



# Certified Open<sup>®</sup>

## FREEDOM FROM LOCK-IN

### What Is Certified Open<sup>®</sup>?

Certified Open is a programme designed to evaluate the technical and commercial lock-in associated with ICT solutions. It promotes fair competition and effective competition in the provision of software, hardware and services. Certified Open provides an easy-to-use framework to assist user organisations in selecting optimal solutions and an accreditation program for suppliers to certify products and services.

### Why Is This Important?

Research indicates that up to 90% of public sector organisations do not have the freedom to choose ICT solutions based on competitiveness, innovation, functionality, service capability and price. The same appears to be true in the private sector. Much of this lock-in is inadvertent and results from hidden factors associated with single proprietary supplier solutions.

Recent announcements have emphasised that such lock-in is unacceptable in the modern ICT market. There are an increasing number of emerging competitive solutions and business models and it is important to all organisations that freedom of choice is maintained. In today's ICT marketplace it is entirely possible that the current 'first choice' will become a historical footnote in 5 years time.

### How Does It Work?

Certified Open is designed to be simple and fast. The certification scheme is based on self-assessment and uses an on-line application process. The questions test end-user, technical and commercial aspects of 'openness'. Certified Open awards Gold, Silver or Bronze certificates to successful applications and accreditations are listed in the on-line product database. The answers to certification questions are published alongside the overall certification result and there is a detailed appeals process to resolve irregularities.

Certified Open applies without bias to all forms of software, hardware and solutions.

### Who Benefits?

Certified Open benefits both suppliers and end-users. The supplier benefits from being able to emphasise the competitive strength of provided solutions built on a base of openness and interoperability. The user benefits from being able to use Certified Open to validate the degree of lock-in present in *current* solutions and as an integral part of the selection process for *future* purchases.

Certified Open also benefits the ICT community at large, promoting as it does innovation, complete interoperability and collaboration.

## How Much Does it Cost?

There are no charges during the current 3-Month Free Trial period (see box). At the end of the trial period, user organisations will be able to continue to deploy Certified Open free of charge. Suppliers will have the option of an individual product certificate at €400 or unlimited certificates for €4000 per year. Non-commercial projects released under a recognised Free software licence will have registration fees waived.

## How Has It Been Developed?

Certified Open was originally developed as part of an official UK local government project and later expanded under a European Commission eTen project. It has enjoyed substantial industry, community and user involvement and has already been extensively trialled. Certified Open will be progressively deployed worldwide following its general release in Spring 2008.

## How Is It Governed?

Certified Open is run by a not-for-profit limited company registered in the UK and will later become a foundation. Currently the board of the company consists of representatives of the two founding organisations – OpenForum Europe and Free Software Foundation Europe. A Governing Council has been formed with representatives from various ICT stakeholders.

## How Do I Get More Information Or Join The Programme?

You can contact Certified Open at [info@certifiedopen.com](mailto:info@certifiedopen.com) or visit the website at [www.certifiedopen.com](http://www.certifiedopen.com).

### \*\*\*\*\*3-Month Free Trial\*\*\*\*\*

**As part of the development phase of Certified Open a 3-Month Trial period will run until the end of January 2008. During this period all accreditations will be free of charge and submissions will remain confidential.**



[www.certifiedopen.com](http://www.certifiedopen.com)

Certified Open Limited, 1 Tanner Street, London SE1 3LE UK Company Registration No: 05753602

“CERTIFIED OPEN” and the “CERTIFIED OPEN LOGO” are Collective marks of Certified Open Limited, Claremont House, 1 Blunt Road, South Croydon, CR2 7PA UK and may only be used by those authorised to do so.

Community Trade Mark No. 004975348