax office all use ODF
- “Considering the huge potential of eGovernance in the nation as well as the need to adopt open standards to make our data systems more inter-operable and independent of any limiting proprietary tools, we feel that ODF is a great technological leap.”  
*-Secretary of Ministry of Info and Technology*

# ODF and Accessibility

- ODF v. 1.1 incorporates significant accessibility improvements
- “[1.1] is...readily transformable to the DAISY digital talking book standard for people with print impairments. The clear specification of [ODF] will remain usable long after commercial and proprietary formats have been condemned to the dustbin.”  
-U.K. Royal National Institute of the Blind
- “The OASIS process exemplifies what should be done if true accessibility to both a document format and the tools to manipulate it are to be achieved.”  
President, National Federation of the Blind in Computer Science

# Microsoft “Open” XML

- Ecma committee's stated mission was to construct a standard compatible with the Microsoft proprietary format
- Approved by Ecma December 7, 2006
- Specification fills over 6,000 pages
- Submitted to ISO/IEC fast-track
- In middle of 9 to 12 month approval process
  - 14 Negative filings
- Natively supported in Office 2007, partially in WordPerfect and Novell OpenOffice.org

# Verdict on Microsoft “Open” XML

- Created for compatibility with one vendor's formats
- No vendor-neutral organization to maintain it
- Unclear as to proprietary hooks
- Unfeasible to implement given length
- Fully implemented in only one office suite
- Duplicates existing ISO/IEC approved standard
- Final approval by ISO/IEC is uncertain

# Using ODF with Plug-ins and Translators

- OpenDocument Foundation Plug-in *da Vinci* soon to be released on ODF v. 1.2
  - Plugin, appears in menu, for MS Office 97, 2000, 2003
  - “Perfect fidelity” with old MS documents
  - Earlier versions tested by state of Mass.
- Sun developed a plug-in for MS Word 97 to read, edit and save ODF and convert .doc
- Novell-Microsoft Translator
  - Standalone program to bi-directionally translate Open XML (Office 2007) and ODF
  - Less than perfect interoperability is not interoperability

# Red Hat Actively Support ODF

- Executive Member ODF Alliance
  - Others include IBM, Oracle, Adobe, Sun
  - 340 members from 47 countries
  - [www.odfalliance.org](http://www.odfalliance.org)
- Internal and external communications campaigns
- Grassroots efforts in targeted geographies
- Personal visits with CIOs and legislators worldwide

# Some ODF Alliance Government and Education Members

- Bristol City Council (UK)
- City of Boomington, IN (USA)
- City of Vienna (Austria)
- Ministry of Finance (Macedonia)
- Local Government Computer Services Board (Ireland)
- Beijing Jiaotong University (China)
- Institute of Software, Chinese Academy of Sciences
- University of Szeged (Hungary)
- Indian Institute of Technology
- UNDP-ADPID International Open Source Network
- Instituto das Tecnologias de Informação na Justiça (Portugal)
- Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Zurich



## **Above all else, remember...**

- ODF is about giving ownership of information back to the public
- Governments, citizens, companies and others increasingly produce and rely on electronic information
- Your information should be yours
- Your and others' need to access the information will outlive the application and the vendor
- Choice brings innovation, but choice should happen at the application level, otherwise innovation is stifled