



How to participate in OpenOffice.org

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Topics

What OpenOffice.org is

How the project works

Participating

What OpenOffice.org is

- A huge open-source project (LGPL), with hundreds of developers, thousands of contributors
- An immensely popular binary, used by tens of millions (over 50M downloads) throughout the world
- A massive code base, with around 10 M lines of code mostly in C++
- The de facto reference implementation and salient representative of the OpenDocument Format (ODF)
- The center and source and engine of a growing ecosystem of ancillary applications, extensions—and the companies that make them

What OpenOffice.org is

And yours, if you participate

How it works: some basic facts

- License since 2.0 is LGPL and copyright is held by Sun Microsystems, Inc.
- All code contributors jointly assign copyright to themselves and Sun
- Sun wrote the original code (StarOffice) and has historically contributed most of the core component code; OpenOffice.org was established in 2000
- Other key corporate contributors include IBM, RedFlag, Intel, Novell, Red Hat
- Non-corporate members include thousands from all sectors, all countries, all languages
- Individuals donate cash; this provides us with some funds

How the project operates: organization

- Work is done per semi-autonomous project; any one can join a project
- Work is coordinated by that project's lead
- Overall coordination, eg., releases, depends on the matter:
 - Releases and coding issues: Sun (historically, as largest contributor)
 - Marketing, art, localization, etc.: As the community does it
- Processes are open and transparent
- Coding issues and procedures are resolved by the Engineering Steering Committee (ESC), an appointed body
- Non-coding policy and community direction is defined by the Community Council, an elected, representative body

Individual projects

- A "Project" implies particular effort and any member can act to start or join one
- All projects use collaboration tools:
 - Mail lists
 - Issue tracker
 - VCS (currently, CVS)
- Most projects complement this with:
 - IRC
 - Wikis
 - IM, etc.

Kinds of projects

➤ Technical

- Patches, large or small
- Extensions
- APIs
- QA , release management
- Localization
- Writing aids
- Developer documentation, instruction

➤ Non-Technical

- Documentation, dictionary translations, etc.
- Support
- Marketing, art
- Regional groups—for users, coders, partygoers

Participation - basics

- Anyone can participate and contribute but not all contributions will be accepted
- You need to start small and earn trust
- Find out how trust is earned—what criteria, what processes
 - In general, discussions take place via email
- Keep in mind you are dealing with busy people who may have deficient social skills (they are geeks): be patient

Some dos and don'ts

- Read over what has been said and done on email lists, wikis, archives, to-dos, etc.
- Ask precise questions
 - Yes: I do not understand the wiki build instructions; there is a conflict on line nn...?
 - Not: How do I build the application?
- Be courteous and suggest how you can help
 - Yes: I can do X, or Here is a draft
 - Not: What can I do? Tell me what to do....

Mentors

- It helps to work with mentors and...
- OpenOffice.org has mentors in the larger projects
 - Mentors are those who've elected to help you out—with the project, with the code, with the processes
 - Mentors may be specific to a project or not
 - You can become a mentor once you have mastered the basics and wish to help others
 -

About collaboration....

Collaboration does not mean you must always work in a team.

It does not mean you must be friends with others in the community.

Rather...

Effective collaboration means that what you do is done so that others may continue what you have done.

You can work in isolation.

You can be in a silo.

But what you do takes part in something great and vast.

Technical participation

- Can you build OpenOffice.org?
- Do you want to add an extension?
 - OpenOffice.org works like Firefox; creating extensions is (relatively) easy: links and how to go about it
- Do you want to work on existing efforts (recommended!)
- Do you want to add a new feature?
 - New features are spec'd and publicized via mail list
 - Our spec process uses a template. You fill it out and send it to dev@specs.openoffice.org
- Do you want to work on the ODF? Or XML?
- Do you want to port or localize OpenOffice.org?
- Do you want to do something altogether new?
- See http://wiki.services.openoffice.org/wiki/Main_Page

Non-technical projects

- OpenOffice.org has many non-technical projects. Some are:
 - Marketing
 - Art, Documentation (enduser, in particular), Website, and
 - The Native Language Confederation of projects
- Marketing: Created in 2002, it coordinates OpenOffice.org's marketing
 - Periodic press releases, brochures, adoption, participation, and the public view of the project
 - How to participate: Go to <http://marketing.openoffice.org> and <http://wiki.services.openoffice.org/wiki/Marketing>
- Art: If you can do art, do it here: <http://marketing.openoffice.org/art/>
- Documentation: Vast amount of enduser and increasingly developer documentation in many languages; see <http://documentation.openoffice.org>
- Support: The NLC helps coordinate community support

Summary

- Start small
- Learn about the project, its requirements, rules, and its people:
 - Subscribe to mail lists, review archives
 - Introduce yourself, ask precise questions
- Consider the extension: easier to do, excellent introduction to coding OpenOffice.org. See:
 - <http://extensions.services.openoffice.org> and
 - http://wiki.services.openoffice.org/wiki/Extensions_development
- Ask me if in doubt: louis@openoffice.org

Links (mostly technical)

- Wiki main page:
 - http://wiki.services.openoffice.org/wiki/Main_Page
- Firefox extension:
 - http://wiki.services.openoffice.org/wiki/Firefox_OpenOffice.org_extension
- Extensions:
 - <http://extensions.services.openoffice.org>
 - http://wiki.services.openoffice.org/wiki/Extensions_development
- Getting the source:
 - http://wiki.services.openoffice.org/wiki/Getting_It
- Building it:
 - <http://wiki.services.openoffice.org/wiki/Building>
- Tips:
 - <http://wiki.services.openoffice.org/wiki/Tips>
- Hacker tutorials:
 - <http://wiki.services.openoffice.org/wiki/Tutorials>

Links (cont'd.)

- Commit rights (how this works...):
 - http://wiki.services.openoffice.org/wiki/Commit_Rights
- Contributing patches:
 - http://wiki.services.openoffice.org/wiki/Contributing_Patches
- Architecture:
 - <http://wiki.services.openoffice.org/wiki/Architecture>
- UNO
 - <http://wiki.services.openoffice.org/wiki/Uno>
- Directories:
 - http://wiki.services.openoffice.org/wiki/Source_code_directories
- Meeting the team on IRC:
 - http://wiki.services.openoffice.org/wiki/IRC_Communication

Contact information

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