



community for open interoperability standards

PRESS RELEASE

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COIS, the UK arm of Open Forum Europe distributes ODF toolkit for Document Freedom Day week

A new toolkit is being launched to target faster public sector adoption of Open Document Format. Released today by the Community for Open Interoperability Standards (the UK arm of Open Forum Europe), the toolkit contains a folder of principles and infographic for Government Technology leaders to use in educating public sector workers on the options and opportunities for ODF use. This publication joins global Document Freedom Day week celebrations of Open Standards, which numbers 58 events in 30 countries this year. The toolkit arrives as UK Government moves to comply with use of ODF 1.2 across departments, following a change in Cabinet Office policy in July last year.

"Despite new policies recognising its value, ODF adoption continues to be slow " said Basil Cousins, Director of OpenForum Europe. "This toolkit provides independent, high-quality materials to aid technology leaders in moving to Open Standards and enjoying the crucial advantages that they bring".

The included folder explains the principles and benefits of ODF, together with a comparison of competing formats, and the range of ODF editing applications currently available. A section containing technical tools, and Government and community contacts is included for reference, together with extracts and highlights from the current UK Open Standards policy.

The benefits of adopting Open Standards for all Government applications are well established, including preclusion of dependence on a single supplier, future-safe official documents, and ease of migration to new standards in future. While these values are often understood by departments heads, effective communication tools for hands-on staff

remain in short supply.

"The obvious advantages of free choice of technologies and wide-scale interoperability are important for the day-to-day work of Government IT workers as well as IT leaders and managers" said Cousins. "It's critical that acceptance of Open Standards spreads throughout departments, for Government to realise maximum value from the current policy in an acceptable time-frame.

Additional documents are expected to compliment the toolkit in future, including digital assets and presentations. The toolkit is hosted by Open Forum Europe, available at this URL: <http://www.openforumeurope.org/library/ODF/odf-toolkit/>

-- About The Community for Open Interoperability Standards (COIS) --

COIS is a division of OpenForum Europe (OFE) which conforms to the OFE Vision, Policies and Code of Conduct with the mission of creating a level playing field for ICT suppliers and freedom of choice for the citizen/user by supporting the drive to adopt Open Standards through the UK public sector. COIS seeks to connect the Public Sector with the technology community, guided by the Cabinet Office's Open Standards Principles. It is committed to transparency, politically and technologically neutral, non profit & self funded with industry support and managed by a co-operation of industry organisations. Views expressed by COIS do not necessarily reflect those held by all its supporters.

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