



BSI Standards Publication

**Document management — Digital file format
recommendations for long-term storage**

National foreword

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**Document management — Digital
file format recommendations for
long-term storage**

*Gestion électronique — Recommandations de format de fichier
numérique pour le stockage à long terme*



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Foreword

ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) is a worldwide federation of national standards bodies (ISO member bodies). The work of preparing International Standards is normally carried out through ISO technical committees. Each member body interested in a subject for which a technical committee has been established has the right to be represented on that committee. International organizations, governmental and non-governmental, in liaison with ISO, also take part in the work. ISO collaborates closely with the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) on all matters of electrotechnical standardization.

The procedures used to develop this document and those intended for its further maintenance are described in the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1. In particular, the different approval criteria needed for the different types of ISO documents should be noted. This document was drafted in accordance with the editorial rules of the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2 (see www.iso.org/directives).

Attention is drawn to the possibility that some of the elements of this document may be the subject of patent rights. ISO shall not be held responsible for identifying any or all such patent rights. Details of any patent rights identified during the development of the document will be in the Introduction and/or on the ISO list of patent declarations received (see www.iso.org/patents).

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For an explanation of the voluntary nature of standards, the meaning of ISO specific terms and expressions related to conformity assessment, as well as information about ISO's adherence to the World Trade Organization (WTO) principles in the Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) see www.iso.org/iso/foreword.html.

This document was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/IEC JTC 1, *Document management applications*, Subcommittee SC 2, *Document file formats, EDMS systems and authenticity of information*.

Any feedback or questions on this document should be directed to the user's national standards body. A complete listing of these bodies can be found at www.iso.org/members.html.

Introduction

The document management industry is heavily reliant on standardized file formats for both long-term storage and interoperability purposes.

Effective document management often requires the selection of an appropriate storage file format and eventually conversion between the native digital document format and the selected storage file format.

This document provides information and guidelines on file formats to assist in the selection of file formats.

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Document management — Digital file format recommendations for long-term storage

1 Scope

This document gives guidelines for selecting the most appropriate file format(s) for the storage, usability, and exchange of data with a long-term management objective.

It is applicable to the selection of file formats to be used to store electronic documents. It provides guidance that takes into account:

- the durability of documents in a readable form;
- fidelity to the original and data integrity;
- interoperability, i.e. independence from creation applications, information systems and rendition platforms;
- compliance with relevant laws and regulations;
- compliance with format specifications;
- reducing costs by reducing the number of conversions, migrations over time.

This document is applicable to all office activities (e.g. text processing, spreadsheets, presentations), email and static web pages, as well as all types of electronic components, including images, video and sound.

It does not apply to database formats.

2 Normative references

The following documents are referred to in the text in such a way that some or all of their content constitutes requirements of this document. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

ISO 12651-1, *Electronic document management — Vocabulary — Part 1: Electronic document imaging*

3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the terms and definitions given in ISO 12651-1 apply.

ISO and IEC maintain terminological databases for use in standardization at the following addresses:

- ISO online browsing platform: available at <https://www.iso.org/obp>
- IEC Electropedia: available at <http://www.electropedia.org/>