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ODF Perspectives Panel discussion

OASIS ODF Adoption TC

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About...

OASIS ODF Adoption TC

-
- “Collaborating to increase the demand for and availability of products that conform to the OpenDocument Format”
-
- http://www.oasis-open.org/committees/odf-adoption

ODF Interop and Conf.TC

-
- “Supporting the creation of interoperable ODF applications”
-
- http://www.oasis-open.org/committees/oic

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Agenda

Agenda

- 17:45 – Intro (Don Harbison)
- 17:50 – Theoretical view (Rob Weir)
- 18:05 – Practical view (Bart Hanssens)
- 18:20 – Panel self-intro
- 18:30 – Break / thinking time
- 18:45 – Q&A (audience and panel)
- 19:15 – Closing remarks
- 19:30 – End of session

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Panelists

Jeremy ALLISON

- Linux Evangelist @ Google
- SAMBA
- http://tuxdeluxe.org/taxonomy/term/21

Bart HANSSENS

- Interoperability expert @ Fedict, Belgium
- Tests with ODF plug-ins for MS-Office
- Chair OASIS ODF Interop. and Conf.TC
- http://www.fedict.belgium.be

Don HARBISON

- Program Director @ IBM
- Open source and open standards
- Linux strategy
- Chair OASIS ODF Adoption TC
- http://www.ibm.com

Jun MA

- Beijing RedFlag2000
- http://www.redoffice.com.cn

Florian REUTER

- Novell
- http://florianreuter.blogspot.com

Malte TIMMERMAN

- Tech.Architect @ Software Engineering, Sun
- StarOffice / Sun MS-Office plug-in:
- Accessibility
- Architecture
- Online Help
- Performance
- Security
- http://blogs.sun.com/malte

Rob WEIR

- ODF Architect, IBM
- Co-Chair OASIS ODF TC
- US delegate ISO/IEC JTC1/SC34
- Member INCITS v1 & INCITS Executive Board
- http://www.robweir.com/blog

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ODF Interoperability - Theory

Rob Weir

IBM

What is Interoperability?

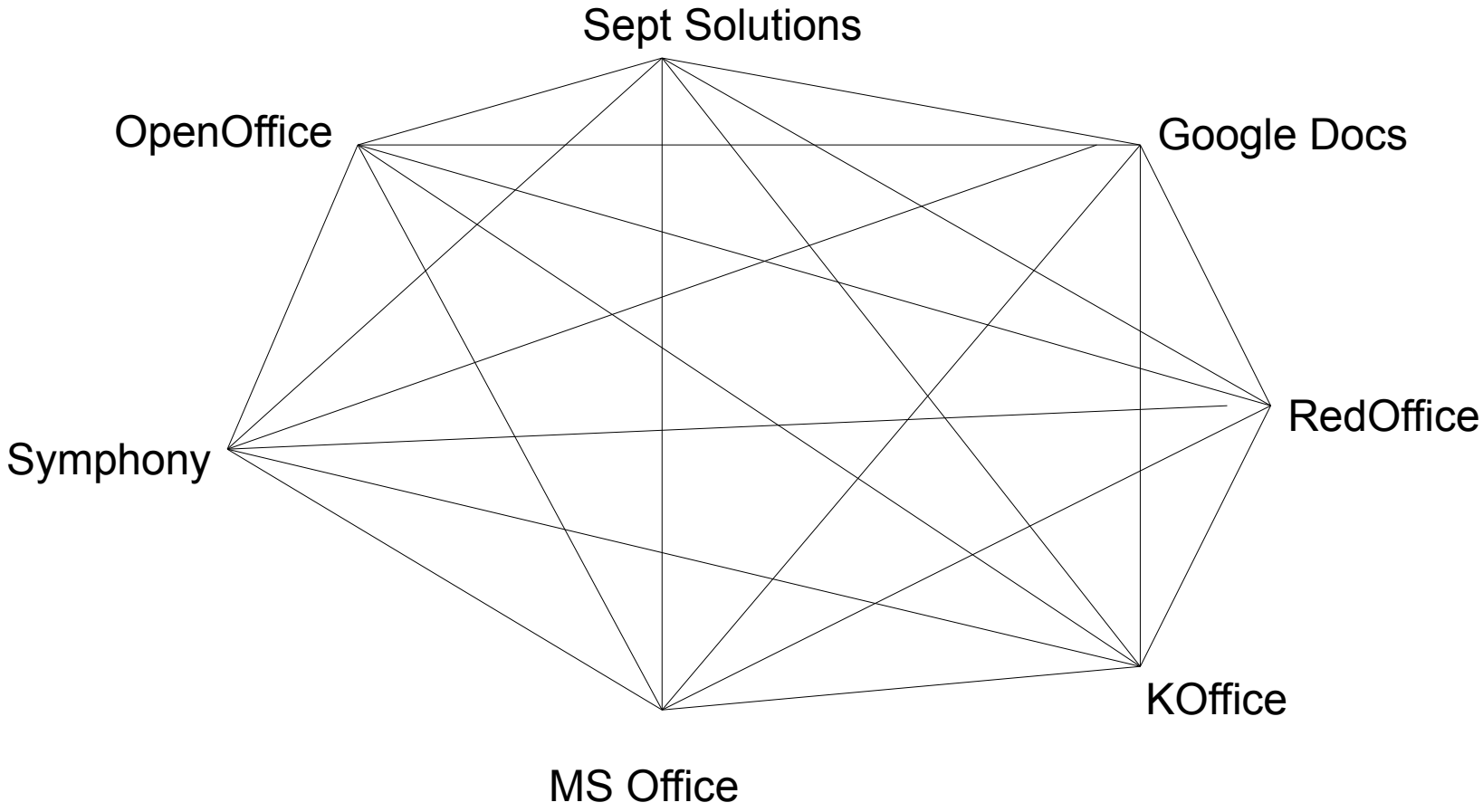
"Interoperability means the ability of information and communication technology (ICT) systems and of the business processes they support to exchange data and to enable the sharing of information and knowledge."

IDABC's "European Interoperability Framework"
http://ec.europa.eu/idabc/servlets/Doc?id=19529

Problem #1

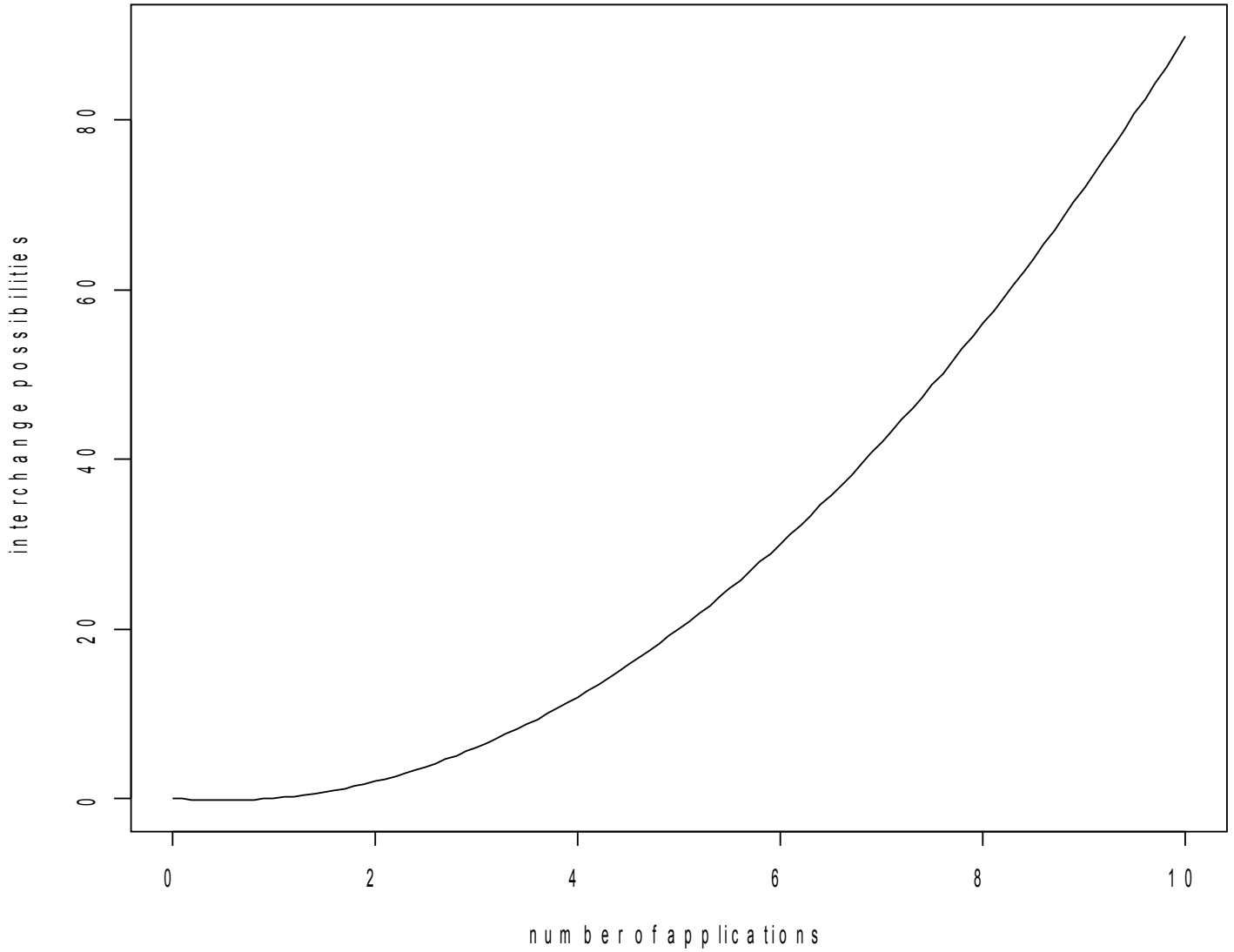
Complexity of Application-to-Application interoperability

Many ODF Implementations

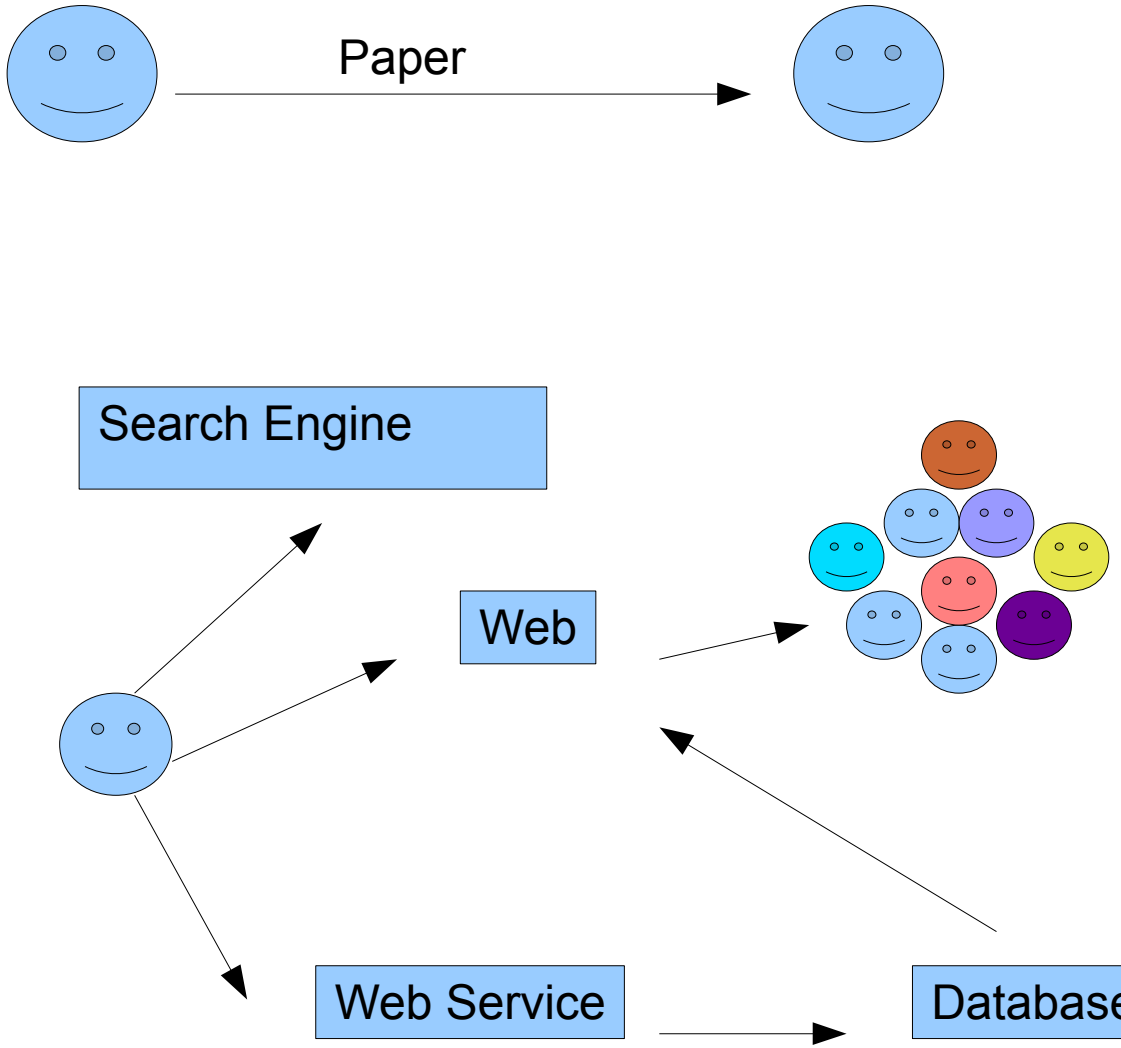


With N editors, there are N*(N-1) interoperability paths

App2App interop doesn't scale



And don't forget the non-editors



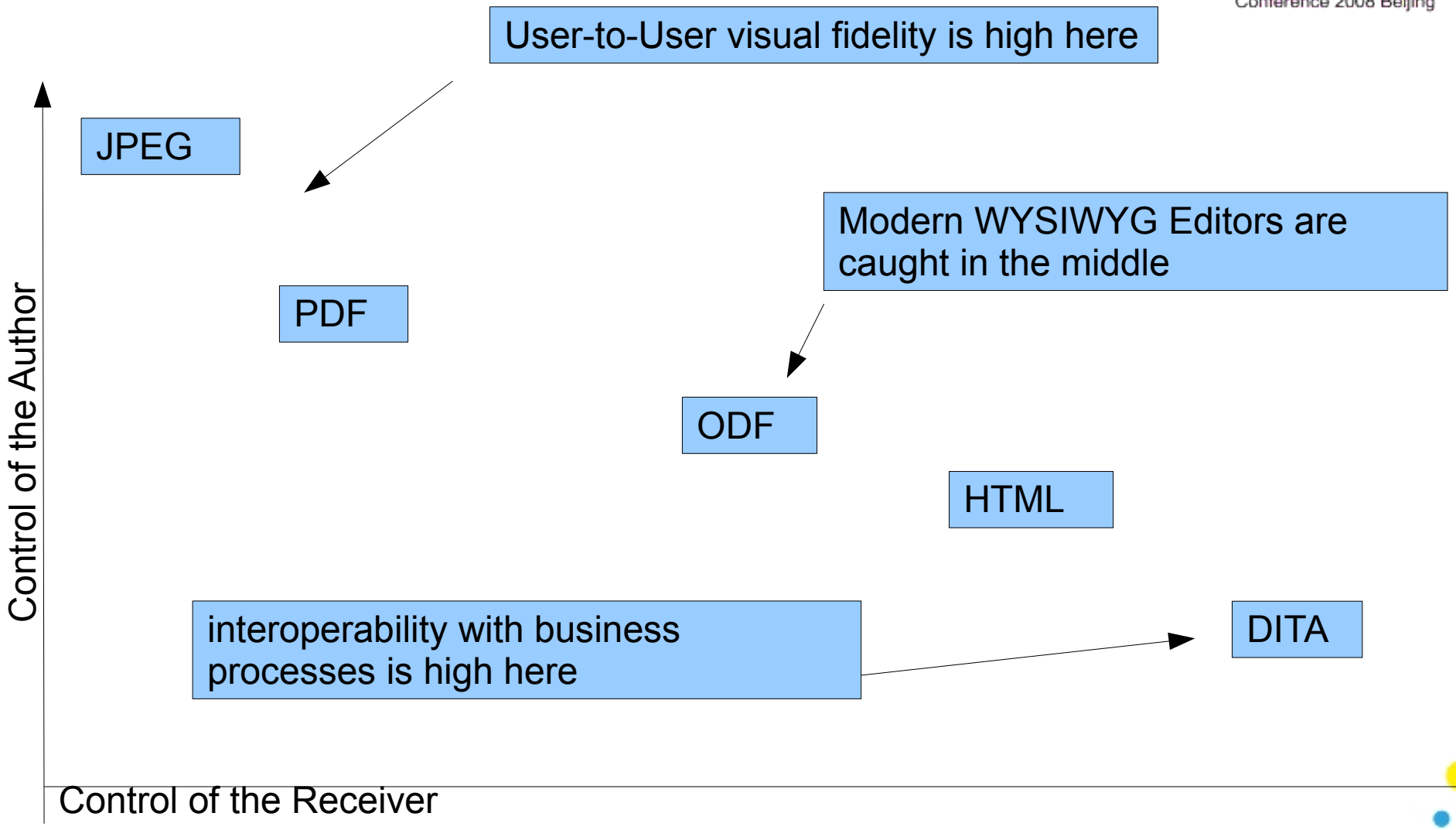
A single document can easily be touched by a dozen different applications from different vendors during its lifetime.

The ultimate destination of your document is unknown to you and likely unknowable.

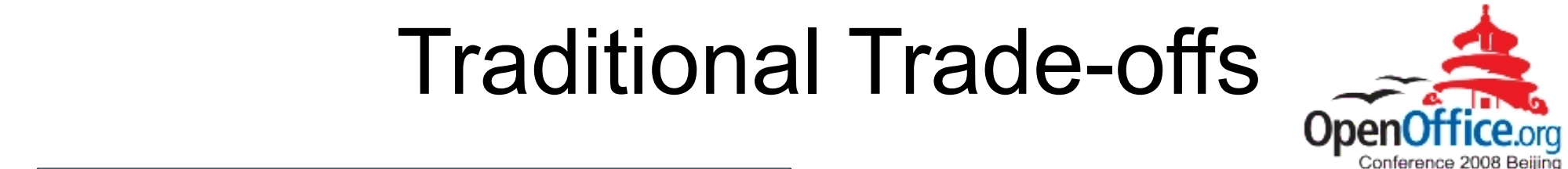
Problem #2

Interoperability means different things
to different people.

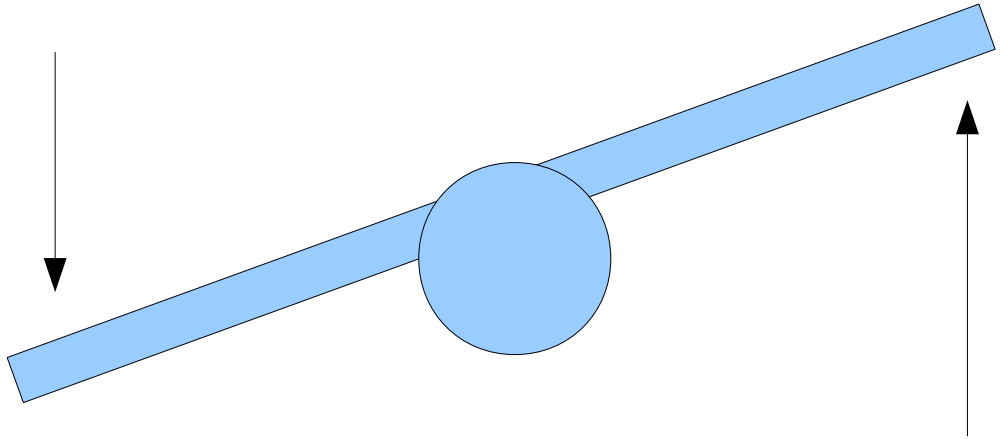
Thinking in terms of control



Traditional Trade-offs



- Visual Richness of authoring environment
- Power
- Ability to say anything
- Pixel Perfection
- High Fidelity



- Accessibility
- Universality
- Ability of everyone to understand
- Structure
- Semantic richness

Not a Law of Nature, but a tendency. The glory goes to those who can solve both problems at once.

Two Big Challenges

- Many ODF Implementations
- Need for ODF to provide interoperability in two dimensions:
  - Ad-hoc, traditional, visual fidelity
  - Structured, data-oriented, business process

Things that cause problems

- Application issues
  - Implementation defects
  - Functional subsets
  - Functional supersets (extensions)
- Standard issues
  - Specification errors
  - Undefined behaviours
  - Implementation-defined behaviours
-

The Solution?

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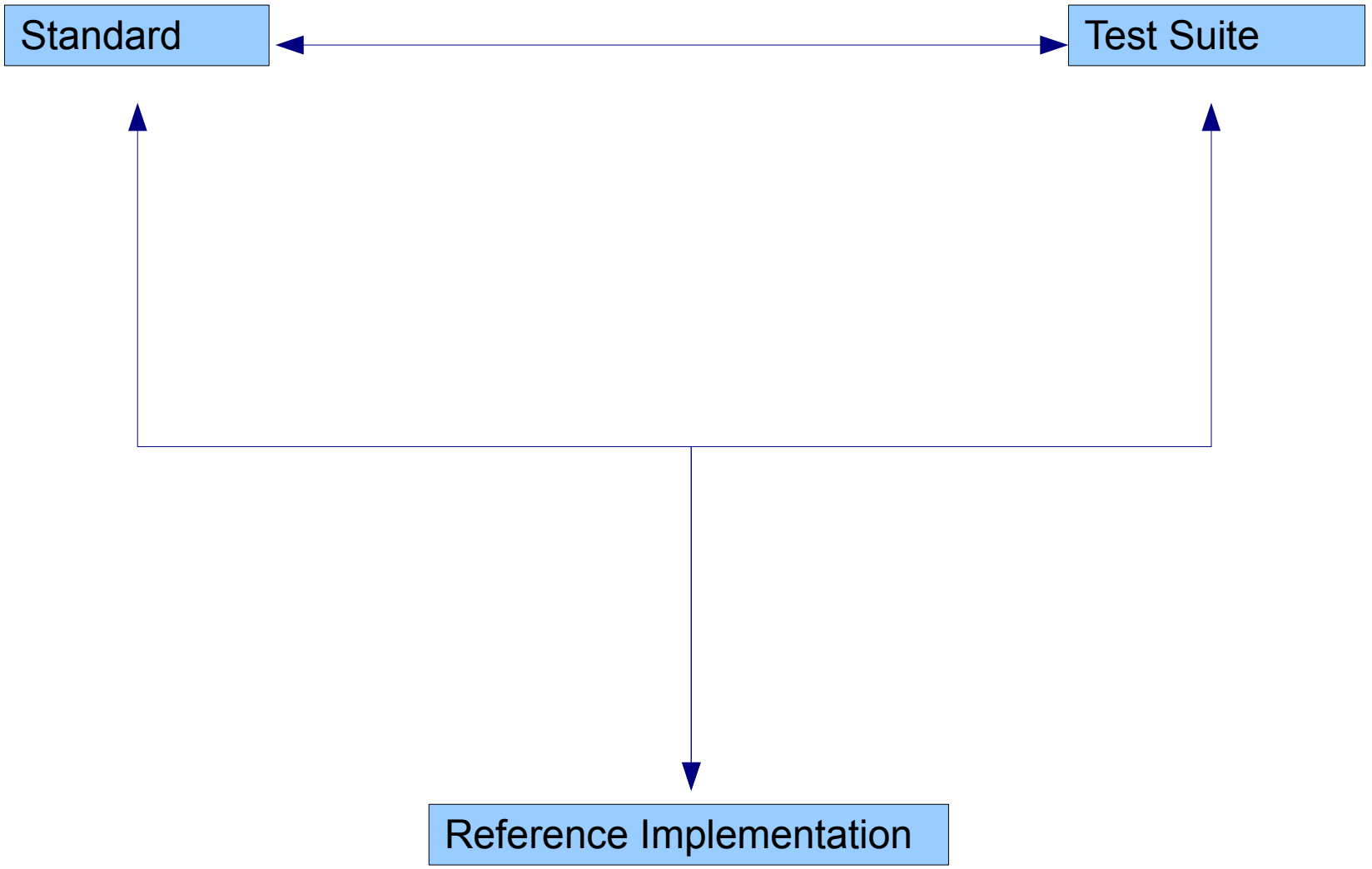
A powerful pattern



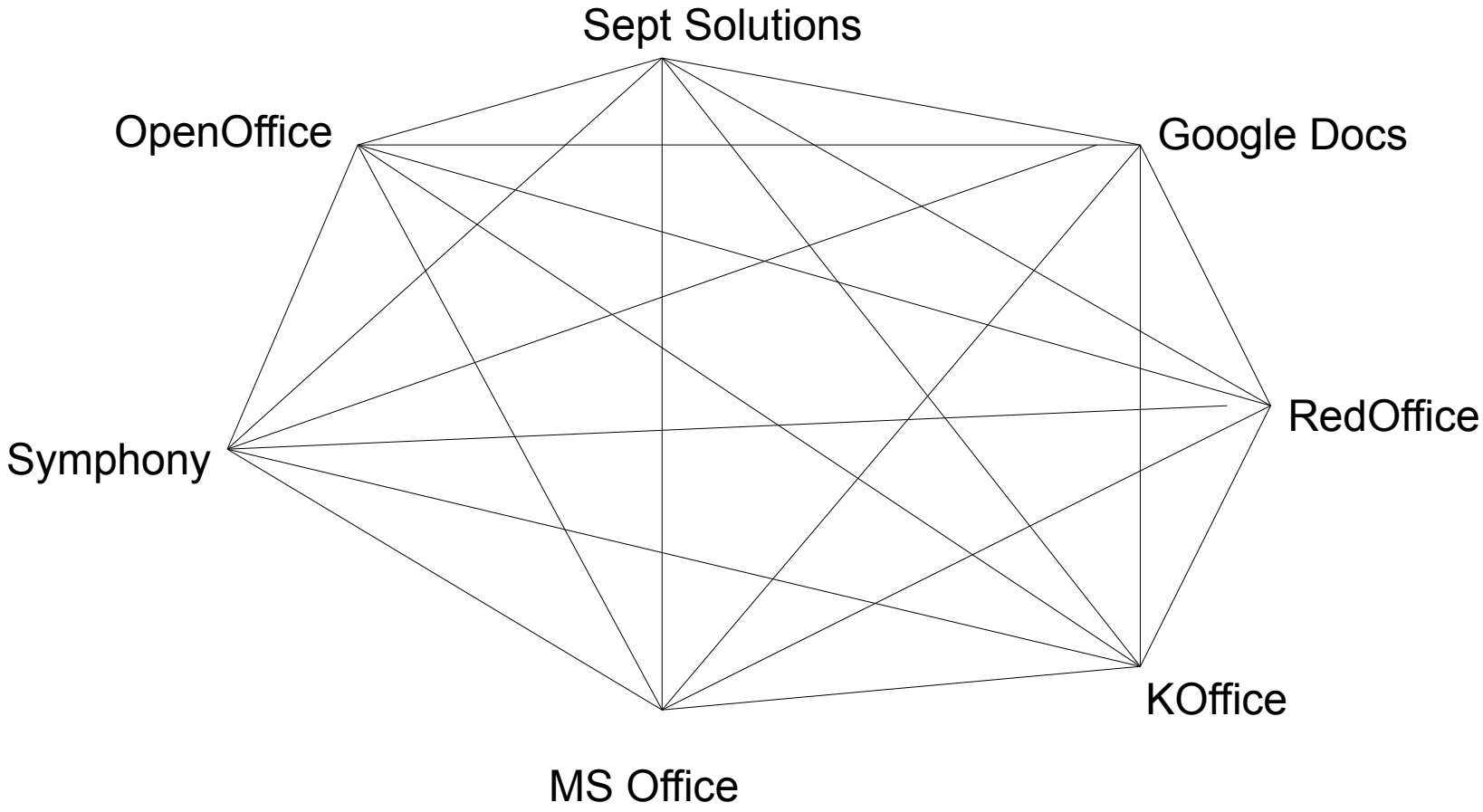
A powerful pattern

- The standard contains the definition of a conformant document
  - (but the standard may have errors or ambiguities)
- The test suite exercises and validates each feature of the standard
  - (but the test suite may have errors or omissions)
- The reference implementation is written to the standard, and tested with the test suite
  - (but the implementation may have errors or missing functionality)

Checks and Balances

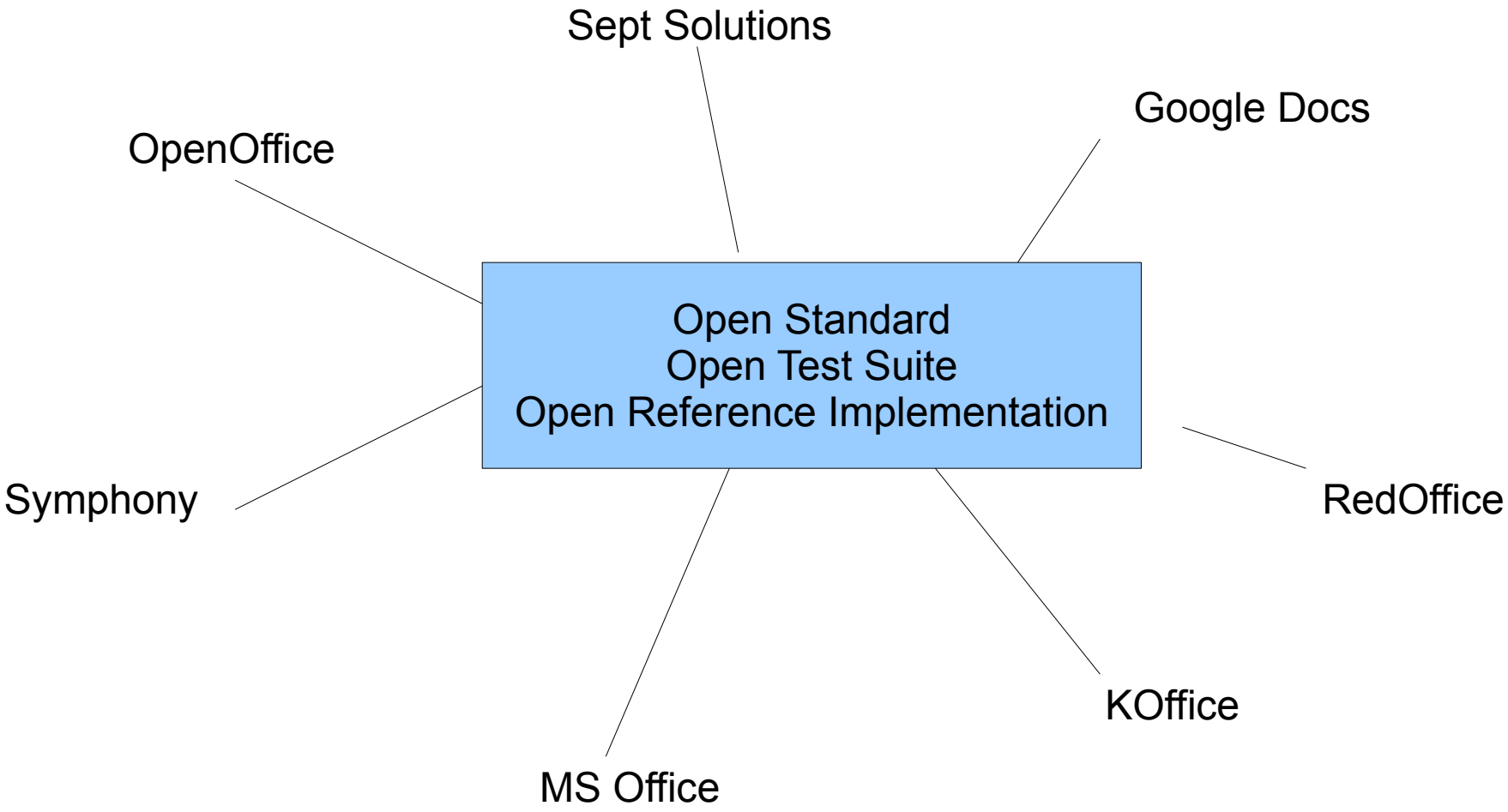
- A test case fails. What is the cause?
  - An error in the application?
  - Is it an error in the test suite?
  - An error in the standard?
- Identify the cause of the failure
- Fix
- Continue until you have a complete test suite and a reference implementation that passes all of the test cases.

This can move us from this...



With N editors, there are N*(N-1) interoperability paths

...to this



With N editors, there are N interoperability tests

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ODF Interoperability in Belgium

Bart HANSSENS

Interop Expert @ Fedict (BE)

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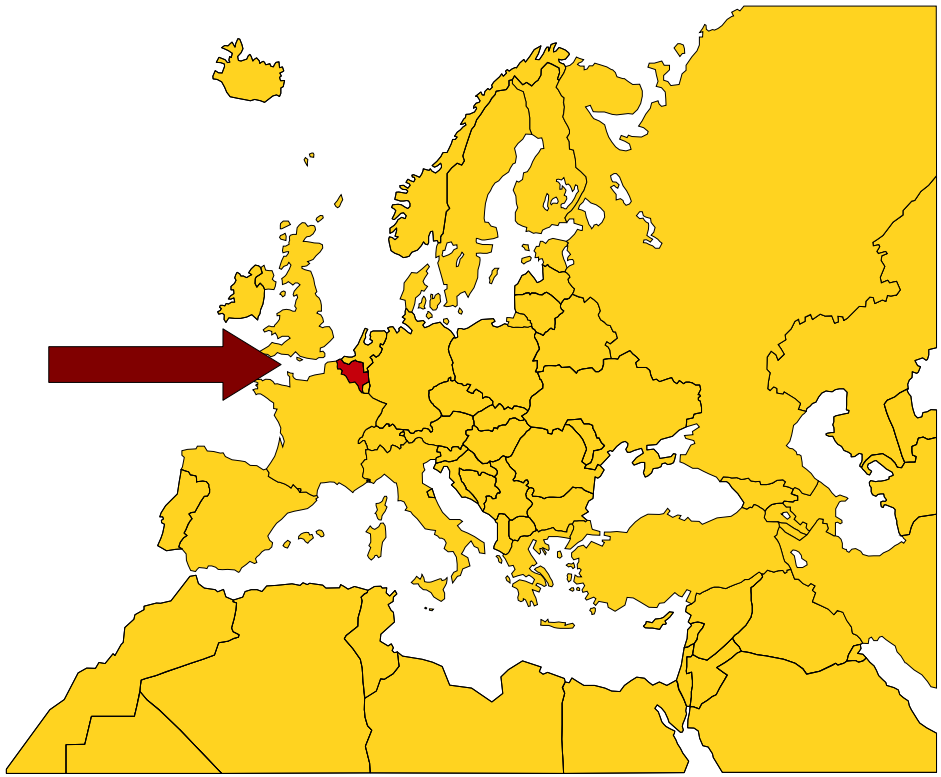
About...

Fedict in Belgium



Belgium:

- Brussels / EU

Fedict:

- Fed.Gover. ICT
- eGov projects

ODF Guideline

Editable text / spreadsheet / presentations

Mandatory between departments

Optional:

- within departments
- towards citizens / other governments

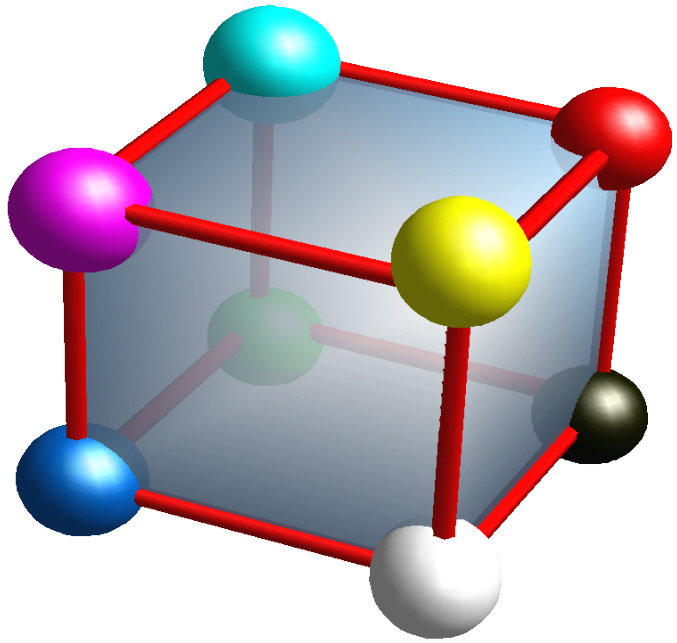
Goal: Interoperability

About:

- YOUR documents
- Working together
- Long term benefits

NOT just product hopping

Our motivation



Different governments:

- federal
- regional
- local

Departments:

- suite of choice

Challenges

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Legacy formats <=> ODF

Different software:

- different versions
- different feature sets

Users: Just Make It Work !

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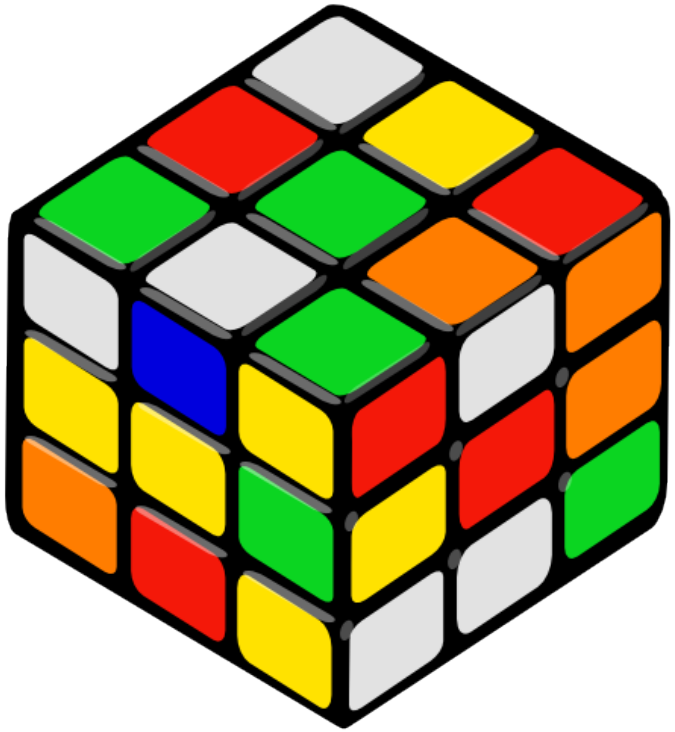
Getting started

A few ODF solutions



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MS-Office + plug-in:

- Sun
- MS / Clever Age

(MS-Office 2007sp2)

Plug-ins

Sun :

- http://www.sun.com/software/star/odf_plugin
- Based upon OpenOffice.org

Microsoft, Novell, Clever Age, … :

- http://odf-converter.sourceforge.net
- Based upon .NET & XSLT

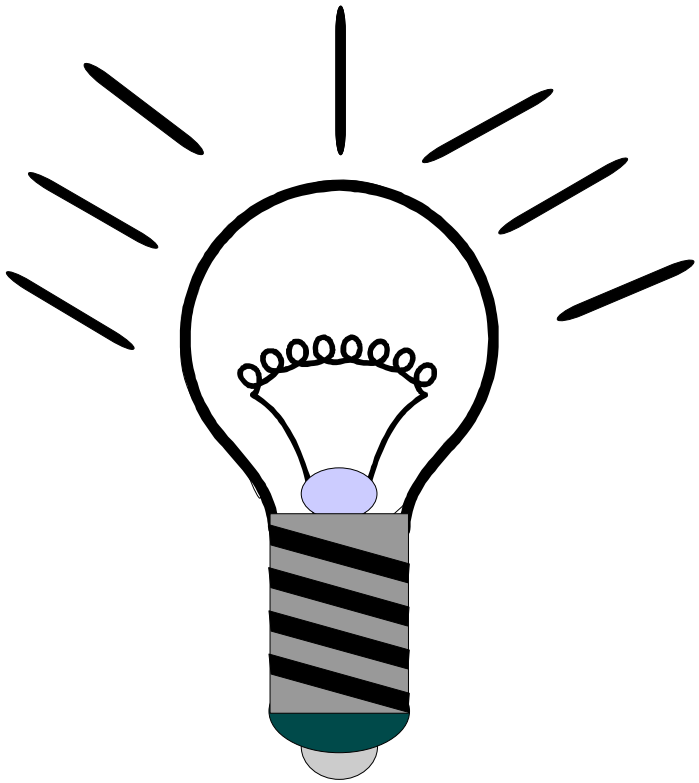
Why focus on MSO-ODF ?

Reality check:

- most users are using MS-Office
- even with plug-in (some) conversion is done

Remember: choice !

The plan



1 – test real documents

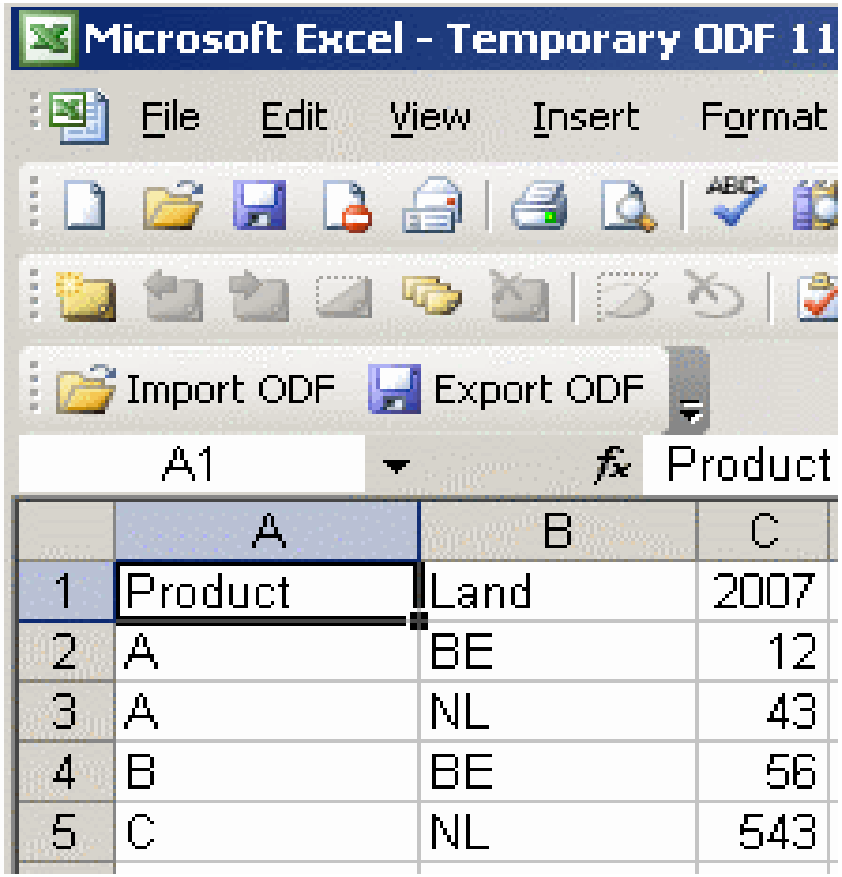
2 – file bug reports

3 – ...

4 – profit !

Results

Plug-ins



Benefits:

- no additional suite

To be improved:

- performance
- interop issues

The Good

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Interoperability is increasing:

- feature set (ODF templates, ...)
- usability (open with double-click)
- lots of bug fixing

Reading OK for most documents

The Bad

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Round-tripping needs to improve

Tables-in-tables

Forms:

- data types => string
- some controls are gone

The Ugly

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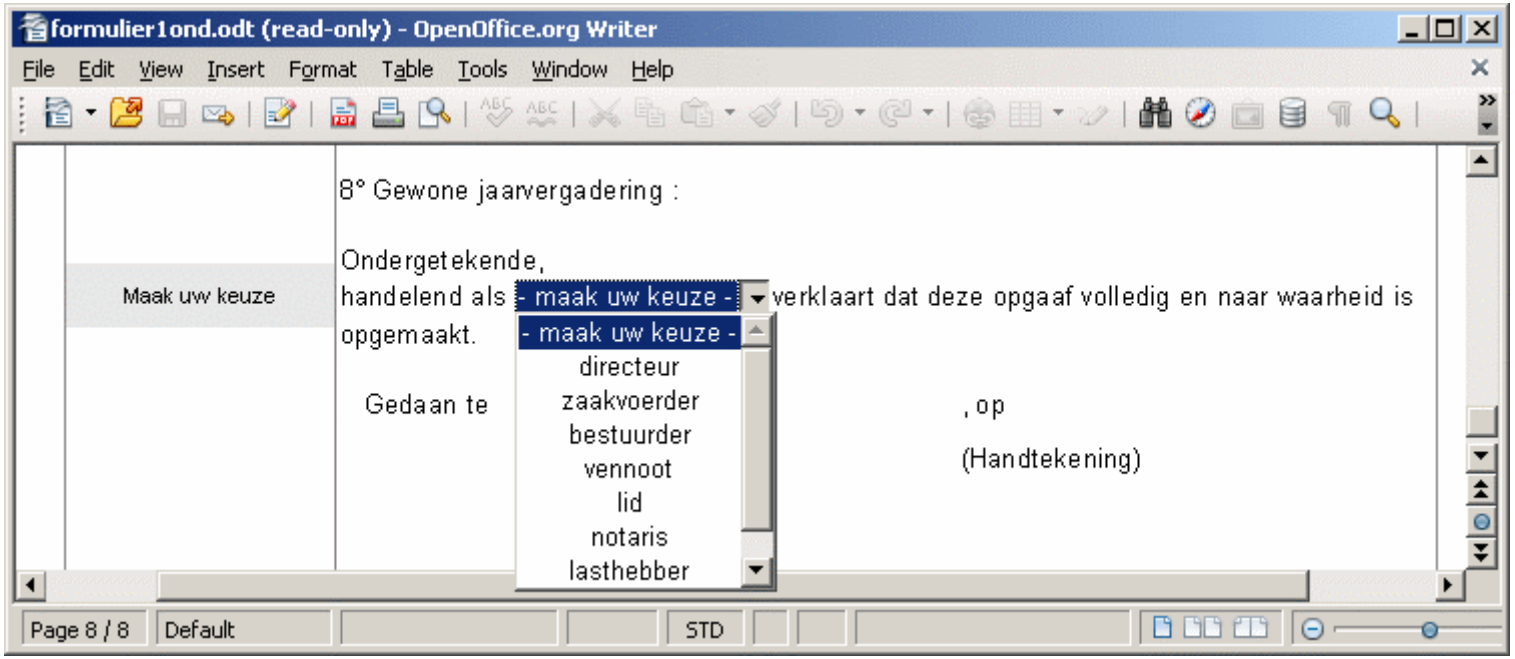
Formula exchange

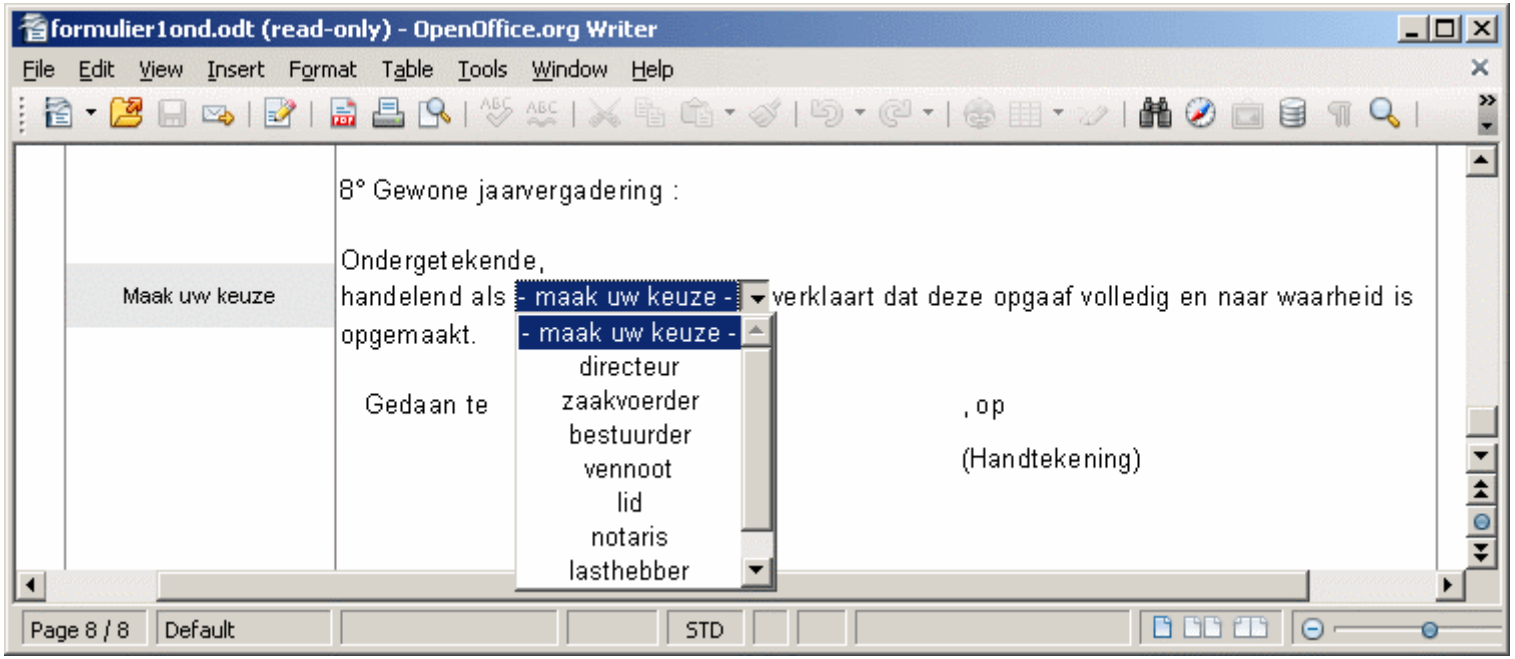
Needs work:

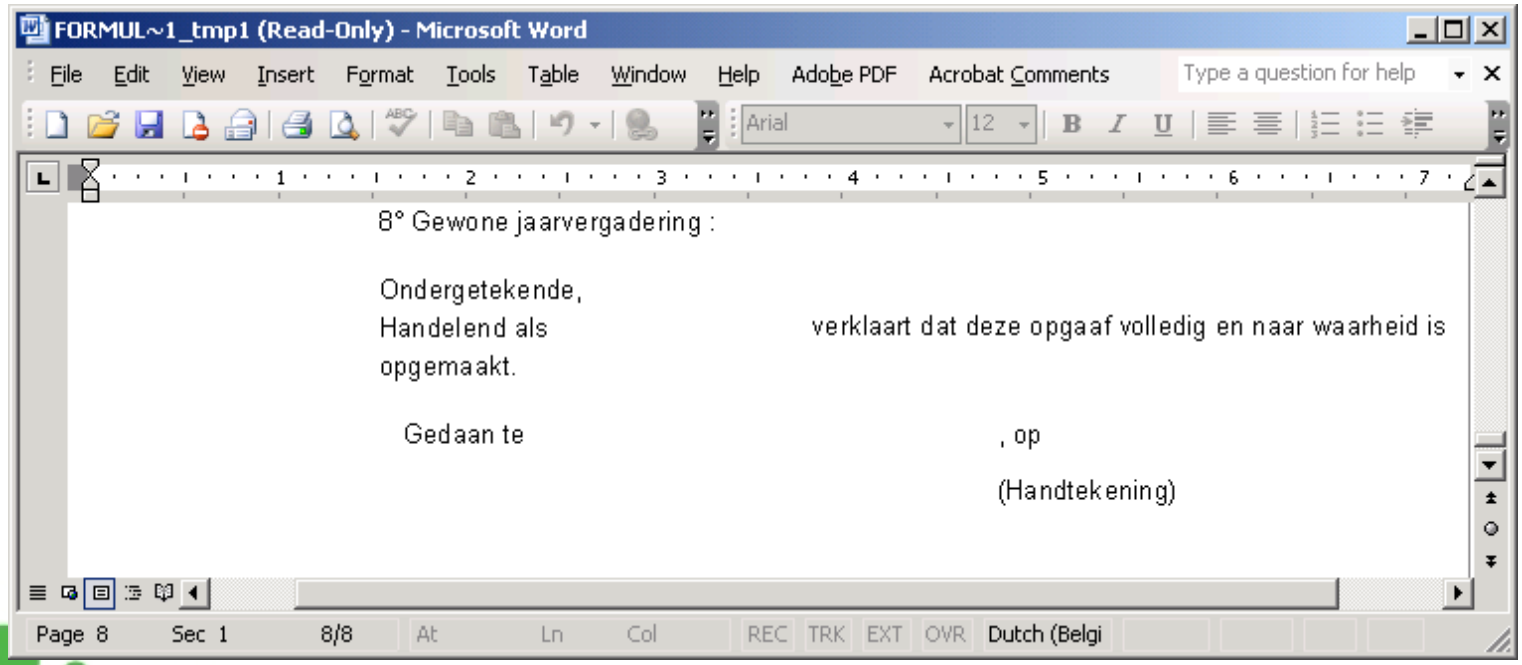
- Complex pivot tables
- Complex charts
- Gradients



OOo 3

Sun ODF plug-in





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OOo 3

MS converter

Sun and MS plug-ins

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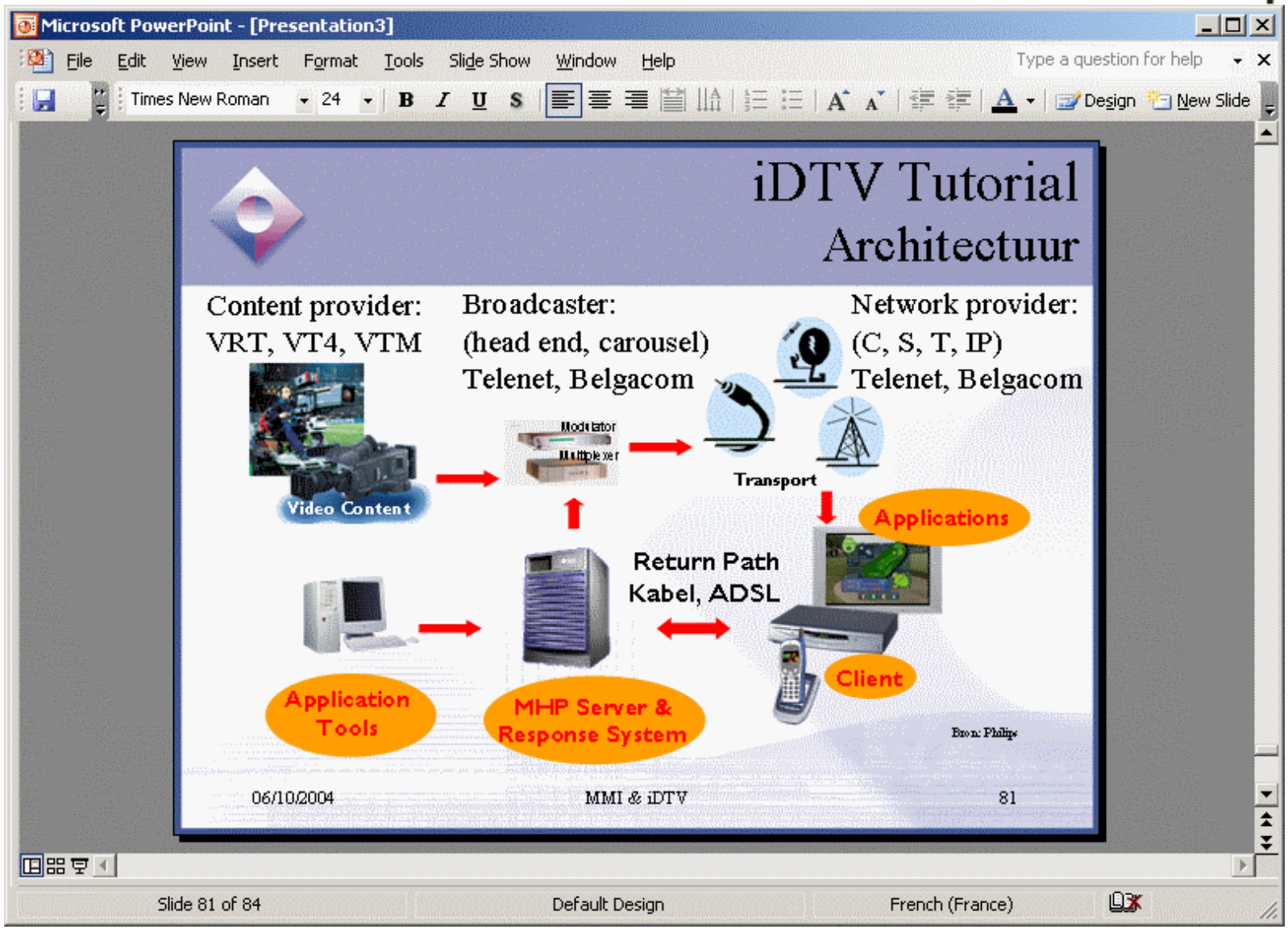

Formula exchange

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Custom namespace

Example:

```
oooc:=NOW()-DATE(1977;5;1)
```

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What's next ?

Open questions

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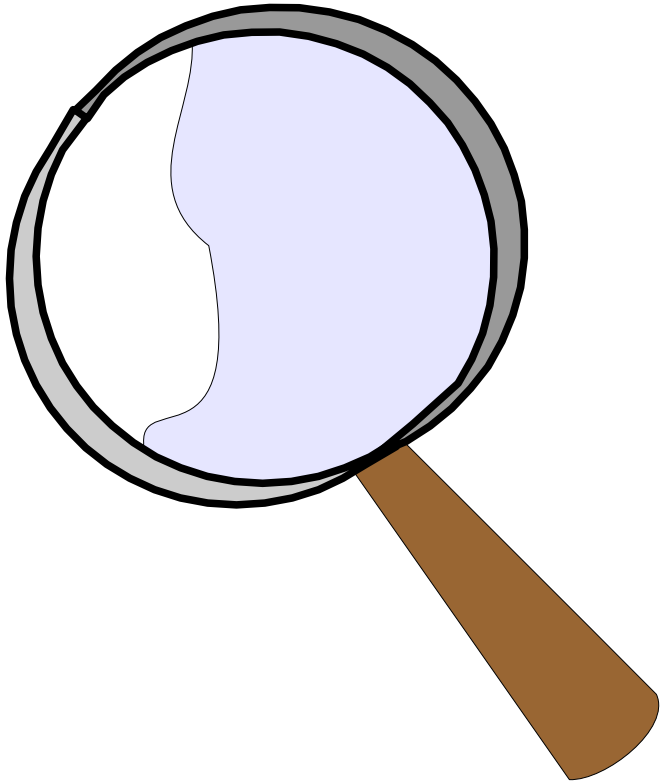

Scripting / macros ?

Database files ?

(do we want this ?)

Waiting for ODF 1.2

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We want:

- digital signatures
- OpenFormula

We wait for:

- standardization
- multiple implementations

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Conclusion ?

Conclusion

It's about choice and YOUR documents

Implementations are getting better

Test with “real” documents

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