

## Microsoft ISO Format Battle

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Microsoft has been in a long battle between a coalition of companies led by IBM and Sun over whether or not **Microsoft's formats** for Access, Word, Spreadsheet and PowerPoint will obtain ISO certification.



The Financial Times reported that "governments would prefer to use software certified by international standards" and "governments are growing worried about being too dependent on a single company such as Microsoft."

Now in the past, haven't the same bodies governing ISO certification for manufacturing overlooked the companies manufacturing toys, electronics, computers, network equipment and dog food- namely those concerns from China? Apple, Hewlett-Packard, Matsushita and Mattel I believe are all ISO certified. What happens to their ISO certifications when manufacturing takes place in **China** and the product is unsafe? ISO doesn't count?

It seems that "standards" and "certifications" are as good as long as no one finds out otherwise. Somewhere along the line- the process is broken, corrupt or misaligned or perhaps it's a little of each.

Not that I'm any great fan of Microsoft- because I'm not. In spite of selling things that require patch and change management- Microsoft has done a pretty amazing job of either fooling the world or convincing vast numbers that their products are in spite of their shortcomings, worthy. For an industry building itself upon best practice, standards, compliance and certifications- one would assume ISO certification would be embraced by Microsoft and it appears just the opposite.

Then to think about Microsoft and UC along with their new buddies is another story still unfolding. New and as with any partnering arrangements; we haven't seen the test of time. Maybe they'll fare well or perhaps the weather will turn turbulent. What would be really interesting to see is if the ISO certification crops up in UC and since many telephony manufacturers are ISO certified- you'd think maybe the same push or consensus would exist in something mission critical- assuming UC is or becomes so.

It seems that in fairness, ISO certification may not make a difference to Microsoft but it appears at least governments are swaying in a different direction than Microsoft's. Not everyone likes being too dependent upon another vendor and when world governments send that message, you'd think perhaps Microsoft is listening. So goes the road of certification, standards, and compliance. It appears not everyone agrees but does anyone really check when and where it counts? Maybe China is the exception and Microsoft will end up playing by their own rules.

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