

Just Starting Out: LibreOffice for Beginners

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LibreOffice
The Document Foundation

What is LibreOffice?

- Free/Open Source Software office suite
- Available to download, use, and share for no cost
- Shepherded by non-profit The Document Foundation (TDF)
- Available for Windows, Mac OS X, & GNU/Linux
- Uses Open Document Format (ODF) natively
 - Supports the use of dozens of file formats



Have questions?

- Please feel free to ask questions during my talk
- Active participation helps to keep you **awake**
- If you have longer questions/comments, we may have time at the end for Q&A
- If you're interested in learning more about LibreOffice's features
 - Read our manuals: <https://wiki.documentfoundation.org/Documentation/Publications>
 - Peruse our Release Notes – they have pictures!
<https://wiki.documentfoundation.org/ReleaseNotes>



How many of you have used LibreOffice?



How many have used or heard of OpenOffice?



LibreWhat?

- Many people have not heard of LibreOffice
 - *...or of OpenOffice.org*
 - *...or of Sun (Microsystems)*
- This means that we need to work harder on brand awareness



LibreOpportunity

- On the other hand, we have an amazing opportunity to expand our userbase
- Nearly everyone has to deal with spreadsheets, word processing documents, or presentations, *even if they're not creating them*
- As a result, nearly every person I meet is a potential LibreOffice user
 - ...and a potential contributor to the LibreOffice Community



Made possible by the community

- LibreOffice exists because of our community
- People across the globe – both volunteers and employees of companies and organizations
- User contributions of time and funds
- Governments who support open formats
 - Desire to give citizens powerful, freedom-respecting software



LibreOffice Community

- Amazing group of contributors
- Teams in Design, Development, QA, Language & Localization, Website/Infrastructure, Documentation, Marketing, Outreach, and more
- Opportunity to gain or grow marketable skills
- Encourage all LibreOffice users to contribute to the project by joining one or more of our teams
 - Whatever your skillset, there's a role for you!



But who am I to talk about LibreOffice?

- Robinson Tryon
- Been very active in the LibreOffice community since 2012
- Live in Vermont, in the North-East of the US
- It's very cold there, so I wear several hats





Sorry, the other hats...

- QA Engineer for The Document Foundation
- LibreOffice Community Outreach
 - With a focus on US and Canada
- Contributor to The Document Liberation Project
- Help setup new infrastructure
- Like most people in Free Software projects, I chip in on whatever else needs to be done



LibreOffice is Free/Open Source Software (FOSS)



Have you ever used...

- LibreOffice or OpenOffice?
- A GNU/Linux system such as Ubuntu, Red Hat Linux, SuSE, Debian, or Mint?
- Firefox?
- Inkscape?
- An Android phone?



LibreOffice
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debian



... they're all FOSS

- These pieces of software are all examples of Free/Open Source Software^[1]
- There are thousands of FOSS programs that can be downloaded for free online
- Odds are, even the operating system in your phone is based on FOSS

[1] The Android OS is mostly Free/Open Source, but not 100%



So what is FOSS?

- Free/Open Source Software describes programs that respect user freedoms
- These freedoms include the ability to *run, copy, distribute, study, change, and improve* software
- For example, if I give you a copy of LibreOffice, you can
 - Use LibreOffice
 - Copy LibreOffice to another computer
 - Give a copy to a friend
 - Read the source code to understand how it operates
 - Update the source code
 - Add a new feature to LibreOffice



FOSS gives users power

- Proprietary software prevents users from being involved with or understanding software
- Providing LibreOffice as FOSS provides transparency
- Gives users ability to make changes or hire someone to work on their behalf
- Removes barriers to sharing software with others
 - Improves interoperability
- Easier to identify bugs or malicious code
 - No “black box” of compiled code



The LibreOffice Community believes in FOSS

- The Community believes in FOSS so much that we put it in our Next-Decade Manifesto
- Offer no-cost downloads of the LibreOffice suite, but Free Software is *first and foremost a matter of liberty*, not price
- Campaign for these freedoms because we believe that *everyone deserves them*^[1]

[1] For more details, see: <https://www.libreoffice.org/about-us/who-are-we/>



Software Libre

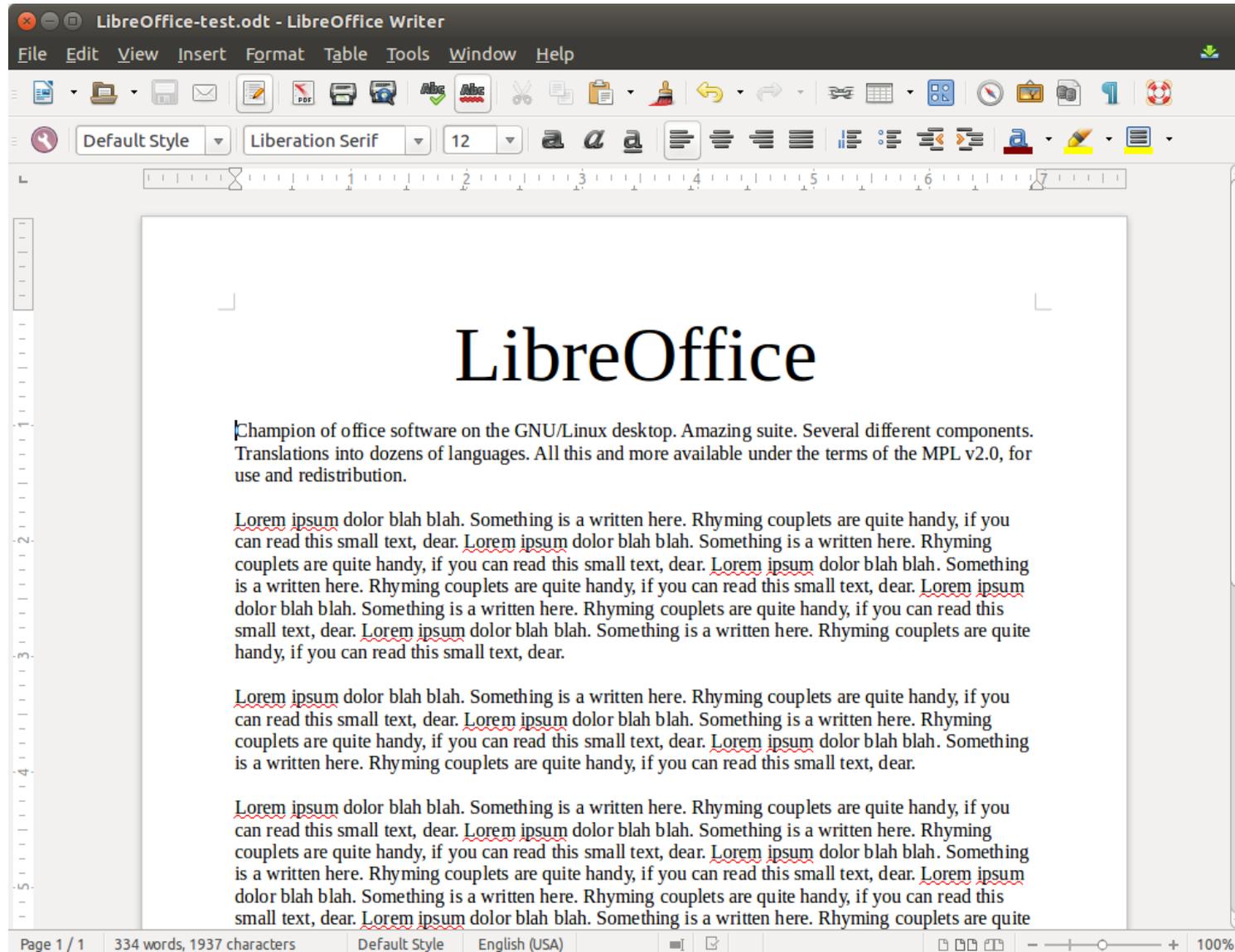
- Unfortunately “Free Software” (software with freedom) and “free software” (no-cost software), sound the same
- As a result, sometimes we use the term “*Software Libre*” to describe *Free Software*
 - e.g. *Linux Libre*, *LibrePlan*, and *LibreOffice*



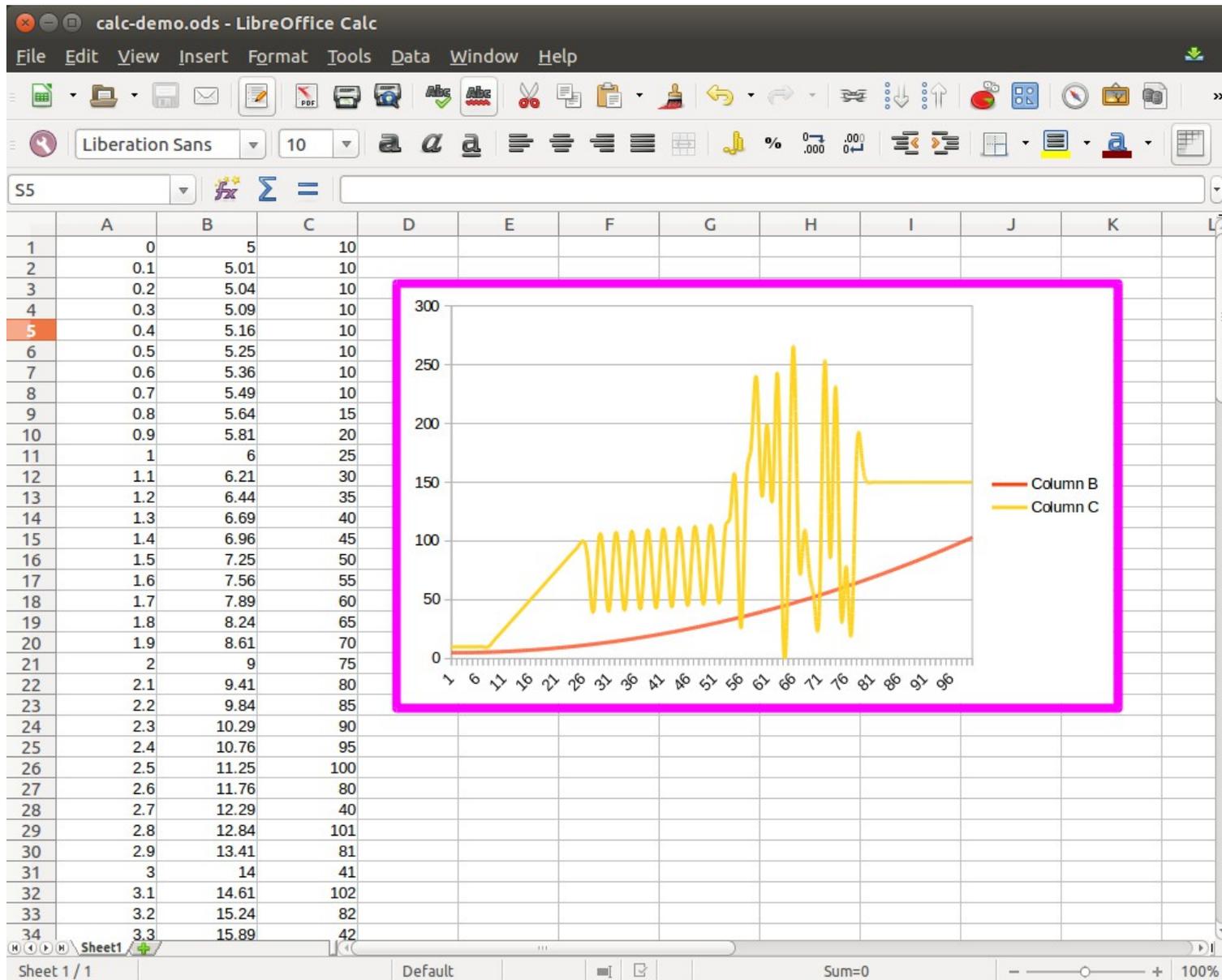
The Software



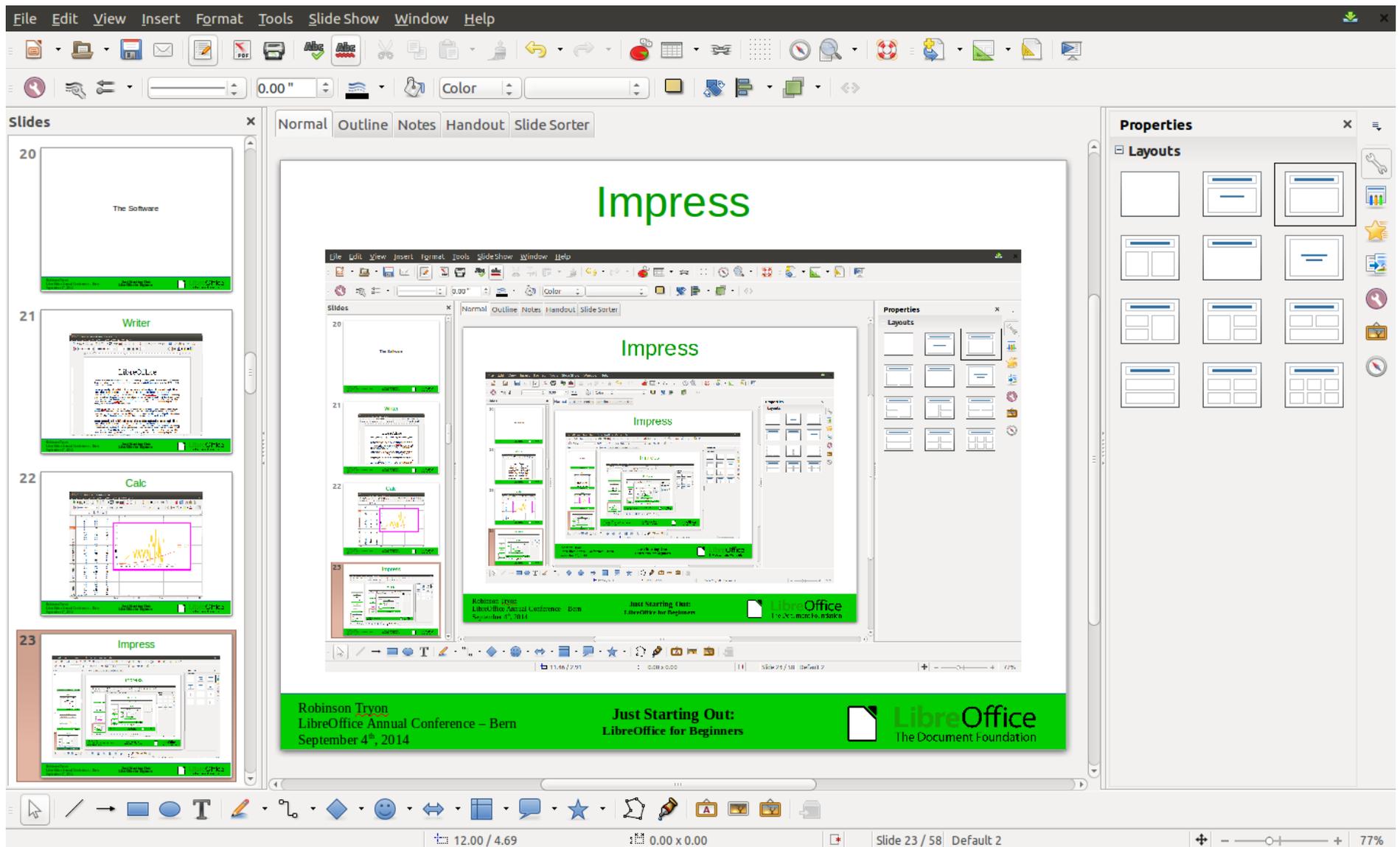
Writer



Calc



Impress



Draw, Math, Base, etc...

- Many other components in LibreOffice
- Large number of advanced and expert features
- We'll explore them in specific presentations
 - Also see several excellent [videos on YouTube](#)
- Good to build on top of basic skills with Writer, Calc, and Impress



The Document Foundation

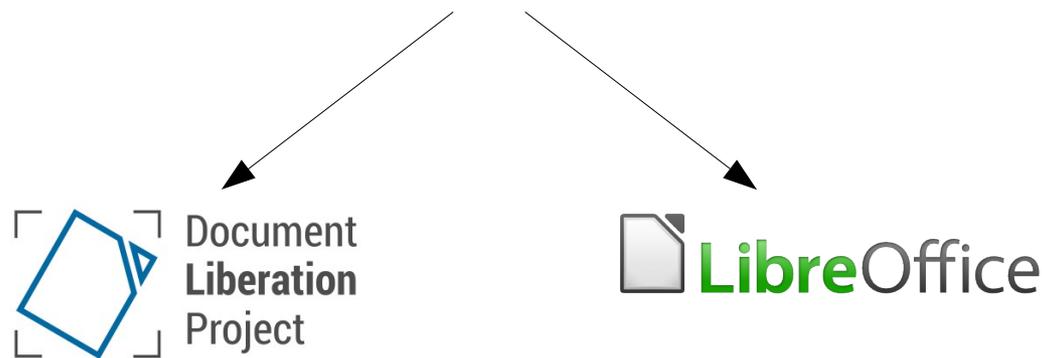


LibreOffice

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The Document Foundation

- *The Document Foundation (TDF)* is a German non-profit that supports, organizes, & deals with all of the legal & financial details for LibreOffice
- There are multiple projects organized under TDF



TDF: Document Liberation Project

- TDF's newest project is a set of libraries to read/write a large number of file formats
- Very useful for LibreOffice users who need to import old or proprietary files
- Bundling libraries together encourages reuse in other FOSS projects



TDF Membership

- Anyone actively working on LibreOffice or other TDF projects for 3+ months may apply for membership
- Membership is *not* required to volunteer
- Confers voting rights
- Comes with responsibility to stay active in the project for at least 6 months



LibreOffice is Multi-platform



Multi-Platform Support

- LibreOffice is supported on Windows, OS X, and GNU/Linux
- Also runs on various *BSD versions
- We're working on versions for Android and iOS
- Want to provide the best tool for ODF authoring and editing on as many platforms as possible



Open Document Format (ODF)



The Open Document Format (ODF)

- Set of Free/Open file formats for office applications
- Developed in an open process by multiple non-profits, commercial vendors, and the community
- Chosen by the UK, Germany, Belgium, and others as their official format for document interchange



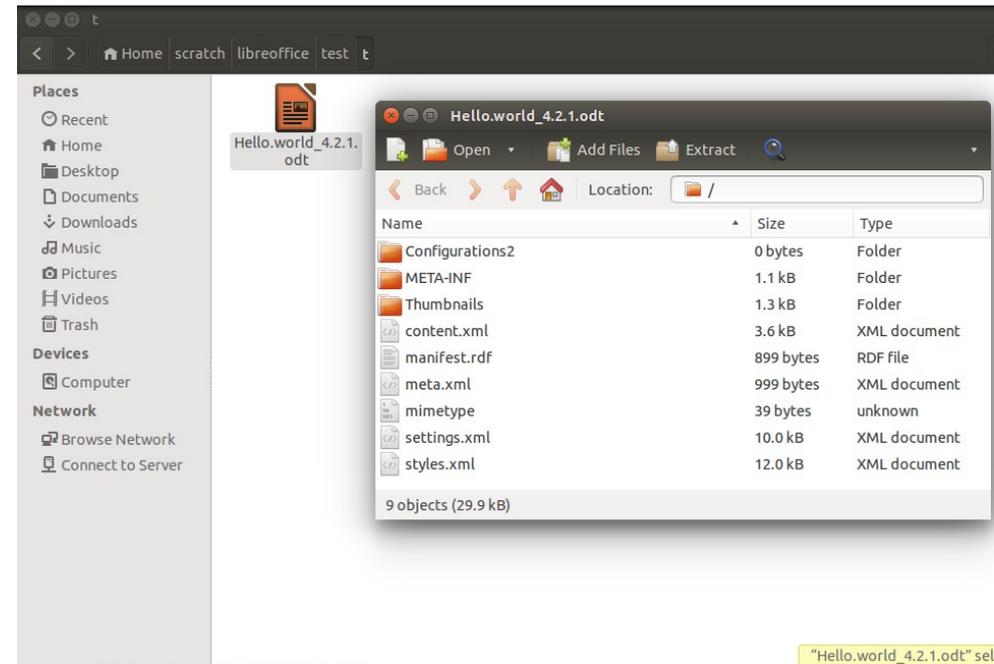
ODF: Support for data types

- ODF includes formats for
 - Word processing (ODT)
 - Spreadsheets (ODS)
 - Presentations (ODP)
 - Vector graphics (ODG)
 - Math equations (ODF)
 - Databases (ODB)
 - *...and more*



ODF: Flexible Format

- Files are actually zipped-up files/directories that include
 - Formatted text (XML)
 - Binary data, including images and/or video
- You can open a file using WinZip, 7-Zip, Archive Manager, etc.
 - Be careful when making changes
 - Using LibreOffice or another GUI tool is the best way to ensure a valid ODF file



The LibreOffice Community



LibreOffice Community

- Already touched on a few aspects of the Community...
 - Global group
 - Commitment to Free/Open Source Software
 - TDF membership



Our goals as a community

- We seek to eliminate the digital divide and empower all as full citizens, support the preservation of mother tongues, and avoid proprietary software and format lock-in. We work to attain our goals by
 - Providing unfettered access to our office productivity tools at no cost
 - Encouraging the translation, documentation, and support of our software in one's own language
 - Promoting and actively participating in the creation and development of open standards and Free Software via open and transparent peer-review processes

For more details, see: <https://www.libreoffice.org/about-us/who-are-we/>



LibreOffice Community: Teams



Community: Design Team

- Make it just work, and look great too!
- User interface (UI) design
 - Interaction design for the best utility, usability, and accessibility of LibreOffice and its website
- Graphical design
 - Visual identity elements, artwork, UI polish, etc...
- No advanced design skills necessary to volunteer



Community: Developers

- Building LibreOffice
 - Start with an EasyHack
- Fixing bugs
- Planning and adding new features
- Implementing new infrastructure, such as gerrit, tinderboxes, unit tests, etc...
- Running Hackfests to bring together new and experienced developers



Community: QA Team

- Finding bugs and reporting them
- Triaging and improving bug reports from users
- Tracking down regressions to a specific commit
 - Leverage home-grown “Bibisect” tool
- Performing manual and automated testing
- Cross-platform testing of bleeding-edge, beta, and experimental builds of LibreOffice
- Identifying and classifying problems for resolution before they affect critical numbers of users



Community: Language/Localization

- Localization of LibreOffice UI and Help files
 - Templates and extensions
- Native Language Teams produce original content for the website, documentation, and marketing in specific languages
- Testing and QA in specific languages
 - MozTrap
 - Localized Bug Submission Assistant (BSA)



Community: Website/Infrastructure

- Maintain our extensive technical infrastructure
- Propose and deploy new technology,
 - e.g. Redmine, OwnCloud, Etherpad, OpenID, & Askbot
- Submit patches & improvements to existing tools upstream
- Coordinate and lead improvement to our TDF and LibreOffice websites



Community: Documentation Team

- Provide written and multimedia documentation for all the components of LibreOffice
- Maintain the internal guides and technical tools used by the Documentation Team
- Promote competence in technical writing throughout the LibreOffice project
- Publish physical copies of LibreOffice manuals
- Create tutorials, training materials, and other instructional items that promote or enable LibreOffice education



Community: Marketing & Outreach

- Provide clear and consistent messaging for LibreOffice
- Promote LibreOffice to users and the press
- Coordinate with teachers and educators to successfully introduce LibreOffice to new groups
- Represent LibreOffice and TDF at conferences and events around the world
 - Organize and run LibreOffice events



Benefits to joining the community



Community: Gaining Experience

- Opportunity to gain marketable skills
 - Or grow/polish existing skills
- Desirable experience to list on a resume or CV
- Showcase the results of your skills publicly
- Hiring managers appreciate ability to review real-world contributions



Community: It's fun!

- We have a lot of fun in the QA Team
- Getting work done is more worthwhile when you and your colleagues have mutual respect
- Teaching others about Free/Open Source Software and LibreOffice empowers them



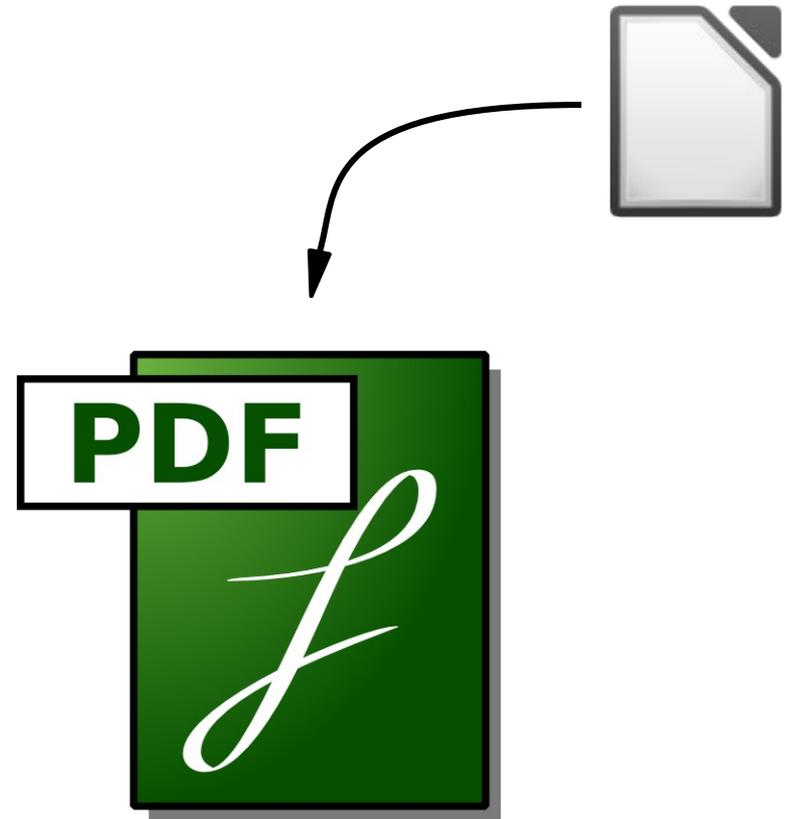
Example: Hybrid PDFs

(if we have time)



Hybrid PDF

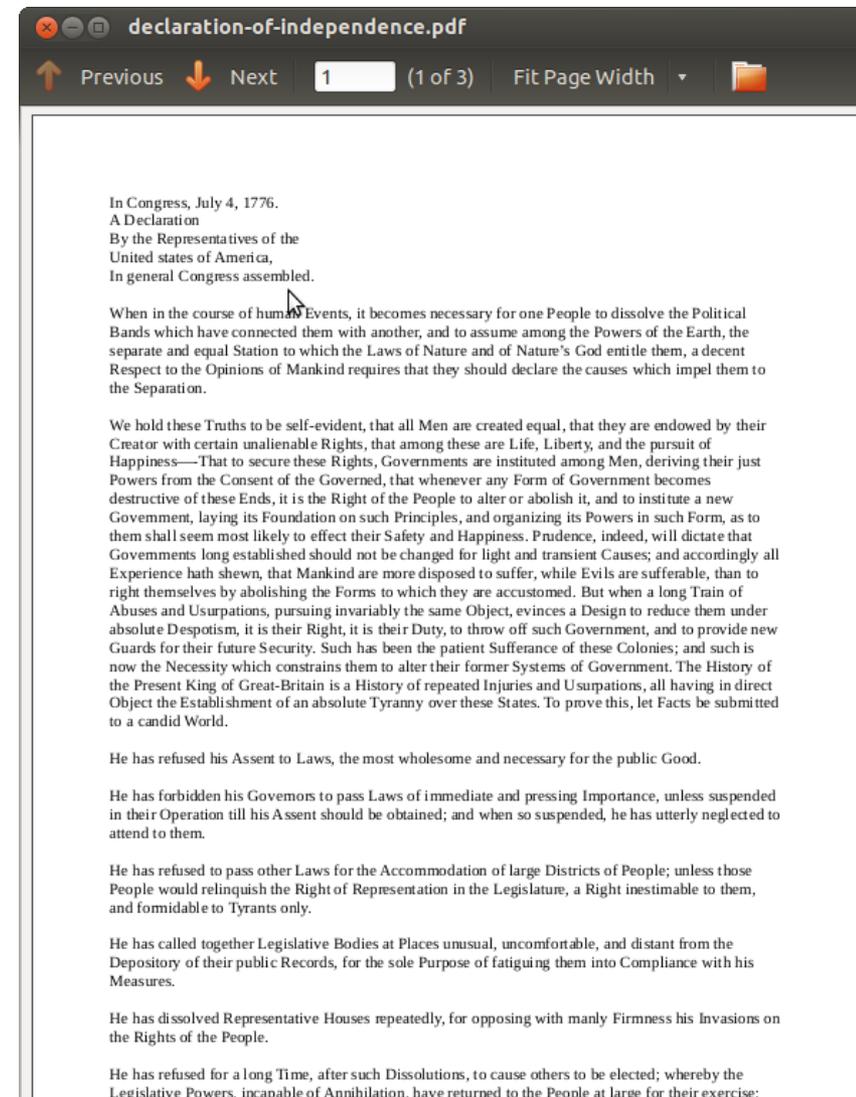
- A Hybrid PDF is a PDF that carries another document inside it
- This used to be a stand-alone extension, but we've found it so useful that we've baked the necessary bits right into LibreOffice



Hybrid PDFs for Interoperability

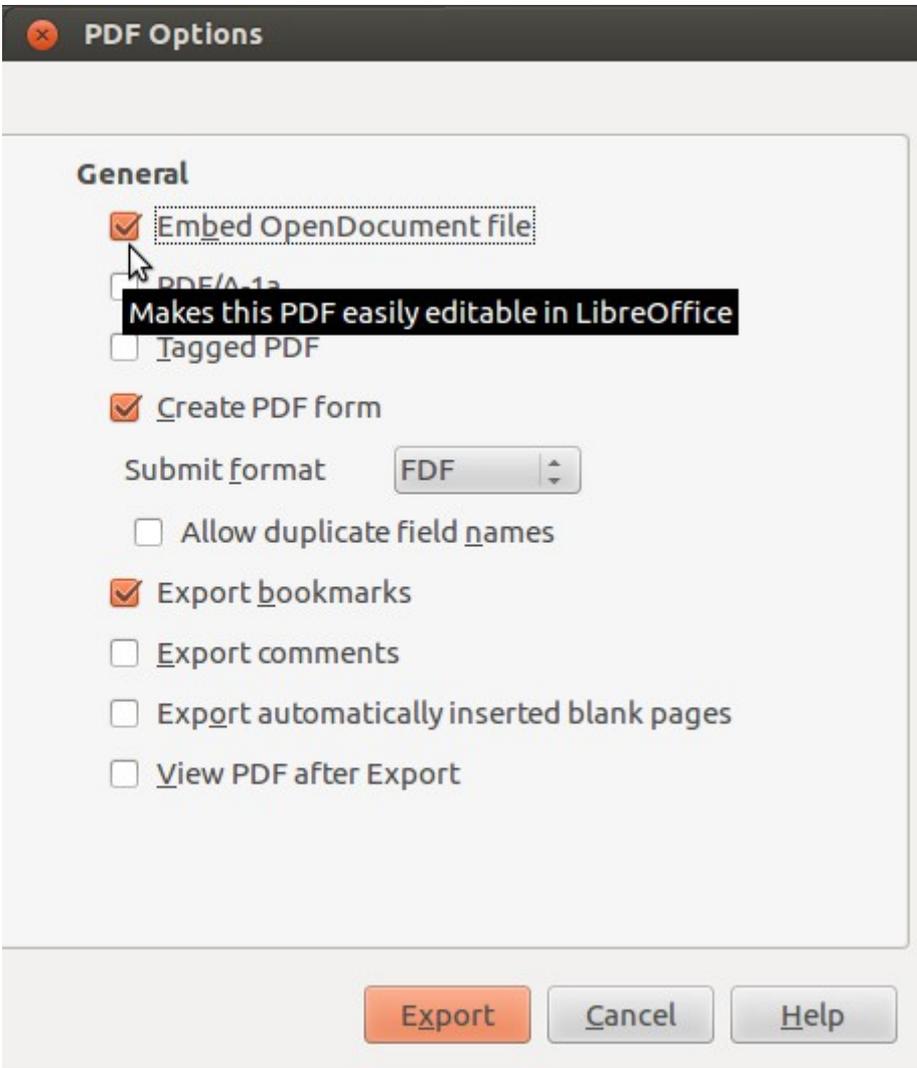
- Anyone with a PDF viewer can read the document
- Anyone with an ODF editor (*LibreOffice, Apache OpenOffice, Calligra, AbiWord, MS-Office*^[1], etc...) can edit
- You only need to distribute a single file!

[1] The latest versions of MS-Office



To create a Hybrid PDF

- *File* → *Export as PDF* → *General*
- *Embed OpenDocument File*
- Click the '*Export*' button
- Review the PDF after export



Notes

- Double Trouble: Hybrid PDFs are two separate documents, so the file is ~2x the size
- PDFs are generated to be widely readable by all readers
 - But not many people have (or know they have) ODF-compatible software available to them
- Make sure you're using modern versions of your software for maximum support



Want to contribute today?



What can I do?



- Join our Mailing lists and Teams
- Help us develop marketing materials describing the importance and benefits of using FOSS in government, schools, and elsewhere
- Talk to educators in your school district
- Help us plan hackfests/community events in your area



The End

- Any questions?

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- You fell off the end



- Noooooooooooooooooooo.....

