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Microsoft Cooking Open Source Solutions

For the Office System

Microsoft announced that it would start cooking open source solutions designed to integrate with its Office System. The Redmond company's perspective over its flagship products, Windows and Office, is that both are platforms, and in this context, the two can act as the basis for additional software. And Microsoft is gearing up in order to deliver its own contribution to both the environment of products built on top of the Office suite but also to the ecosystem of open source solutions. For this, the software giant has partnered with Europe-based open source systems integration consultancy firm Sourcesense, announcing plans to work together on a common strategy, as well as on the development and deployment of OSS for the Office System. The Microsoft and Sourcesense road to open source solutions aimed at the Office platform will start with the building of a new version of Apache POI. Via Apache POI, Microsoft will permit end users to not only access but also manage Office binary formats. "Donating code to an established, consensus-driven organization such as the Apache Software Foundation benefits both our customers and the open source community at large," stated Sam Ramji, senior director of Platform Technology Strategy at Microsoft. A project of the Apache Software Foundation, Apache POI is essentially set up as a file format reader and writer, while being an open source solution. Apache POI will enable the creation, viewing and editing of Office Open XML files associated with Excel, Word, PowerPoint and Visio applications. "By helping contribute to new Apache solutions, we are putting our intentions into action, and giving back to this dynamic community. We're excited to work with Sourcesense, whose experience in catalyzing Apache technologies and open development practices makes it the ideal partner," Ramji added. With Open XML, or Ecma 376, in the final stages of the ratification process as an ISO/IEC standard, Microsoft is working as hard as it can in order to prove its commitment to interoperability. The connection between the Open XMP open standard and open source via Apache is set up to deliver additional proof of a Microsoft on a new path, diverging from its traditional proprietary and monopolist ways. "Apache POI support for Open XML is compelling. It makes it easier to integrate, manage and deploy across the enterprise, and opens up valuable user contributions and feedback - an essential step to the interoperability and adoption of many collaboratively developed technologies," added Gianugo Rabellino, CEO of Sourcesense.