



DIS 29500 “Office Open XML” Fact Sheet

Each member body of the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) is entitled to vote on Draft International Standard (DIS) 29500, commonly known as Office Open XML (OOXML). National Bodies may vote in one of the following ways: APPROVAL, DISAPPROVAL, or ABSTENTION. Ballots, which can be obtained by official representatives to ISO via [“Livelihood”](#), are due no later than September 2, 2007.

Please do not abstain -- it is critical that you exercise your right and “Disapprove” DIS 29500. By voting “no”, you are voting “yes” for true openness, choice and interoperability. Here are three key reasons to “Disapprove”:

- **There is already an ISO-approved standard, OpenDocument Format (ISO/IEC 26300), covering the same use as DIS 29500.** Having multiple *competing products* is a good thing; having *competing standards* adds cost to industry, government and citizens.

If you support harmonization between the existing ISO approved standard, ODF (implemented in over 30 applications) and DIS 29500/OOXML (implemented by only one vendor to date), vote 'No'. A vote to disapprove would create great impetus for convergence between the two. This convergence would serve the industry and governments through multiple, interoperable applications available for them to choose what works best at lowest cost.

- **DIS 29500 is too tied to proprietary products to be fully and completely implemented, without being liable to patent damages or patent license fees.**

If you want to promote your local industries' ability to compete in the global marketplace, vote “no” for DIS 29500/OOXML, as implementing it may risk intellectual property violations. The patent-protection pledge in Microsoft's Open Specification Promise only protects what is explicitly specified in the standard, but there are numerous implied, referenced and undocumented facets and behaviors in OOXML which leaves would-be implementors, who want to compete globally, at serious risk.

- **DIS 29500 is too long (6000+ pages) and even at that length is not fully published;** it contains both undocumented and under-specified elements that prevent full implementation.

If you support choice among office application products in the marketplace that are fully interoperable, then please vote “no” on DIS 29500/OOXML. DIS 29500's complexity, extraordinary length, technical omissions and single-vendor dependencies combine to make alternative implementation legally and practically impossible. While DIS 29500/OOXML works extremely well with Microsoft products, its length, incomplete documentation and IPR restrictions violate the core principle of an international standard – being implementable by multiple vendors. If you want harmonization, interoperability and competition, “Disapprove” DIS 29500/OOXML.

For more technical analysis on why DIS 29500 should be rejected, see
<http://www.odfalliance.org/resources/The%20Technical%20Case%20Against%20OOXML.pdf>