



Join Open-Xchange and OpenForum Europe for our workshop during the Internet Governance Forum 2019:

LEAVING HOTEL CALIFORNIA: PROMOTING ALTERNATIVES TO THE INTERNET GIANTS

Monday November 25, 2019 13:05 - 15:00
Raum IV Sonnenallee 225, 12057 Berlin, Germany

Open-Xchange and OpenForum Europe want to bring the experts, the concerned and curious to discuss tangible policy actions to increase competition and user choice in the digital markets, in particular for the platform economy. We want to have an open discussion investigating what a legal model for interoperability can look like.

Please indicate your interest on the IGF platform.

Please feel free to share this with friends and colleagues who are going to the IGF or are Berlin-based.

The idea of interoperability requirements based on open standards is that it would counter the concentration of the ICT markets by [reducing barriers to entry](#), [allowing competitors to compete](#). This in turn unleashes societal benefits such as user choice and control. We could avoid winner-takes-all outcomes and multiple closed silos, where the user has to get access to every single platform. The idea is not new. In fact, interoperability was offered as the solution in cases such as the requirements imposed by both regulators and antitrust enforcers against [AT&T](#) and by [antitrust enforcers in US v. Microsoft](#), and was at the center of the landmark Microsoft antitrust case. It is interoperability that has allowed for [third party ink-cartridges](#), and [avoided an early monopoly of PCs](#).

We are again seeing interoperability entering the debate of competition in digital markets once again. In response to this, we hope to move the conversation beyond discussions on how and why markets are centralising, and instead look at which legal specifications are needed to make the promise of interoperability a reality.

In order to keep our conversation anchored in the current policy debate, we aim to shape our session around the three questions based on the preconditions for interoperability requirements posed by the European Commission in their [leaked discussion document on the Digital Services Act](#):

- Where does interoperability make sense?
- When is it technically feasible?
- In what contexts will it lead to more competition and real options for customers?