

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact:

Marino Marcich, ODF Alliance, +1.202.789.4450, mmarcich@odfalliance.orgBeth Dozier, Rational PR, +1.202.429.1833, bethdozier@rationalpr.com**Governments Increasingly Turn to OpenDocument Format as
ODF Alliance Marks Unprecedented 2008***Annual Report Chronicles Major Gains With Governments, Applications Support
for the OpenDocument Format*

Washington, DC, December 22, 2008. The ranks of governments adopting the OpenDocument Format (ODF) continued to grow, as did the depth and range of ODF applications, according to the annual report published by the ODF Alliance.

"With a variety of powerful word processing, spreadsheet, and presentation software products now supporting ODF, many of them available free of charge, it comes as no surprise that more and more governments are now requiring the use of ODF," said ODF Alliance managing director Marino Marcich. "Governments can be assured that they will have access to important documents and records many years and decades from now with no worries that their software provider will discontinue support for the format. Just as importantly, with ODF, governments can avoid imposing on themselves or their citizens the use of a particular brand of software."

The comprehensive report highlighted major developments for ODF in 2008:

- **Government Adoptions of ODF Grew Steadily** – The year ended on a high note, with Germany joining Uruguay as ODF government adopters in 2008. Germany's recent announcement that federal agencies will be able to receive, read, send and edit ODF files beginning no later than 2010 brings the total list to 16 national and 8 provincial governments that have now formally recommended or required the use of ODF.
- **ODF Application Support Extends Beyond the Desktop** – Building on the large increase in the number of ODF-supporting word processing, spreadsheet, and presentation applications in 2007 (now over 50), 2008 saw a dramatic improvement in both the quality of existing support and its expansion into new areas with the emergence of ODF-supporting mobile device and web conferencing applications, document management systems, wiki editors, viewers, converters, accessibility tools (ODT-To-DAISY Digital Talking Book), database software, and programming libraries. The launch of the *ODF Toolkit Union*, which provides developers an application programming interface (API) for reading, writing and manipulating ODF documents, presages ODF's further integration into third-party applications and web services.

- **ODF Procurement Gains Substantial Momentum** – Open standards-based procurement initiatives in the European Union and elsewhere promise to speed ODF's uptake in the public sector. Use of ODF is now mandatory in the Netherlands, for example. When purchasing IT worth €50,000 or more, Dutch public administrations and semi-government agencies must in principle select ODF-based IT solutions.
- **ODF Gets Richer with ODF 1.2** – The next version of ODF, ODF v1.2, which includes support for extensible metadata, spreadsheet formula, and digital signatures, is expected to be submitted shortly for approval as an OASIS standard. These and other performance enhancements to ODF 1.2 will enable the production of “smart” documents with advanced searchability and application interaction.
- **ODF Alliance Support Continues to Expand** – Support for ODF by organizations around the world continues to advance. The ODF Alliance's membership surpassed the 500 mark in 2008 and now includes 584 member organizations in 63 countries. The Alliance now maintains regional chapters in Europe and Latin America and national chapters in India, Malaysia, Brazil, Portugal, Poland, Hungary, Latvia, the Benelux countries, and Canada.

ODF roots are now firmly planted in Latin America, according to ODF Alliance Brazil managing director Jomar Silva. "ODF is steadily achieving continent-wide support in South America, with Uruguay joining Brazil and several regional governments as ODF adopters," said Silva. "We congratulate these governments for recognizing what ODF can do to transform e-government."

Looking ahead to 2009, the power of the public purse is expected to further advance the use of open standards like ODF among governments. "Open standards-based procurement initiatives in the European Union, the Netherlands, and elsewhere, promise to speed ODF's uptake in the public sector," noted Graham Taylor, Chief Executive of OpenForum Europe, which coordinates Alliance activities in the European region.

The full ODF Alliance Annual Report 2008 is available at:

<http://www.odfalliance.org/resources/Annual-Report-ODF-2008.pdf>

The OpenDocument Format Alliance is an organization of governments, academic institutions, non-government organizations and industry dedicated to educating policy makers, IT administrators and the public on the benefits and opportunities of ODF.
