

1 September 2006

Massachusetts Mid-Year Accessibility Review Affirms Move to ODF, Commitment to Persons with Disabilities

Massachusetts announced that plug-in products which translate documents from Microsoft formats to ODF and vice versa are sufficiently promising to enable the Commonwealth to meet the needs of persons with disabilities, while fulfilling its commitment to implement ODF. Massachusetts plans to implement ODF using a plug-in in a group of early adopter agencies by 1 January 2007, and thereafter migrate all executive branch agencies in phases by June 2007. The plug-ins will enable users of assistive technologies (e.g., screen readers, magnifiers, voice recognition systems) developed for the Windows platform to use ODF. The Alliance welcomed the news, and hailed the progress made regarding the accessibility of ODF-supporting suites and their ability to work with assistive technologies.

MA Mid-Year Statement Regarding ODF Implementation -

http://www.mass.gov/?pageID=itdmodulechunk&&L=1&L0=Home&sid=Aitd&b=terminalcontent&f=accessibility_odf_accessibility_midyear_ltr&csid=Aitd

Alliance Statement - <http://www.odfalliance.org/press/AllianceRelease24August06.pdf>

IBM Launches Accessibility Contest

IBM is launching a contest that challenges students to propose and design ODF software for people with disabilities. The winning entries will be contributed to the open source community for further development. The contest is open to students in the United States, Canada, China and Japan. The top two student developers in each region will win a Lenovo ThinkPad laptop and a trip to Los Angeles in March 2007 for the 22nd Annual International Technology and Persons with Disabilities Conference. There, they will have the opportunity to make top-notch contacts and demo their applications for international organizations and executives from a variety of industries.

IBM Accessibility Coding Challenge 2006 - <http://www-306.ibm.com/able/contest/>

OpenOffice, KDE Conferences To Feature Discussions on ODF

OpenOffice.org Conference takes place this year on September 11-13th in Lyon, France, and includes a panel discussion on ODF. The event includes an examination of ODF and OpenXML to compare and contrast how they deal with issues such extensibility, modularization, expressivity, performance, reuse of standards, programability, ease of use, and application/OS neutrality. aKademy 2006, the annual meeting of the KDE community, takes place Sep 23-30 in Dublin, Ireland. Tuesday the 26th is OpenDocument Day, offering software developers an opportunity to exchange ideas, build relations

and collaborate on all things ODF in an informal setting. Topics include interoperability between ODF implementations, new ODF usages, future ODF extensions as well as toolsets and libraries for handling ODF.

OOOoCon 2006 - <http://marketing.openoffice.org/ooocon2006/index.html>

aKademy 2006 - <http://conference2006.kde.org/>

KDE OpenDocument Day - <http://conference2006.kde.org/codingmarathon/opendocumentday.php>

Hong Kong Government Recognizes ODF As A Recommended Standard in Interoperability Framework

ODF has been added to the the Hong Kong Government's Interoperability Framework (IF) as a recommended standard for use in the areas of "Formatted document file type for collaborative editing", "Presentation file type for collaborative editing, " and "Spreadsheet file type for collaborative editing." The IF, which was revised in March 2006 (version 4.0) and defines a collection of specifications aimed at facilitating the interoperability of government systems and services, had not previously included ODF as a recommended standard. Multiple specifications are recognized in certain interoperability areas, including collaborative editing.

HKSARG Interoperability Framework (vers 4.0) -
<http://www.ogcio.gov.hk/eng/infra/download/s18.pdf>

Denmark: Move to OpenOffice/ODF Could Save Government \$94m

Based on a report prepared by the Danish consultancy Ramboll Management (the so-called Ramboll report), the Danish Open Source Business Association estimates that a move to OpenOffice/ODF by the entire Danish government (national and local) could result in a savings of 550m kroner, or \$94m, over a five-year period. The report estimates that a migration by the national government alone to Microsoft Office 2007 and Open XML would cost 380 million kroner over 5 years, whereas a move to OpenOffice.org and ODF would cost 255m kroner over the same period, covering all migration costs plus already existing MS licence costs until outphased.

John Gotze's Blog - <http://gotze.eu/2006/08/report-use-odf-save-550-million.html>

Croatia Policy Paper Recommends Procurement of Software Based on Open Standards

A July 2006 policy paper highlights the danger that, after a certain period of time, historical documents cannot be downloaded and presented in a readable form because the government body no longer has a license, or the vendor no longer supports the old format. As part of the Operational Plan for the Implementation of e-Croatia 2007- Program for 2006, state administrative bodies must apply open standards for the recording of electronic documents. The policy paper calls on the the government to the greatest possible extent avoid the use of software which makes connecting with other software or data exchange between software of different information systems in state administration bodies impossible; and, in the cases where this is not possible due to already implemented and operational information systems with closed, proprietary software, all subsequent upgrading and modifications in these systems shall have to be based on the support of open source software and open standards.

Croatia Open Source Software Policy - http://www.e-hrvatska.hr/repozitorij/dokumenti/downloads/Open_Source_Software_Policy.pdf

eCroatia 2007: Operating Plan for 2006 - http://www.e-hrvatska.hr/repozitorij/dokumenti/downloads/plan_provedbe_e-Hrvatska_za_2006.pdf

ODF As Draft Malaysian Standard Out for Public Comment

The list of draft Malaysian standards, which now includes ODF, is now officially out for public comment. On 18 July 2006, the Technical Committee on E-Commerce (TC4) in SIRIM - the body appointed by the Department of Standards Malaysia to develop Malaysian Standards - had voted unanimously to propose ODF as a national standard. The two-month comment period ends 31 October, 2006.

Open Malaysia - http://www.openmalaysiablog.com/2006/09/odf_as_draft_ma.html

New Members

Please welcome the following new members: Unisys(USA); Norwegian Mission Alliance Philippines; Green Banana, Inc. (USA); Oxford Archaeology (UK); VersusMind (France); Kyrgyzstan National Information Technology Center; Transtronics, Inc. (USA); Elevated Technology (USA); Norfello Oy (Finland); iHorizons (Qatar); USARSD.org (USA); Advanced Information and Communication Technology (Iran); and Movimento Software Livre Paraná - MSLPR (Brazil).

*****ODF IN THE NEWS*****

Massachusetts maintains commitment to Open Document Format

By Stuart Corner, 27 August 2006

iTWire

<http://www.itwire.com.au/content/view/5401/127/>

Massachusetts ODF plan will use Office plug-in

By Martin Lamonica

CNET News.com

August 25, 2006

<http://news.zdnet.co.uk/0,39020330,39281729,00.htm>

Massachusetts Forges Ahead With ODF Implementations

State CIO says progress has been made on access to the disabled, rollout to start January 1, 2007.

By Barbara Darrow, *CRN*

11:04 AM EDT Fri. Aug. 25, 2006

<http://www.crn.com/sections/channelbusiness/channelbusiness.jhtml?articleId=192300202>

Computer Science Majors Get Tools To Build Accessibility Into Software

Information Week by K.C. Jones
TechWeb
Aug 28, 2006 12:53 PM

<http://www.informationweek.com/software/showArticle.jhtml?articleID=192300838&subSection=Development>

Google Opens Writely To Everyone

By Will Head
VNUNet.com
08/22/06 7:51 AM PT

<http://www.technewsworld.com/story/52554.html>

Government Technology: Formatting for the Future

August 31, 2006 By Shane Peterson

<http://www.govtech.net/magazine/story.php?id=100356>

OpenDocument gets boost: Alfresco backs OpenDocument Format

By SearchOpenSource.com Staff

31 Jul 2006 | SearchOpenSource.com

http://searchopensource.techtarget.com/originalContent/0,289142,sid39_gci1206495,00.html