



OSCAL: THE FUTURE OF COMPLIANCE AUTOMATION

While there has been a concerted effort over the years to shrink the operational burdens of security compliance, the fact remains that current methodologies are still woefully lacking in scalability.

Across both the public and private sector, it's clear that today's approach to risk management – a slow, costly, labor-intensive process – is out of step with an increasingly fast-paced digital world. A lack of regulatory standards is also problematic, magnifying cost and time burdens across entire sectors and industries. Without harmonization and reciprocity, all compliance programs will eventually suffer under the weight of redundancy, inefficiency, and high costs.

The White House has recognized these challenges, making regulatory harmonization a top priority across the federal government. In 2021, NIST released the **Open Security Controls Assessment Language (OSCAL)**, a standardized framework that enables compliance automation *at scale*.

OSCAL: The Emerging Solution

Today, OSCAL is considered the gold-standard solution for alleviating the challenges of risk management and compliance. It isn't just a grassroots movement – it's a critical innovation in response to a national need. Although automating controls and addressing the ATO space aren't new concepts, OSCAL is unique in that it **standardizes the entire compliance life cycle, uses automation and innovation to improve efficiency, and**

enables continuous assessment. By introducing a standardized, data-centric method for compliance life cycle management, OSCAL empowers organizations to:

- + Promote a secure-by-design culture by decentralizing the creation of security control and documentation to developers and engineers
- + Assess compliance control implementations across multiple information systems and components
- + Support multiple regulatory frameworks simultaneously
- + Automate the generation of compliance documentation
- + Automate processes and human-driven activities like security plan validation
- + Support continuous authorizations by decreasing assessment-related labor and automation of continuous monitoring capabilities
- + Bridge the gap between legacy formats like Word or Excel and new machine-readable language standards

Our Unique Innovations

Our approach to OSCAL innovation focuses on providing the community with free, standardized tools for managing the compliance life cycle. Over the past 3+ years, our team has lead the way on developing new OSCAL capabilities, tackling multiple open-source projects throughout 2020 and releasing an OSCAL Viewer in 2021. This year, we launched OSCAL.io, a central hub that serves as a repository for valuable OSCAL resources like templates, artifacts, and user guides. Our R&D team also published v1 of our internal OSCAL Processor, a critical tool that facilitates our work on a native OSCAL platform.



1. Eliminates dependency on MS Office documents; 2. Structures data in standard format expressed in OSCAL; 3. Accurate reporting and tracking provides incremental status, queries, and enhanced analytics.

Our Ongoing Commitment

In addition to our innovations to OSCAL capabilities, Easy Dynamics has developed a unique Adoption Framework to support and accelerate an organization's journey to OSCAL adoption. The framework describes a 6-step process, from identifying targets to optimizing educational and change management efforts – all of which enhance the ability to develop and maintain highly-reusable compliance artifacts. The process also leverages our valuable open-source work to speed the adoption timeline and bring non-technical team members into the shift-left compliance workflow.



The ROI of Automation

Cybersecurity risk management demands a rigorous attention to detail, considering the high volumes of data and complex processes involved. The business case for automation is clear; OSCAL can make big economic impacts, particularly at scale.

Based on our own use cases, early ROI indicators demonstrate that 20-40% efficiency can be achieved by standardizing the compliance life cycle and improving information management. When we begin to introduce automation, improved information sharing, and interoperability, the impact to efficiency and quality can be increased by as much as 60%. And when we consider the

ingestion of real-time signals, connected governance, and artificial intelligence, we find that even more significant increases in efficiency and quality are achievable.

Looking to the Future

In the rapidly-evolving landscape of compliance automation, OSCAL stands as a beacon of innovation and efficiency, addressing the persistent challenges that have plagued risk management and compliance for years. Its impact goes beyond mere automation – it signifies a major shift towards a secure-by-design culture. At Easy Dynamics, our commitment to OSCAL's evolution has already yielded valuable tools and resources for the wider community, even as our innovations for both the public and private sectors continue. With OSCAL leading the way, we step into a future where compliance isn't just a checkbox but a fully-integrated aspect of our digital endeavors, ensuring a secure and agile future for us all.

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