

OpenOffice.org Community announces The Document Foundation

The community of volunteers developing and promoting OpenOffice.org sets up an independent Foundation to drive the further growth of the project

The Internet, September 28, 2010 - The community of volunteers who develop and promote OpenOffice.org, the leading free office software, announce a major change in the project's structure. After ten years' successful growth with Sun Microsystems as founding and principle sponsor, the project launches an independent foundation called "The Document Foundation", to fulfil the promise of independence written in the original charter.

The Foundation will be the cornerstone of a new ecosystem where individuals and organisations can contribute to and benefit from the availability of a truly free office suite. It will generate increased competition and choice for the benefit of customers and drive innovation in the office suite market. From now on, the OpenOffice.org community will be known as "The Document Foundation".

Oracle, who acquired OpenOffice.org assets as a result of its acquisition of Sun Microsystems, has been invited to become a member of the new Foundation, and donate the brand the community has grown during the past ten years. Pending this decision, the brand "LibreOffice" has been chosen for the software going forward.

The Document Foundation is the result of a collective effort by leading independent members of the former OpenOffice.org community, including several project leads and key members of the Community Council. It will be led initially by a Steering Committee of developers and national language projects managers. The Foundation aims to lower the barrier of adoption for both users and developers, to make LibreOffice the most accessible office suite ever.

The Foundation will coordinate and oversee the development of LibreOffice, which is available in beta version at the placeholder site: <http://www.libreoffice.org>. Developers are invited to join the project and contribute to the code in the new friendly and open environment, to shape the future of office productivity suites alongside contributors who translate, test, document, support, and promote the software.

Speaking for the group of volunteers, Sophie Gautier - a veteran of the community and the former maintainer of the French speaking language project - has declared: "We believe that the Foundation is a key step for the evolution of the free office suite, as it liberates the development of the code and the evolution of the project from the constraints represented by the commercial interests of a single company. Free software advocates around the world have the extraordinary opportunity of joining the group of founding members today, to write a completely new chapter in the history of FLOSS".

FSF President Richard Stallman welcomed LibreOffice release and it's stated policy of only recommending free software. "I'm very pleased that the Document Foundation will

not recommend nonfree add-ons, since they are the main freedom problem of the current OpenOffice.org. I hope that the LibreOffice developers and the Oracle-employed developers of OpenOffice will be able to cooperate on development of the body of the code".

"The Document Foundation supports the Open Document Format, and is keen to work at OASIS to the next evolution of the ISO standard", says Charles Schulz, member of the Community Council and lead of the Native Language Confederation. "The Document Foundation brings to the table the point of view of developers, supporters and users, and this might accelerate the adoption process of ODF at government and enterprise level".

Chris DiBona, Open Source Programs Manager at Google, Inc., has commented: "The creation of The Document Foundation is a great step forward in encouraging further development of open source office suites. Having a level playing field for all contributors is fundamental in creating a broad and active community around an open source software project. Google is proud to be a supporter of The Document Foundation and participate in the project".

"Viva la LibreOffice", said Guy Lunardi, product management Director at Novell. "We look forward to working with the Document Foundation to help develop a solid open source document software offering. Ultimately, we envision LibreOffice do for the office productivity market what Mozilla Firefox has done for browsers".

Jan Wildeboer, EMEA Open Source Affairs at Red Hat, has commented: "All over the world, users, companies and governments are moving to innovative technology solutions based on Open Standards. Red Hat is proud to join this effort".

Mark Shuttleworth, founder and major shareholder of Canonical, the makers of Ubuntu, has declared: "Office productivity software is a critical component of the free software desktop, and the Ubuntu Project will be pleased to ship LibreOffice from The Document Foundation in future releases of Ubuntu. The Document Foundation's stewardship of LibreOffice provides Ubuntu developers an effective forum for collaboration around the code that makes Ubuntu an effective solution for the desktop in office environments".

"The Open Source Initiative has observed a trend back towards open collaborative communities for open source software", said Simon Phipps, a Director of the Open Source Initiative. "We welcome The Document Foundation initiative and look forward to the innovation it is able to drive with a truly open community gathered around a free software commons, in the spirit of the best of open source software".

"We welcome the LibreOffice project to the free software community as we believe there is a great opportunity for them to enrich the free desktop experience." says Stormy Peters, Executive Director of the GNOME Foundation. "Over the years the GNOME community has been supportive of OpenOffice together with applications in the GNOME Office suite, such as Gnumeric, GnuCash and Abiword. As LibreOffice joins the free software community, we believe that free desktop users will benefit from a rich set of choices."

Patrick Luby, Chief Engineer of NeoOffice says "I am happy to see a new, independent

LibreOffice foundation to continue creating an office suite with enhanced features, pushing OpenOffice.org in new, exciting directions". Ed Peterlin, Chief Visionary at NeoOffice says "I am excited we will be able to continue bringing excellent features from LibreOffice to the Mac platform. In the future I also hope to extend our web based collaboration tools to support LibreOffice users on all platforms".

Chris Halls, UK Managing Director of Credativ, an independent consulting and services company specialising in the development, implementation and support of open source solutions: "Welcomes the foundation as an opportunity to provide a new focus for the community contributors and allow them to move the project forward together. In our business, we support thousands of office desktops in many different environments. It is vital that the feedback and code that we can contribute as part of our day to day work can flow easily into the project".

"The creation of The Document Foundation is in line with the vision BrOffice.org - Projeto Brasil has for the Brazilian OpenOffice.org community. Our country already has a large investment in the Open Document Format and the software tools fully supporting it. BrOffice.org and The Document Foundation share the same values and objectives and we are more than happy to be part of it.", says Claudio Filho, Chairman of the BrOffice.org NGO of Brazil.

The Norwegian foundation "Åpne kontorprogram på norsk" ("Open Office Suites In Norwegian") is responsible for the Norwegian translation of OpenOffice.org, and for promoting OpenOffice.org in Norway. So far the Norwegian project has been administered and financed mainly by counties and municipalities, but recently the foundation has started a process for getting commercial companies more actively involved. We realise the need for a more substantial commercial participation to establish a long-term sustainable project. Our foundation notes that the other Nordic countries, a majority of the European countries, as well as a range of worldwide big companies like Google, Novell, Canonical and Red Hat are now cooperating with The Document Foundation. We believe this is the right way forward also for Norway. A cooperation with The Document Foundation will make it easier to create more innovative and user-friendly solutions integrated with the LibreOffice suite. Eliminating license barriers and obtaining easy access to source code and standards will facilitate further development of related and integrated surrounding products.

Additional information, including the mission, are available on the web site of The Document Foundation: <http://www.documentfoundation.org>
Biographies and pictures of the founding members of The Document Foundation are available here: <http://www.documentfoundation.org/foundation/>
There is a specific page for people interested in contributing to the development of the code: <http://www.documentfoundation.org/contribution/>

The Document Foundation has a Twitter account at <http://twitter.com/docufoundation> and an Identi.ca account at <http://identi.ca/docufoundation>

The announcements mailing list is at announce+subscribe@documentfoundation.org
The discussion mailing list is at discuss+subscribe@documentfoundation.org
The IRC channel is #documentfoundation at irc.freenode.net

The Document Foundation

The Document Foundation is an independent self-governing democratic Foundation created by leading members of the former OpenOffice.org Community. It continues to build on the Foundation of ten years' dedicated work by the OpenOffice.org community, and was created in the belief that an independent Foundation is the best fit to the Community's core values of openness, transparency, and valuing people for their contribution. It is open to any individual who agrees with our core values and contributes to our activities, and welcomes corporate participation, e.g. by sponsoring individuals to work as equals alongside other contributors in the community.

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