How to distribute your macros with an Addon

Provided By the OpenOffice.org Documentation Project

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1 Introduction

When you create macros providing a new feature to OpenOffice you activate them by menu configuration or by adding buttons on a tool bar. Inserting macros and configuring on several PC's is a boring and tricky task. There is a method to automate this, with many capabilities and taking into account the installation (stand-alone PC or network). This method is called **Addon**. It is officially available from **version 1.1** of OpenOffice (limited operation on OOo 1.0.3).

Addon installation mainly depends on an XML file describing the configuration to be installed. This file is rather complex, so chapter 2 provides you a Basic tool with which you will create this file without knowledge of its structure.

The next chapter shows how to insert the addon (or suppress it) in OpenOffice.

The remainder of the document is for the curious reader: a simplified technical explanation of the XML configuration file structure. The information provided here comes from version 1.1RC4 and from what can be inferred of the Developer's Guide chapters 4.7.3 and 4.9.1, completed by the analysis of several addons which are supposed to work.

1.1 Warning

The information and the tool included in this document were tested with OpenOffice 1.1 and on a standalone PC working under Windows XP.

Be careful and check that the created addon is working correctly. Be particularly careful for a networked installation (see chapter 3.2).

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Any ground experience which could help me improve this HowTo is welcome.

1.2 Document changes

Main changes since version dated October, 23, 2003

Document

ch 2.4 c)....added: description of titles and accelerator keys

ch 2.4 e)....added: description of buttons and buttons separators

ch 5.11 a)...modification

Tool (rev 1.1)

Buttons.....Facility to add separators

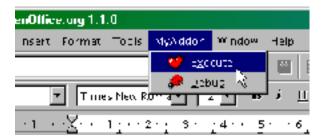
Menus......The separators are added like in the button dialog

1.3 What are the capabilities of an addon?

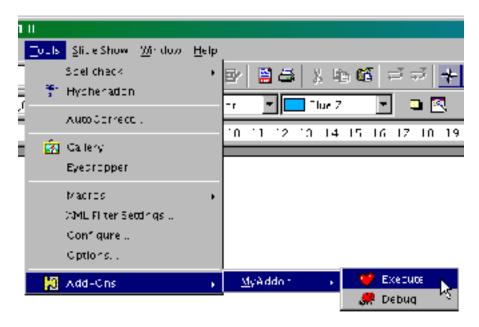
An addon achieves the integration of one or more functions into OpenOffice menus and toolbars. These functions may have been coded with various programming languages, notably OpenOffice Basic. An addon is able to:

Insert a macro library into soffice (accessible to any application)

Add a new menu item in the main menu, left of the Window item. This should only be used by really important and complex features. Take note that a sub-menu is mandatory for this item.



Add a menu item in the menu Tools > Add-ons. On default configuration *Add-ons* item is shown only if at least one addon uses this facility and then it opens a sub-menu with one menu item per addon.



At the same time an *Add-ons* icon shows up on the toolbar which opens the same sub-menu.

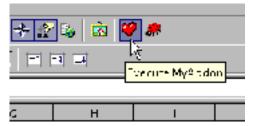


For both of these possibilities you may define cascading sub-menus with several menu items at each level.

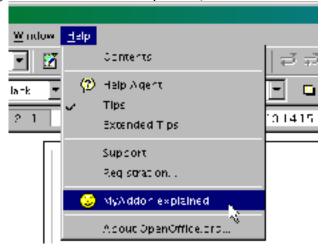
For each sub-menu item:

- you may choose it to appear only on some specific applications, e.g. only Writer and Calc;
- you may provide several titles which will be used depending on the locale language;
- you may provide an icon to be displayed; this icon may be in up to 4 variants (small or big icon, combined with normal contrast or high contrast).

You may add one or more buttons on the Function toolbar, here again with the same facilities on application context, language dependent title, associated icon.



Finally you may add a single menu item in the Help menu, with the same facilities.



Installing the addon into OpenOffice

It is possible to install an addon in a relatively simple manner on a single PC (stand-alone or part of a networked OpenOffice) or in a centralised manner on a networked OpenOffice.

The addon mechanism simplifies the updates. The installed version will be replaced by the new one when you re-execute the installation procedure.

Of course the installation tool can also suppress an addon.

2 Tool to create the XML file for an addon

The tool is a set of macros within this HowTo. Although it can be used to create various addon types, I will focus on how to integrate macros.

2.1 Preliminaries

Suppose as an example that your macros are gathered in a macro library of soffice which is named TATA. This library is on the PC with wich you have tested your macros. You find it in the directory {installation}/user/basic/TATA/

In an empty work directory (example: Work/), copy the directory containing your library. You get now a directory Work/TATA/

If you have got image files for the future menus items or buttons make a copy of these into the directory WORK/TATA/ or preferably in one or several sub-directories of it.

With the Organizer for macros delete from your PC the library TATA. You may later append again the library from your copy.

You should have made up your mind on which menu items to create and the title for each.

You should know if you will provide buttons with icons in the function Toolbar, and if you will provide icons for some menu items.

You have prepared a Checklist to make sure you won't forget anything. See in chapter 4 an example of Checklist.

2.2 Create the configuration file

Click on the button at right and answer the questions with utmost care as it is easy to make a mistake. Some trials will help you understand the tool. Chapter 2.4 offers some more explanations.

In most of the displayed panels there is a text window at top which displays a log of the actions executed so far. Use the vertical scrollbar or Ctrl-End key to see the last actions.

At the end of execution the log is displayed in a big window. Read it with care (spelling mistakes, omission, mistakes). If all is OK, click on "Addon zipping" button in the panel. If you feel bad about the result you will have to close and begin from start again, or else you have to wrestle with the manual dissection of addon.xcu file, which you can modify with a text editor. The files addon.xcu and Log.txt are stored in the work directory Work/. You are not compelled to create the zip file now.

Chapter 5 provides you with a general description of addon.xcu file structure. If you want to go further into understanding the code you will have to read chapter 4.7.3 of the Developer's Guide.

2.3 Pack the addon

If you are pleased with your addon.xcu file you have now to create the zip file which will contain the addon. To do this, click on the button "Addon zipping" in the final panel or start again the tool by clicking on the button hereunder.

Addon zipping

Following the example you will get TATA.zip in the directory Work/.

Read now the chapter: "Installing addons".

2.4 Notes on the information to be provided

a) Addon contents

You may use or not use the creation of menu items or buttons.

You may design an addon without any menu item, no button, no help: the macro library will only be installed and will be available in soffice.

You may design an addon where some buttons or menu items trigger macros belonging to an already installed library.

b) Notion of configuration tree

OpenOffice configuration data are stored in a software tree. Under a given node in the tree you will find all the necessary information for a configuration part of OpenOffice. A node is identified by its name; it is mandatory that each configuration domain have an <u>own name</u> so as to avoid a conflict with any other already existing configuration. In particular you have to abide by this rule for each addon.

A recommended way of insuring a unique name is to use a "qualified name" structure formed by terms separated by a dot, example:

```
org.openoffice.Office.addon.BernardMarcelly.function1
```

By choosing this, I hope I am the only one to use the branch BernardMarcelly. If I provide later another addon I may re-use my node BernardMarcelly and add another branch named:

```
org.openoffice.Office.addon.BernardMarcelly.anotherfunction
```

Notes

The name of the node remains internal to OpenOffice, it does not appear to the user of the addon.

It is advisable to only use non-accentuated letters (i.e. do not use national characters), digits, dot, and not use spaces.

c) Titles

The texts of menu items may have accelerator keys (the character appears underlined). In order to choose the character, put a \sim just before it.

You may define title texts for various languages but if your macros display texts you will have to handle the translation in your code.

d) Sub-menus

When in a menu item you want to open a secondary level (a sub-menu), choose in the URL panel the option "URL opening a sub-menu".

You cannot display an icon in a menu item which opens a sub-menu.

If you add an item in the Main menu you will have to open a sub-menu.

You may open up to 4 successive levels of sub-menus, but you should try to be more straightforward.

e) Buttons

A button separator is automatically added before the first button of the addon. You may also add a separator between the buttons of the addon.

f) URL

You may trigger an already installed macro, not solely one of the addon macros.

With the dispatch command you may execute other commands.

The "display mode" seems not to change anything. You may leave it as it is.

g) Icons

Use of icons by OpenOffice

When you assign an image to a menu item or a button, OpenOffice remembers the corresponding URL. When you re-use the same URL for another button or another menu item the same image is automatically assigned to it.

This behaviour is quite logical as only the URL carries out the action, not the button nor a menu item. Usually you will have a menu item leading to an URL and a button leading to the same URL because you provide two means of carrying out an action; you will indicate the image only once.

On the opposite if you do want two different images for two menu items leading to the same macro make sure not to indicate the same URL: either by calling a dummy macro which only calls the main macro, or by calling the same macro but from two different modules! (in Basic, macros from a module are accessible from any other module of the same library).

Structure

The icons you may display on a menu item or button are "Windows bitmap" images with a **bmp** extension. *Please note*: these are not .ico files!

OpenOffice manages 4 image variants:

- 1. small icons of 16x16 pixels,
- 2. big icons of 26x26 pixels,
- 3. small icons of 16x16 pixels with high contrast,
- 4. big icons of 26x26 pixels with high contrast.

According to official documentation, when there is no high contrast image OpenOffice uses a normal contrast image (not verified).

For OpenOffice to display a 16x16 pixels image you have to provide an image and say that it is indeed 16x16. In the same way, for OpenOffice to display a 26x26 pixels image (used with option: big icons) you have to provide another image and say that it is indeed 26x26. If the image you provided does not have the indicated size it will be re-dimensioned for the display. But the result will be worse than an image especially drawn for the format.

The color RGB(255, 0, 255) stands for a transparent pixel: the background color will be displayed instead.

There are several ways to create an addon with an icon on a menu item or on a button. The tool can handle images of type 1 or of type 2.

Image of type 1

These images must be present in the addon directory or in a sub-directory.

Their filename have the same base followed by a suffix indicating the image variant.

Size in pixels	Contrast	Suffix	Example of image file
16x16	normal	_16.bmp	iconExecute_16.bmp
16x16	high	_16h.bmp	iconExecute_16h.bmp
26x26	normal	_26.bmp	iconExecute_26.bmp
26x26	high	_26h.bmp	iconExecute_26h.bmp

You only have to indicate one of these images and OpenOffice will retrieve the other variants in the same directory. Images of type 1 are preferable because simpler to handle.

Image of type 2

These images may have any kind of name. You may provide them:

- i. either as a file in the addon directory or a sub-directory,
- ii. or in a binary form coded in hexadecimal in addon.xcu file; in this case the original file may be stored anywhere because it will not be provided with the addon.

Unlike images of type 1 you have to indicate a file for each variant. You may mix images i) and images ii).

The file addon.xcu is more complex with images of type 2. It becomes quite big if numerous images of type 2 ii) are defined.

3 Installing addons

OpenOffice may be installed:

- 1. on one specific PC
- 2. on a network with a core on a server and a light client on every PC. In this case you may install an addon
 - a) for selected users,
 - b) or for all users of OpenOffice.

3.1 Installation directories

The command-line tool: **pkgchk** is used to install addons. It may install:

- 1. either a specific addon indicated in the command line
- 2. or all addons it finds in the default directory. There are two default directories:
 - a) For addons specific to a user the default directory is
 {installation}/user/uno_packages
 this translates to, for a Windows XP installation
 C:\Program Files\OpenOffice.org1.1\user\uno packages
 - b) For network-wide addons the default directory is {installation}/share/uno packages

The **pkgchk** tool is in the directory:

3.2 Running pkgchk

You have to work at command line to run **pkgchk**. It is advisable to prepare a batch file (MS-Windows) or a shell script (Unix).

The current directory must be {installation}/program

It is mandatory to stop all execution of OpenOffice before running pkgchk. You must also stop the QuickStarter of OpenOffice (MS-Windows version). In the network every OpenOffice must be stopped. Without these precautions the OpenOffice installation may be damaged. Pkgchk tests if OpenOffice runs locally, but it cannot detect this on a network installation.

a) Installing addons for one user

Put the addon(s) into {installation}/user/uno packages

Run this very simple command:

pkgchk

Or else if you want to display a report during execution, add the option -v:

pkachk -v

b) Installing one specific addon for one user

Put the addon zip file in a directory. As an argument for the command give the path to the addon file. Example for MS-Windows:

```
pkgchk C:\tests\MyOwnAddon.zip
```

Still for Windows, if there are spaces in the path name or file name you must enclose the path with double quotes like this:

```
pkgchk "C:\My Documents\MyOwnAddon.zip"
```

c) Installing addons for the network

Put the addon(s) into {installation}/share/uno packages

Run the command:

```
pkgchk --shared
```

d) Installing one specific addon for the network

Put the addon zip file in a directory. As an argument for the command give the path to the addon file. Example for MS-Windows:

```
pkgchk --shared C:\tests\MyOwnAddon.zip
```

e) Deleting an addon

Suppress this addon from the <u>default directory</u>. Note that if you installed the addon with method b) or d) you will also find it in the default directory.

Run command a) or c)

Explanation: **pkgchk** will update all addons depending on the contents of the default directory. Those which exist no more will be suppressed.

3.3 Batch file example

Here is a simple batch working for Windows XP which installs a specific addon only on the PC running the batch. The sequence <code>copy ... packages\"</code> must be on one line.

```
@echo off
echo WARNING : stop completely OpenOffice, including the QuickStarter !! **
echo hit a key when it is done
pause
copy C:\Work\TestAddon.zip "C:\Program Files\OpenOffice.org1.1.0\user\
uno_packages\"
pause
c:
cd "c:\Program Files"
cd "OpenOffice.org1.1.0\Program"
pkgchk -v
pause
```

4 Checklist before creating the addon

For a complex addon it is strongly advised to put on paper the answers before running the creation macro.

Choose a "unique name" which will be specific to your addon. The name must never be identical to the name of another addon, written by you or someone else.

Review each of the basic features:

- 1. item in the Main menu, sub-menus
- 2. item in the Tools menu, sub-menus
- 3. button(s) in the Function Toolbar
- 4. item in the Help menu

Make up your mind on the titles for the menu items, name of the macro, associated image.

If your addon should appear only for some contexts, choose which context(s) for each menu item and each button.

For each title you may prepare translation in various languages.

For each associated image you have to choose wether it will be provided as a file in the addon and decide the filename, or integrated in the xml file; each associated image may be provided with several variants, this has to be prepared.

After a run of the tool, if you made a mistake print the log file and note what must be different. This paper will serve as a checklist for your next run.

5 The XML file addon.xcu

The addon.xcu file is a text file in XML syntax which describes how to integrate the addon to OpenOffice. For more information on XML you may read the book: Learning XML published by O'Reilly & Associates.

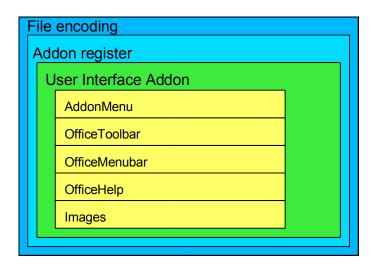
This chapter's goal is to help you read and possibly modify this file.

The file makes use of tags which have a meaning and a syntax for their use.

The file is structured in "Russian dolls". Describing it implies presenting cascading concepts.

Each of the listed elements is composed of an opening tag, a contents and a closing tag, in the same way as in HTML documents for example.

5.1 Fixed layers



The three first layers are fixed texts as regards addon description.

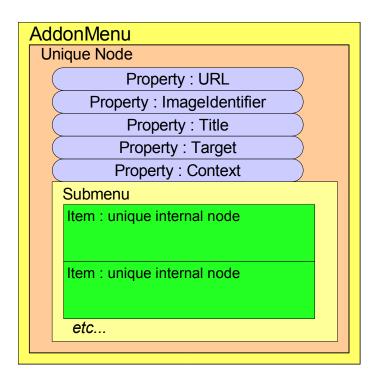
Layer "User Interface Addon" contains one or more components. The sketch shows the 5 possible components. The component order is not important, each may appear only once. We are going to study each component. But before this, some words on the principle for storage of configurations in OpenOffice.

OpenOffice configuration data are stored in a software tree. Under a given node in the tree you will find all the necessary information for a configuration part of OpenOffice. A node is identified by its name; it is mandatory that each configuration domain have an <u>own name</u> so as to avoid a conflict with any other already existing configuration. In particular you have to abide by this rule for each addon.

The same qualified name may be used to name different component of the addon as each component (OfficeMenubar, OfficeToolbar, etc) is itself a top node. As a particular case the Images component is made of as many sub-components as images to insert. These sub-components will be distinguished by adding a qualifier, for example :

org.openoffice.Office.addon.BernardMarcelly.fonction1.img02

5.2 AddonMenu (item in Tools menu)



AddonMenu defines a menu item in Tools > Addons. It is composed of an envelope used to name this configuration un-ambiguously in the <u>configuration tree</u> of OpenOffice. This envelope contains several properties, described later on, the order of which is of no importance.

Submenu is a composite element which may or may not exist. It is used to define a deeper level in the menu. Its structure is described in the next chapter.

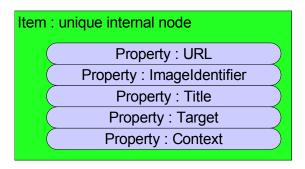
Note that if Submenu exists the property URL may be omitted or have any contents because no macro will be triggered. The property ImageIdentifier may also be omitted because it will be ignored and no image will be displayed.

5.3 Submenu

A Submenu defines sub-menu items. It is composed of one or more items.

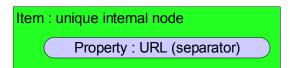
Each item is composed of an envelope used to name this configuration un-ambiguously in the Submenu. The tool decides of the unique name of the node. The contents of an item has three variants.

a) Sub-menu item

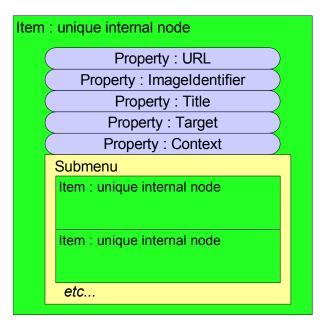


This is the most common case. The order of the properties is of no importance.

b) Separator between two sub-menu items



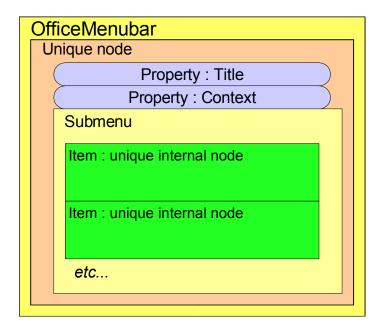
c) Opening a secondary sub-menu



You recognize the structure of the previous chapter: this is a recursive definition. The tool has a limit of 4 levels which should be largely sufficient.

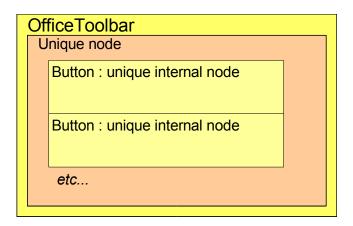
5.4 OfficeMenubar (item in the main Menu)

OfficeMenuBar defines a menu item at the highest level, at left of the Window item. It is composed of an envelope used to name this configuration un-ambiguously in the <u>configuration tree</u> of OpenOffice. This envelope contains two properties, described later on, and a composite element called Submenu, <u>previously described</u>. The order of the properties is of no importance. Note that for OfficeMenubar the Submenu is mandatory as it is the only way to run a macro.

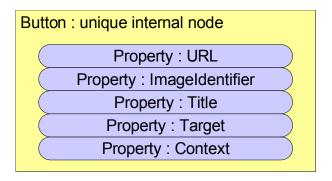


5.5 OfficeToolbar (button in the Tool bar)

OfficeToolbar defines one or more buttons in the Function Toolbar (this is the toolbar with buttons : Open file, Save Document).



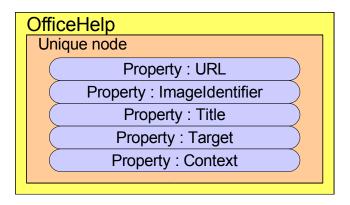
It is composed of an envelope used to name this configuration un-ambiguously in the <u>configuration tree</u> of OpenOffice. In this envelope you find one or more button descriptors. Each descriptor is composed of an envelope used to name this button un-ambiguously in the superior node. The tool decides of the unique name of the node.



In each button envelope you find several properties. The order of the properties is of no importance.

5.6 OfficeHelp (item in the Help menu)

OfficeHelp defines a help item which will be inserted in the Help menu, after the item "Registration...". It is composed of an envelope used to name this configuration un-ambiguously in the <u>configuration tree</u> of OpenOffice.

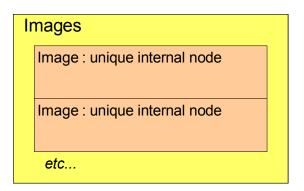


In this envelope you find several properties. The order of the properties is of no importance.

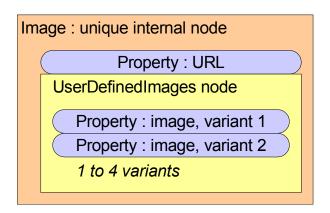
5.7 Images

Images defines one or more images of type 2 (in our case these are icons) by listing their binary contents. The component Images does not exist if all images are of type 1 or if there is no image.

The Images envelope is fixed and contains one or more image descriptors. Each descriptor is composed of an envelope used to name this image un-ambiguously in the <u>configuration tree</u> of OpenOffice. The tool decides of the unique name of the node.



Each image node contains a property URL and an internal node used as a container for several variants of the same image. There may be up to 4 variants.



These properties are specific to images, they are explained later on.

5.8 General structure of a property

A property begins with a tag

The opening tag contains the property name. It indicates also that the property value is of the type "String".

Between the two tags lays the property value. It may appear in several aspects:

<value/>

means: no value

<value>blabla blabla etc</value>

the string between the two "value" is coded in Unicode UTF-8 so that accentuated or national characters are converted into couples of characters;

the characters quote, double quote, commercial and, lower, greater, are transcribed into their predefined character entity, for example : < becomes <

Other ways of describing the value are used depending on the properties.

5.9 URL property

Usually an URL is used to run a macro when a menu item or a Fonction Toolbar button is activated. The value for URL is written like this:

```
<value>macro:///MyLib.Module1.Function1</value>
```

In the example above the macro to be run is Function1 and is stored in module Module1 of the library MyLib.

You declare a menu separator or a button separator with the conventional value:

<value>private:separator</value>

5.10 Title property

This is a text visible in the user interface, e.g. the text of a menu item.

You may specify the language locale for which this text applies. Example:

```
<value>erase</value>
<value xml:lang="en-UK">rub out</value>
<value xml:lang="fr">gommer</value>
```

The first line applies if the current language locale is not one of the provided languages.

The second line applies to United Kingdom english.

The third line applies to french independently of the country (France, Canada, Belgium, Switzerland...)

Here are some usual combinations of language-Country:

language-COUNTRY	Idiom
en-US	United States english

language-COUNTRY	Idiom
en-GB	British english
fr-FR	french from France
de-DE	German from Germany
it-IT	Italian
es-ES	Spanish (Castillan)
pt-PT	Portuguese from Portugal
nl-NL	Dutch
da-DK	Danish
sv-SE	Swedish
hu-HU	Hungarian

The language codes with 2 characters are normalized (ISO 639), you will find a list on various web sites like this english list.

Country codes with 2 characters are normalized (ISO 3166), you will find a list on various web sites like this <u>english list</u>.

5.11 ImageIdentifier property

The value for ImageIdentifier is the URL address of an image which will be associated with the component.

The image may be an internal resource of OpenOffice or a file provided with the addon.

a) Internal OpenOffice image

This image type is not supported by the macro tool in the current document.

The value for ImageIdentifier is written like this:

<value>private:image/1</value>

The /1 specifies that internal image number 1 is to be used.

I could not make this work.

b) Image provided with the addon

The value for ImageIdentifier is written like this:

<value>%origin%/TATA/titi/iconExecute</value>

In this example the main directory of the addon is $\mathtt{TATA}/$, and the image file(s) is (are) stored in subdirectory $/\mathtt{titi}/$

The name <code>%origin%</code> stands for the path to the directory <code>TATA/</code>

Why several images? Because of image variants...

c) Image variants

OpenOffice handles 4 image types. Only the common left part of the image filenames is specified in the URL. The complete filename for each type is obtained from the supplied name by adding a suffix.

Size in pixels	Contrast	Suffix	Image file example
16x16	normal	_16.bmp	<pre>iconExecute_16.bmp</pre>
16x16	high	_16h.bmp	iconExecute_16h.bmp
26x26	normal	_26.bmp	iconExecute_26.bmp
26x26	high	_26h.bmp	iconExecute_26h.bmp

As a consequence of this rule, image filenames must use an allowed suffix, in particular a ".bmp" extension.

5.12 Target property

The value for Target is one of the four following keywords:

```
_top _parent _self _blank
```

The sole use I have seen is self:

<value> self</value>

5.13 Context property

Context specifies that the component shall be available in only one or several OpenOffice applications. An empty value means that the component is available in all applications.

Application	Nom de service
Writer	com.sun.star.text.TextDocument
Calc	com.sun.star.sheet.SpreadsheetDocument
Impress	com.sun.star.presentation.PresentationDocument
Draw	com.sun.star.drawing.DrawingDocument
Formula	com.sun.star.formula.FormulaProperties
Diagram (Chart)	com.sun.star.chart.ChartDocument
Bibliography Database	com.sun.star.frame.Bibliography

Example 1

<value>com.sun.star.drawing.DrawingDocument</value>

Example 2

Here the component is available in two applications:

<value>com.sun.star.drawing.DrawingDocument,com.sun.star.presentation.PresentationD
ocument

Example 3

Here the component is available in any application:

<value/>

5.14 Property values specific to Images

The Images component is used to specify the images which were not specified with the property ImageIdentifier as described above.

The Images component uses specific values for its properties.

a) URL property in an image node

The value for URL is exactly the same string as the one used for the URL of the component which needs it. For example an AddonMenu component triggers a macro on a menu item; the URL of the image node will re-use the same macro-calling sequence.

When encountering a component with an empty ImageIdentifier, OpenOffice will scan each Image node searching an identical URL. If it finds one this image will be associated to the menu item.

b) Image properties

There are 8 variants of this property because OpenOffice can handle 4 image variants, either integrated within the XML file or specified as an image file provided with the addon.

Size in pixels	Contrast	Property name	
		integrated image	provided image
16x16	normal	ImageSmall	ImageSmallURL
16x16	high	ImageSmallHC	ImageSmallHCURL
26x26	normal	ImageBig	ImageBigURL
26x26	high	ImageBigHC	ImageBigHCURL

Value for an image integrated in the XML file

The parameter value is the (uncompressed) binary value of the image, written in hexadecimal text, e.g. for a 16x16 image :

Note that for the same number of pixels two bmp image contents are of different size if the images are

coded with different color depths (16 colors, 16 millions colors, etc).

Value for an image provided in the addon

The value is written like this:

<value>%origin%/TATA/titi/iconExecute.bmp</value>

In this example your files *.xlb *.xdl et *.xba are grouped in a directory, e.g. \mathtt{TATA} , and the image file is stored in sub-directory $/\mathtt{titi}$ /

The name <code>%origin%</code> stands for the path to the directory <code>TATA/</code>

6 Credits

Author: Bernard Marcelly

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Integrated by:

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Contacts: OpenOffice.org Documentation project http://fr.openoffice.org

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7 Licences

7.1 Documentation

Appendix

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7.2 Macro libraries

General information on LGPL is available on this Web site.

The standard library included in this document is a tool which produces files for an OpenOffice.org Add-on. Copyright (C) 2003 Bernard Marcelly

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