

# COUNCILS TO LEARN BENEFITS OF SOFTWARE CHOICE

Submitted by: Chelgate

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## COUNCILS TO LEARN BENEFITS OF SOFTWARE CHOICE

A conference to discuss the challenges facing local authorities in choosing software platforms to enable them to deliver e-government programmes and transform service delivery will be held on February 6 at Glaziers Hall, London Bridge, London.

The day-long conference is being staged by London Connects and the Open Source Academy (OSA). The OSA is funded under the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's e-Innovations programme and is tasked with providing answers to local authorities on the use of open source software (OSS) and its integration with the omnipresent proprietary systems currently dominant in the sector.

The ODPM wants to see greater competition in the software market, and aims to encourage local authorities to make more use of OSS as it is potentially cheaper and more secure.

A key obstacle to a mixed software economy, and to local authorities looking to make use of OSS, is the undisclosed hidden lock-ins that exist with proprietary software, severely restricting the options that are available. The conference will mark the launch of a certification scheme which will enable councils more easily to understand the implications these lock-ins have on future procurement decisions. Called 'Certified Open', the scheme will gauge the 'openness' of software and its potential for integration and use with other software systems, which will assist local authority officers when making decisions about software procurement, both proprietary and open source.

The conference will also announce the results of all the work-streams being run under Open Source Academy, notably the implementation of Star Office at Bristol CC, and the main stream roll out of OSS at Birmingham CC.

Top speakers from local authorities, the ODPM, the European Commission, and European industry will review the issues, share actual experiences and give guidance on effective software procurement, and the continued development of OSS as a viable alternative, and addition, to proprietary software.

For further information about the conference and the OSA go to: [www.opensourceacademy.org.uk](http://www.opensourceacademy.org.uk) or [www.londonconnects.gov.uk](http://www.londonconnects.gov.uk). For conference booking go to [www.promarta.co.uk/winter](http://www.promarta.co.uk/winter).

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## NOTES TO EDITORS:

·The conference is being hosted by London Connects, which brings together local and regional partners to support the delivery of the e-government agenda across London. More information can be found at [www.londonconnects.gov.uk](http://www.londonconnects.gov.uk).

Open Source Academy is a partnership of local authorities and organisations with experience in the Open Source world, funded under the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's e-Innovations programme. Members of the consortium are Birmingham CC, Bristol CC, Cheshire CC, Shepway DC, University of Kent, Institute of IT Training, National Computing Centre, OpenForum Europe and SOCITM.  
[www.opensourceacademy.org.uk](http://www.opensourceacademy.org.uk)

