

Government of Japan Embraces Open Software Standards

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[The OpenDocument Format Alliance](#) (ODF Alliance), the leading organization advocating for openness and accessibility to government documents and information, today congratulated Japan for adopting a policy under which government ministries and agencies will solicit bids from software vendors whose products support internationally recognized open standards.

Previously, government agencies could ask bidders to submit bids based on whether their products offered functions comparable to particular software suites. With the new interoperability framework, which takes effect immediately, the government will give preference to procuring products that adhere to open standards, and which interoperate easily with other software.

The new guidelines, available from Japan's Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry, were designed to be implemented by government ministries and agencies. The interoperability framework also suggests that the guidelines would also be useful for private industry.

"With its new interoperability framework, Japan is setting an important worldwide example," said Marino Marcich, ODF Alliance managing director. "By giving preference to open software formats such as ODF, it is saying that information should be competitively priced, innovative, and easily available to the widest range of people, now and in the future. We hail Japan for its diligence and vision."

Said Masayuki Hayase, general manager, President's Office, Justsystems Corp.: "The formal launch of the interoperability framework by the Japanese government is an epoch-making initiative for Japan. Securing open-standards-based interoperability is critical to accelerate innovation. The interoperability framework will propel healthy competition and open up more opportunities for small and medium-size companies in Japan."

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

<http://www.govtech.com/policy-management/Government-of-Japan-Embraces-Open-Software.html>