



Ecma International
Rue du Rhône 114
CH-1204 Geneva
Tel: +41 22 849 60 00

Ecma publishes ECMA-376 Edition 2

*Ecma International approves ECMA-376
Edition 2 aligned with International Standard
ISO/IEC 29500 (Office Open XML)*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Geneva, Switzerland, 16 December 2008

On Thursday, December 4, 2008 the Ecma General Assembly voted to approve International Standard (IS) ISO/IEC 29500 (Office Open XML) as ECMA-376 Edition 2.

Office Open XML is an open standard for word-processing documents, presentations and spreadsheets that is intended to be implemented by multiple applications on multiple platforms. A primary rationale behind the standard is to ensure the long-term preservation of documents to maintain compatibility with continuing advances in the field of information technology.

The work to standardize Office Open XML started in December 2005 in Ecma International via its Technical Committee 45 (TC45), which included representatives from Apple, Barclays Capital, BP, The British Library, Essilor, Intel, Microsoft, NextPage, Novell, Statoil, Toshiba and the United States Library of Congress.

This effort resulted in the approval of ECMA-376 Edition 1 in December 2006 which was submitted as Draft International Standard (DIS) 29500 in fast-track to JTC 1 in January 2007 for approval as an ISO/IEC standard.

IS ISO/IEC 29500 marks the culmination of the development efforts over the past two years by the ISO/IEC National Bodies and the members of Ecma Technical Committee 45 (TC45). The constructive input provided by ISO/IEC National Bodies around the world to improve and clarify the DIS text has resulted in an enhanced open standard that meets extensive requirements to support continued implementation across the industry.

ISO/IEC approved the enhanced DIS text as IS 29500 in April 2008 and published the final text on November 18, 2008.

"As a common practice - for the benefit of the industry - Ecma International adopts with a new edition of the Ecma standard the result of the ISO/IEC fast-track process." said **Dr. Istvan Sebestyen**, Secretary General of Ecma International. *"We look forward to continued cooperation and collaboration with ISO, IEC, and ISO/IEC JTC 1 to maintain and enhance the Office Open XML standard".*

Ecma TC45 created a new version of the white paper "Office Open XML Overview", an up-to-date companion document to the new and enhanced version (IS ISO/IEC 29500 – ECMA-376 Edition 2).

Maintenance and evolution of Office Open XML

ISO/IEC JTC 1/SC 34 and Ecma International will collaborate in a single working group to ensure the maintenance and evolution of Office Open XML. SC 34, the committee in charge of the maintenance of the standard, created SC 34/Working Group 4 to handle IS 29500 maintenance. Ecma TC45 will actively participate in the maintenance and evolution of the standard, and will also cooperate with ISO/IEC JTC 1/SC 34 in the new SC 34 Working Group 5 created to ensure Interoperability across document formats.

Office Open XML (ECMA-376 Edition 1) has been widely adopted by numerous organizations throughout the industry. Independent software vendors, including Apple, Corel, Microsoft and Novell have already shipped implementations of the Office Open XML standard (Edition 1) within popular applications such as iWork, iPhone, WordPerfect, Open Office and Microsoft Office 2007. It is expected that the industry will also widely implement the new and enhanced version (IS ISO/IEC 29500 – ECMA-376 Edition 2).

We look forward to continued cooperation and collaboration with ISO, IEC, and ISO/IEC JTC 1.

About Ecma International

Since its inception in 1961, Ecma International (Ecma) has developed standards for Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and Consumer Electronics (CE). Ecma is a non-profit industry association of technology developers, vendors and users. Experts from industry and other organizations work together at Ecma to develop standards. Ecma submits its work for approval as ISO, IEC, ISO/IEC JTC 1 and ETSI standards and is a frequent practitioner of “fast-tracking” of specifications through the standardization process in international standards organizations. Ecma publications can be downloaded free of charge from the Ecma International website www.ecma-international.org.

For more information: please contact **Dr. Istvan Sebestyen**, Secretary General of Ecma International. Email: istvan@ecma-international.org.