5

THE OPENOFFICE SUITE

This chapter gets you up and running with OpenOffice so you can perform standard tasks such as building a spreadsheet, making a chart, or writing and formatting a document. This and the following chapter introduce you to tools well suited for the office. While there are certainly more office applications available for Linux, we cover only those sufficiently advanced in development to give you confidence of use.

A vast array of office applications, both commercial and free, is available for Linux. A group of applications presented in a similar fashion that comes bundled together is often called a *suite.* The office suites that come with a price tag include Anyware Desktop, previously known as Applixware Office (http://www.vistasource.com); Corel's WordPerfect (http://www.wordperfect.com); and Sun Microsystems' StarOffice (http://www.sun.com/software/star/staroffice/).

We feature some of those without a price tag in this and the following chapter: OpenOffice, KOffice, KWrite, and AbiWord. StarOffice version 5.2 was formerly a free offering. With the release of version 6.0, Sun has begun charging a moderate price for StarOffice (both versions) but has continued to offer OpenOffice (http://www.openoffice.org) at no cost. It is included on many Linux distributions, including SuSE. Keep in mind that a free product in the Linux world does not translate into an inferior product. In fact, at SSC we have used Sun's StarOffice as our default office suite for many years and are now beginning to use OpenOffice.

Most of the differences between OpenOffice and StarOffice can be accounted for by the fact that StarOffice contains elements that Sun pays to license, and therefore these elements are not included in OpenOffice. These include certain fonts (such as Asian language fonts), database support, templates, and certain clip art images. StarOffice also offers manuals and support, while OpenOffice does not. OpenOffice does, however, boast a rather comprehensive list of topics on the Help menu.
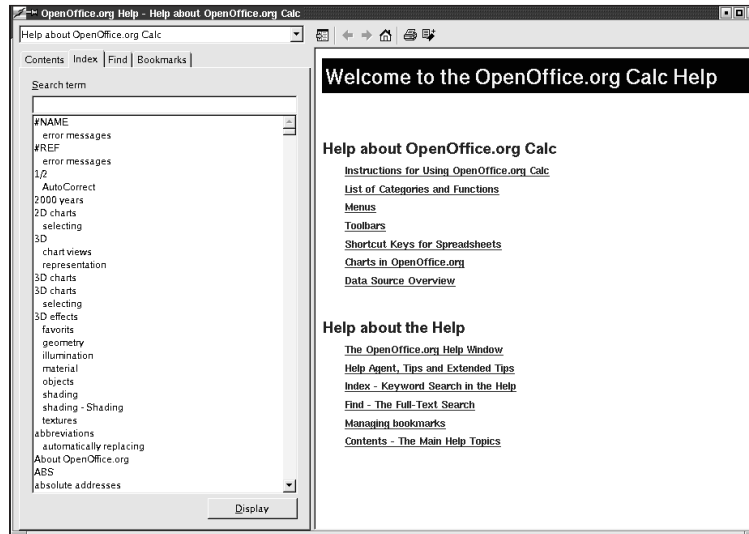

Figure 5.1: OpenOffice Help

Those who rely on document templates will miss them in OpenOffice. This is a feature that will probably be added to future versions, but if you can't do without it, we recommend purchasing StarOffice, as it comes with a large variety of document templates.

Introduction to OpenOffice

OpenOffice is a feature-rich office productivity suite distributed and maintained by Sun Microsystems. Comparable to Microsoft Office, OpenOffice includes a word processor, a spreadsheet application, presentation software, and graphic program applications. OpenOffice is incredibly powerful—many believe that not only is it as good as MS Office, but also better in many ways. OpenOffice is available for other platforms as well, including Solaris and Microsoft Windows, and runs equally well on all of them.

OpenOffice offers the ability to import many different types of documents and templates from a variety of other programs, including Microsoft Word. It can also export to a wide range of formats, including HTML, PDF, and MS Office XP.

OpenOffice may be included on your distribution already. If it is not, simply visit http://www.openoffice.org. There you can download the latest version for free. This site also contains a list of distributors who sell CD-ROMs that install the software.

TIP *The users@openoffice.org mailing list is a great way to get help with OpenOffice. Visit http://www.openoffice.org for details. Online help is also available.*

The default OpenOffice installation places an OpenOffice submenu in the K menu. From there, you can launch any of the OpenOffice programs (Writer, Calc, Draw, or Impress). You can also click on any existing OpenOffice document to open it within the appropriate OpenOffice application. Once the application is open, another OpenOffice program can be started from the open application's File menu.

The menus and toolbars may look familiar to you, as they are similar to those of other office programs—the main menubar at the top and two tiers of toolbars displayed by default. As usual, many of the most used menu items are available from the icons in the toolbars. You can discover the function of an icon by holding the mouse pointer over it.
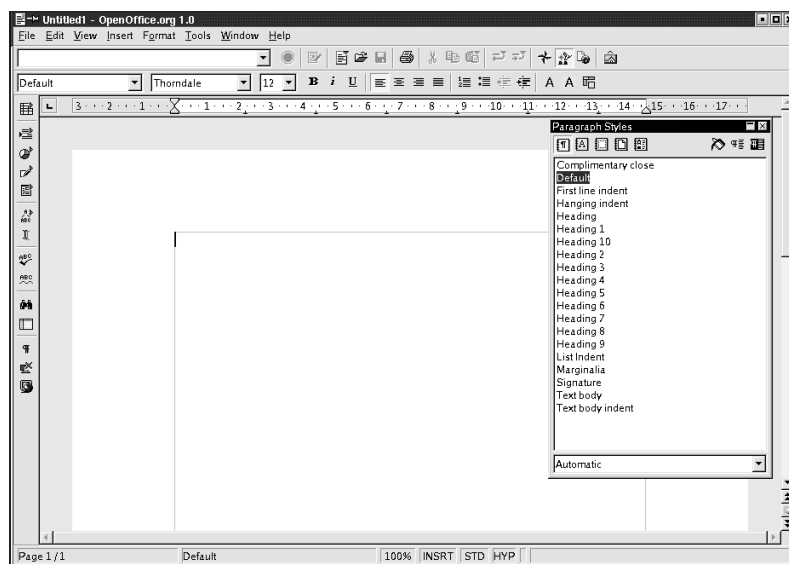

Figure 5.2: OpenOffice Writer

TIP *If you find yourself using OpenOffice or any OpenOffice document often, add its icon to the desktop or panel bar. See the "Adding Icons" section of Chapter 11 for details.*

Writer: Working with Text

Writer is a word processor that allows you to compose documents such as letters and articles, as well as import and export documents from other systems in a wide range of file formats that include HTML, ASCII, RTF, and MS Word.

Creating a New Document

When you launch Writer, you are put into a new document automatically, so there is no need to do anything other than simply begin typing. If you'd like help building your document, Writer provides a selection of AutoPilots for commonly used documents such as fax cover pages, sales contracts, and school papers.

TIP *To set a style for your document, use the Paragraph Stylist. It is turned on automatically when you launch Writer. Turn it on or off by selecting Stylist from the Format menu.*

Using the AutoPilot

AutoPilot, often referred to as a wizard in other office programs, guides you through a series of document customization questions.

To use this feature, select AutoPilot from the File menu. Then choose the type of document you want to create. Options include memos, faxes, letters, and web pages.

Once selected, the AutoPilot Agenda dialog box appears. You are instructed to customize your document by choosing a layout style, including a logo or graphic, and naming your file.
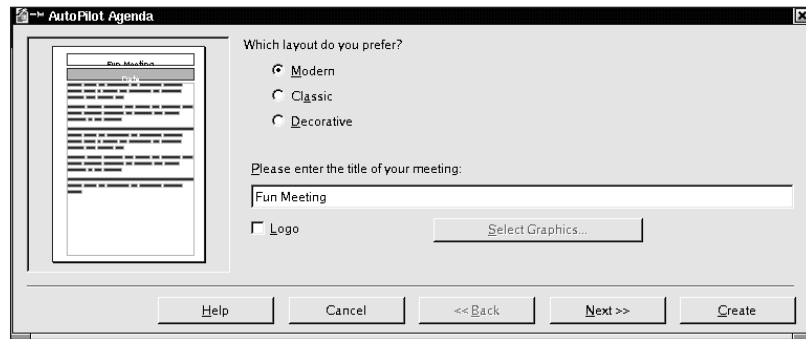

Figure 5.3: AutoPilot Agenda Dialog Box

Click Next to select your desired options, and continue clicking Next each time you are done with a set of customization questions. When you are finished, click Create, and your document loads.
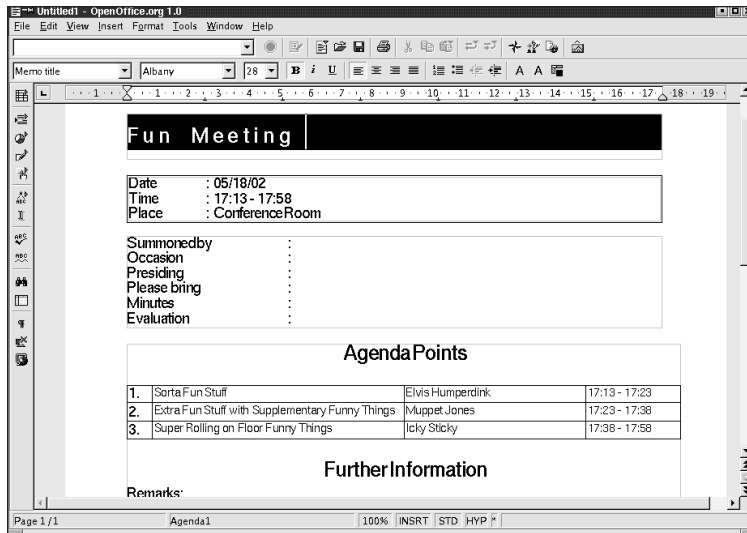
Figure 5.4: AutoPilot Agenda Document

TIP *Turn on the Autotext feature on the Edit menu. Check the Display Remainder of Name as Suggested While Typing box, and type the word you want to add to the Autotext list.*

TIP *Count the number of words in your document by selecting File • Properties • Statistics.*

Opening an Existing Document

To open an existing document, select Open from the File menu or click the open file icon featured on the main OpenOffice toolbar (the icon is a file folder with a little arrow indicating that it opens). It opens your home directory. Double-click on the file you want to open, and your document loads automatically.
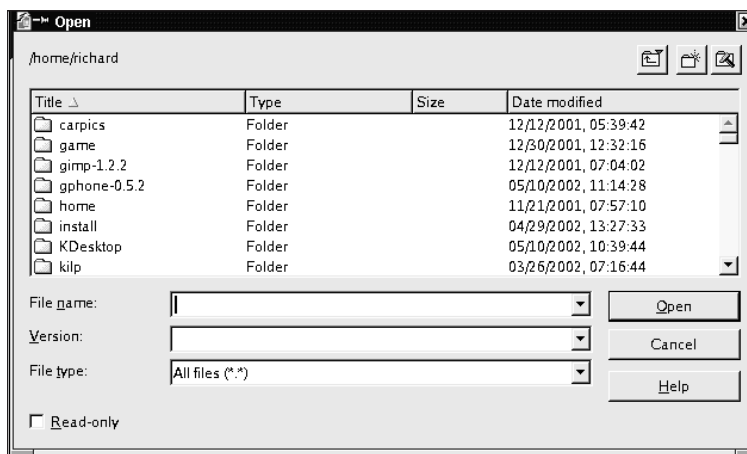

Figure 5.5: Opening an Existing Document

When you open a file from a directory in this way, the Open Folder dialog box allows you to select a file type. OpenOffice defaults to All, which lists and searches through all file formats automatically. You can choose to narrow the number of formats by selecting a specific one from the File Type drop-down menu. For example, if you have forgotten the name of the document you want to open, but know it is in MS Word 97 format, select MS Word 97 from the drop-down menu. Only the MS Word 97 files found within that directory are then listed in the Open dialog box. For more file format options, see the Open dialog box.

The Open dialog box also allows you to do things like create a new folder in which to save or move documents; simply click the create new directory icon (it pictures a file folder with an asterisk in the upper right corner). The default directory icon, featured just to the right of the create new directory icon and displaying a sledgehammer, allows you to return quickly to the default directory (set by default as your home directory). To help navigate to the file you are look-ing for, the up one level icon to the right of the create new directory icon takes you the parent directory of the current directory. OpenOffice also lists the most recently used documents at the bottom of the File menu for quicker access.

Importing and exporting MS Word and other documents created in popu-lar word-processing file formats is quick and easy in OpenOffice. Follow the example just given in "Opening an Existing Document" to import a foreign file format. To save a document as a foreign file format, go to the Save As dialog box, simply click the arrow within the File type text box, and select the desired file format from the scroll bar.

TIP *OpenOffice comes loaded with a thesaurus. You can access it from the Tool menu.*

Formatting Your Document

Formatting allows you to choose the font and page styles to apply to your docu-ment. There are many options available in Writer. Here we review standard for-matting tools. Advanced users can feel confident that other formatting features, such as those that let you apply text styles, add tables, and create indices, are all available. They are located generally in the same places you would find them in other word processing applications. All of these formatting options can be set before beginning a new document or applied to existing documents.

TIP *Spell check a document by selecting Spellcheck or AutoSpellcheck from the Tools menu.*

TIP *When you begin a task or turn on a feature that OpenOffice thinks it can help explain, such as AutoSpellcheck, a light bulb appears in the bottom left corner of the window. Clicking on it brings up the relevant topic in the Help contents.*

Choosing a Font

The default Writer font is 12-point Thorndale. To change the font, simply high-light the desired text and select the desired font type and size boxes just above the document. Next to the font name and size are buttons for Bold, italic, and underline.

Aligning Text

The Writer default is to left-justify all text within a document. If you want some or all of your document to be aligned differently, highlight the appropriate text and select an alignment icon (featured just above the document and next to the font attribute icons). Options include left, centered, right, and forced justification.

Using Bulleted Lists

Place the mouse pointer at the beginning of the paragraph or sentence where you want to insert a bullet or number. Click either the bullets or numbers icon in the second row of icons at the top of the OpenOffice desktop. The para-graph or sentence is instantly formatted as the appropriate type of list. To turn off bulleting, move your mouse pointer to the beginning of the paragraph or sentence where you want to end the list or delete a bullet, and again click the bullets or numbers icon.

You can apply a different bullet or numbering symbol by selecting Numbering/Bullets from the Format menu. The Numbering/Bullets dialog box appears.
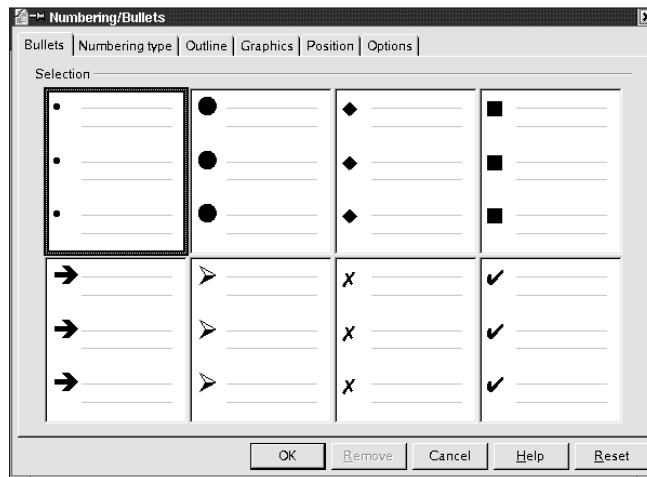

Figure 5.6: The Numbering/Bullets Dialog Box

Select the appropriate tab at the top (bullets, numbers, or graphics). Then click the example box of your choice and click OK.

Increasing and Decreasing Indents

To increase or decrease the indentation of text, click one of the two indent icons, featured just above the document to the right of the numbers and bullets icons. The icon featuring text and an arrow pointing left decrease an indent, whereas the icon featuring text and an arrow pointing right increase an indent. Click the appropriate icon more than once to add more or less indentation.

Applying Color

Color can be applied to text characters or added as a highlight over a string of text. The color icons are found next to the indentation icons. Select the text you want to color or highlight by clicking and dragging your mouse pointer over the desired text. Then click the icon featuring a yellow background behind the A character, and your text is highlighted.

Color also can be applied to the background of a document. The icon that features a complete palette of colors (positioned next to the character color icons) performs this task for you. Click the background color icon. A dialog box appears prompting you to select a color. Once you have clicked on the desired color, your background changes to the new color.
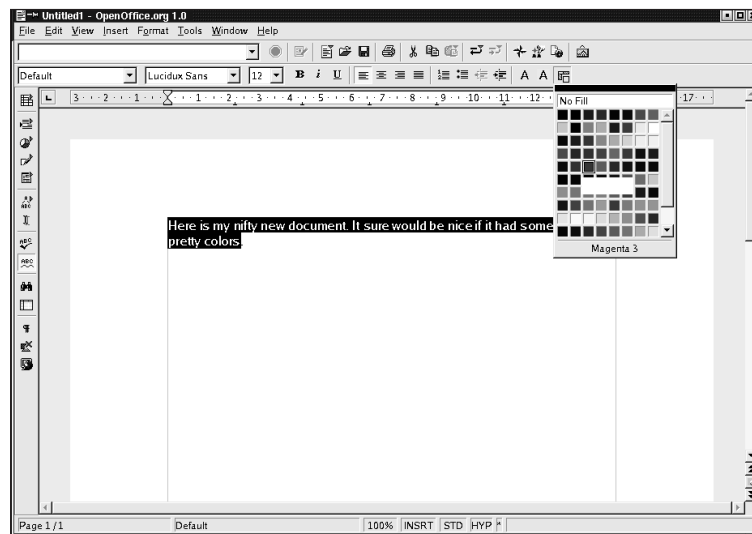

Figure 5.7: Coloring the Background of a Document

Advanced Formatting Tools

Advanced page formatting tools are available in a central dialog box titled Page Style. To access it, select Page from the Format menu, and the Page Style dialog box appears.
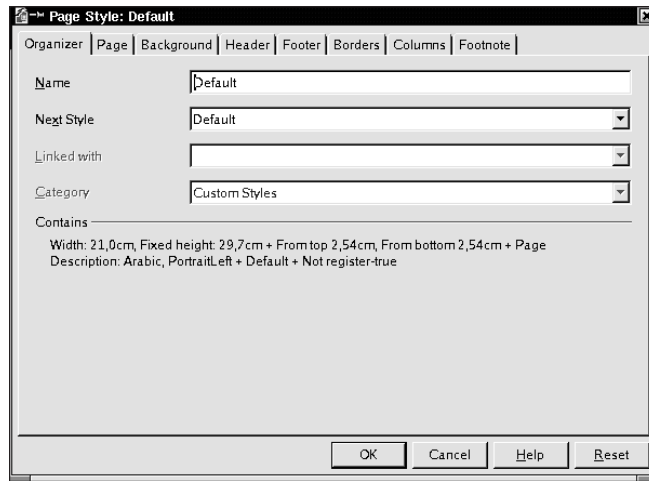
Figure 5.8: Page Style Dialog Box

Here you are given the opportunity to select the background color, size, and margins of the document; apply headers, footers, and borders; and even set columns.

Advanced paragraph and character formatting tools are also available. Select Paragraph or Character from the Format menu, and the Paragraph or Character dialog box appears. From here you can apply drop caps, tabs, and alignment, among other advanced paragraph formatting tools.

To add page numbers to your document, choose the Footer tab from Format • Page, check the Footer On box, and select OK. Next, from the Insert menu choose Fields and then Page Numbers. A 1 appears in the footer. If you want the page numbers to appear as "1 of 10" or "1 of 18", and so on, select Fields and then Page Count. Next, under Footer, edit the text to add the word "of".
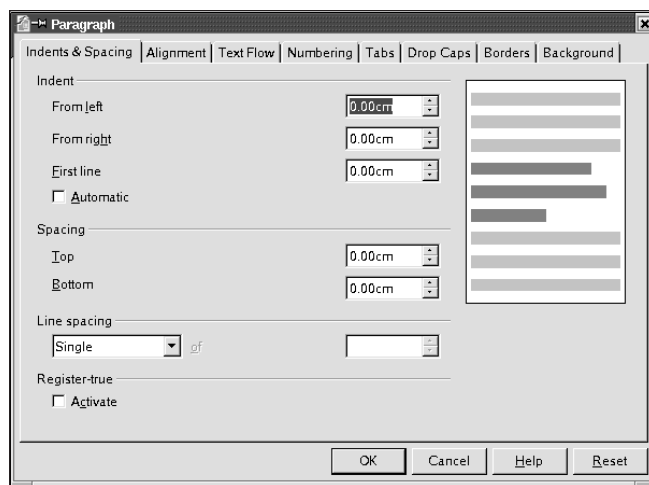
Figure 5.9: Paragraph Dialog Box

Inserting Graphics into Your Document

From the Insert menu, select Graphics and then From File. The Insert Graphics dialog box appears.
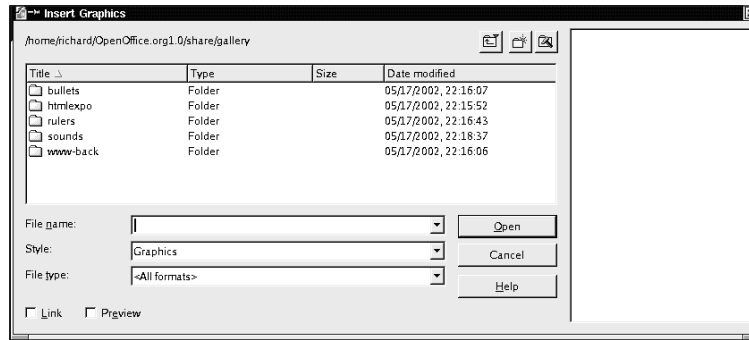

Figure 5.10: Insert Graphics Dialog Box

Select the graphics filename just as you selected an existing document file. Once your graphic appears in the document, you can double-click it at any time to pull up the Graphics dialog box. Here you can crop, make the image a hyperlink, or add a border. Once you have selected the options you want, click OK to proceed with the changes or Cancel to cancel any changes.
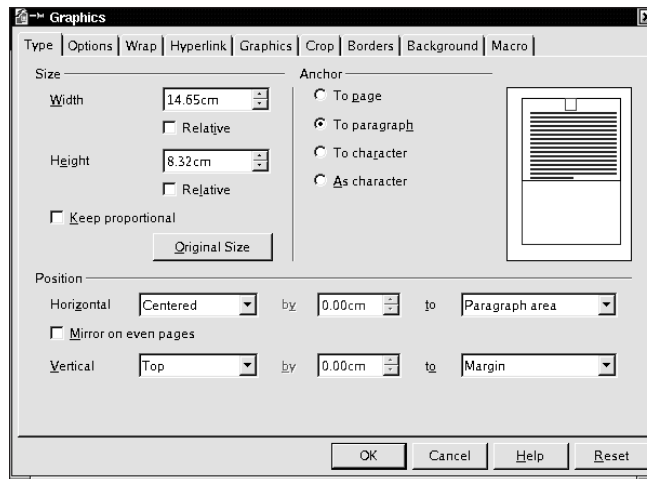
Figure 5.11: Graphics Dialog Box

TIP *You can move your graphic by simply clicking and dragging the image anywhere within the document.*

Figure 5.12: Inserting and Moving Your Graphic

To delete the graphic, simply select it with the mouse and select the cut icon, or right-click the image and select Cut from the pull-down menu.

Saving Your Document

To save your document, select the floppy disk (save) icon from the top toolbar or select the Save or Save As options located on the File menu. The Save dialog box appears, instructing you to name your file (if it is not already named), designate the directory to which you want to save the file, and choose the file format you want your document to be saved as (click the arrow next to File type to see a list of file format options). This is where you can prepare your document for exporting, as mentioned previously.

TIP *To save your document as a PostScript file, select Print to File from the File • Print menu. Save the file with a .ps extension. Keep in mind that if you save a document in this format, it cannot be re-edited, so you should save a copy in a standard document format as well.*

Creating Document Templates

Although the current version of OpenOffice does not come with existing document templates, it is possible to create templates. Start by opening a new document. Create a set of styles and give it the desired structure, and simply save the document as a template from the Save As dialog box.

Printing Your Document

Printing your document is easy. Simply select the print icon from the toolbar immediately below the menubar, or select Print from the File menu. In either case, a Print dialog box opens, giving you the option to print to your printer or to a file. Options are presented to print a range of pages, if you don't need the whole document, or to print multiple copies.

TIP *You have more print options if you select Print from the File menu. The Printer toolbar icon prints according to the defaults.*
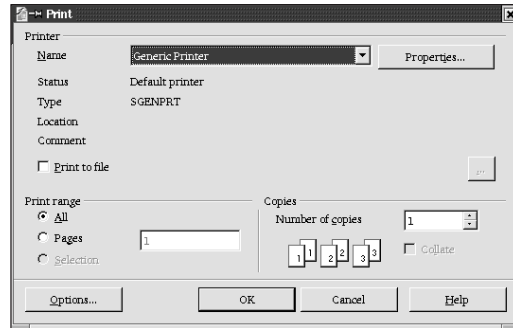
Figure 5.13: Printer Dialog Box

OpenOffice Calc: Spreadsheets

OpenOffice Calc is a powerful spreadsheet program that also imports and exports other popular spreadsheet formats, including MS Excel. Spreadsheets are large tables where information is entered in individual *cells* that appear in rows and columns. They're ideal for accounting purposes and for creating data comparisons.
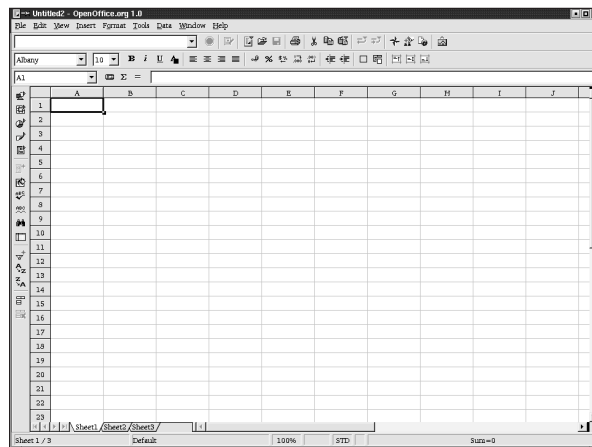

Figure 5.14: OpenOffice Calc

It is easy to enter data and formulas in OpenOffice Calc and to create charts from that information.

To launch Openffice Calc, select Calc from the OpenOffice submenu in the K menu.

TIP *For advanced users, OpenOffice Basic offers the opportunity to automate some of these processes with macros. Select Macro from the Tools menu, or see the Basic IDE entry in the OpenOffice Help.*

Creating a New Spreadsheet

When you launch OpenOffice Calc, you are dropped into a new spreadsheet automatically, and you can begin entering data. Or you can open an existing spreadsheet (New • Open) to begin working.

A spreadsheet contains cells organized in rows and columns. To begin entering data into your spreadsheet, simply click in a cell. A black outline appears around the selected cell. Enter data, either text or numbers. When you are finished, simply click in another cell or press ENTER on the keyboard. You can also use the arrow keys or the TAB key to move to the next cell. This process is much like entering data into a word processor except that, in this case, each piece of data is entered into one cell at a time.

Figure 5.15: Entering Data into Your Spreadsheet

TIP *To highlight a table area, click the upper left cell of the desired area and hold down the mouse button. Then drag the mouse pointer to the bottom right cell and release.*

Deleting or Moving Data

Since your spreadsheet is likely structured with formulas, deleting or moving data can be a bit more complex than it is in a word processor.

To delete data in an individual cell, simply use the BACKSPACE key to delete each character or number desired. To move data in one cell, right-click within the cell. Select Cut or Copy, depending on which action you want. In the new cell, right-click again, but this time select Paste.

You also can delete or move all data contained in a row or cell. Use the Delete Cells option on the Edit menu, or simply right-click on the data and select Delete from the menu that pops up. This option allows you to specify what should happen to the deleted row—for instance, move rows up or shift columns.
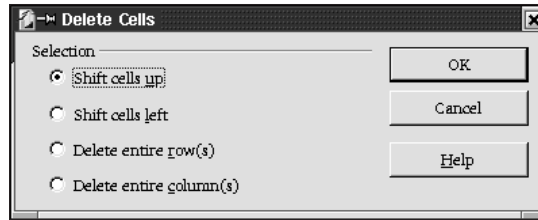

Figure 5.16: Delete Cells Dialog Box

Changing Heights and Widths

The cells in a spreadsheet are fairly small, but the size can be changed to accommodate larger entries and make data more readable on printouts. There are two ways to accomplish size changes. The first is to place the mouse cursor over the lines separating rows and columns in the guides (the lettered boxes at the top of the spreadsheet for columns, and the numbered ones along the left side for rows). For instance, if you want column A to be wider, position the mouse pointer over the borderline between the column A guide and the column B guide. When the pointer changes to a double-headed arrow, click and drag to the left or right to shorten or lengthen the column as desired. For rows, it's the same procedure except you move the double-headed arrow up and down to shorten or heighten the rows.

A second way to change cell sizes is more precise, in that it allows you to select measured increments. From the Format menu, select Cell, Row, or Column. In the resulting submenu, choose the first entry (Column Width or Row Height). Here you can enter a specific size in inches.

Using Formulas and Functions

Formulas and functions perform mathematical calculations automatically before displaying numbers within a cell. A formula always begins with an equal sign (=) and is created using alphanumeric combinations. Each cell has a grid address. The cell in column A, row 1 is referred to as A1. The cell in column B, row 6 is referred to as B6, and so on.

Formulas can be written to add, subtract, multiply, and divide. To write a formula, start by typing an equal sign (=) within a cell. This tells Calc that you want to perform a calculation. Then type the formula, for example, type =A9+A10+A11+A12. Press ENTER when the formula is complete. Calc performs the calculations. In this case, it adds the numbers in the given cell and displays the results in the cell in which you entered the formula.

A *function* is a predefined formula that performs calculations by using specific values in a certain order. A function begins with the function name, followed by an opening parenthesis, the specific values (often referred to as the argument) for the function, separated by a colon, and ending with a closing parenthesis. Again, the function must be preceded by an equal sign. For example, typing `=SUM(A9:A12)` into a cell and pressing ENTER yields the sum of the values in A9 and A12 in that cell. Hundreds of functions are available in a variety of categories (logical, financial, and mathematical, for instance. Select Function List from the Insert menu for a complete list of available functions.

Formatting Your Spreadsheet

Formatting a spreadsheet is much like formatting a document. The same capabilities are available, such as features to alter fonts and font size, and add color to some or all of the background. Refer to "Formatting Your Document" earlier in this chapter for details.

When formatting a spreadsheet, you can easily format a single cell or an entire group of cells. For instance, you may want to add a background color to all cells in column D. To do so, highlight a group of cells by clicking the uppermost cell of the desired area and holding down the mouse button. Then drag the mouse pointer to the bottom cell and release. Now click the Background Color icon, select your color of choice—and voila!
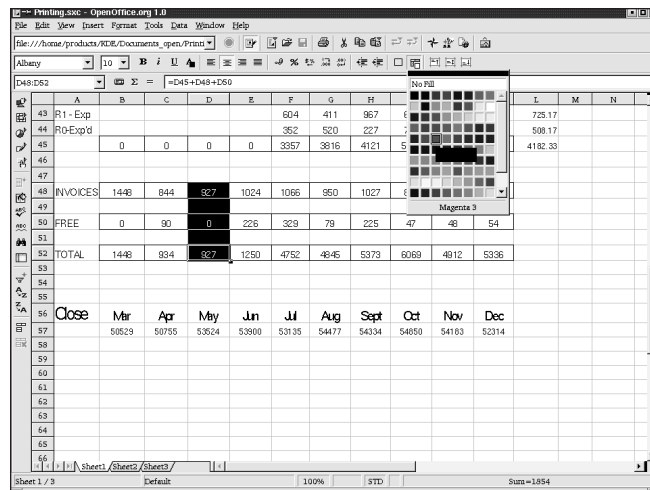

Figure 5.17: Adding Color to a Column of Cells

TIP *You can make a row freeze so that it remains visible when you scroll down the window. Click the bottom line of the last row you want to remain visible, and then select Freeze from the Window menu.*

Making a Chart

It's easy to convert data from a spreadsheet into a chart. To begin, open an existing spreadsheet. Highlight the group of rows, columns, and headings from which you want to build the chart. Select Object from the Insert menu, and then OLE Object from the resulting submenu. The Insert OLE Object dialog box appears.
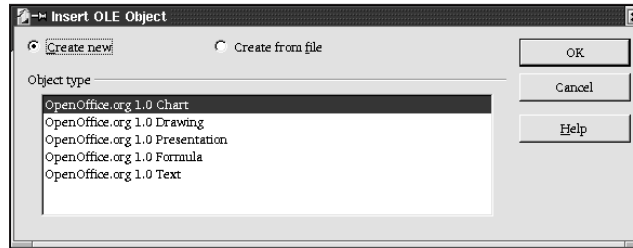

Figure 5.18: Insert OLE Object Dialog Box

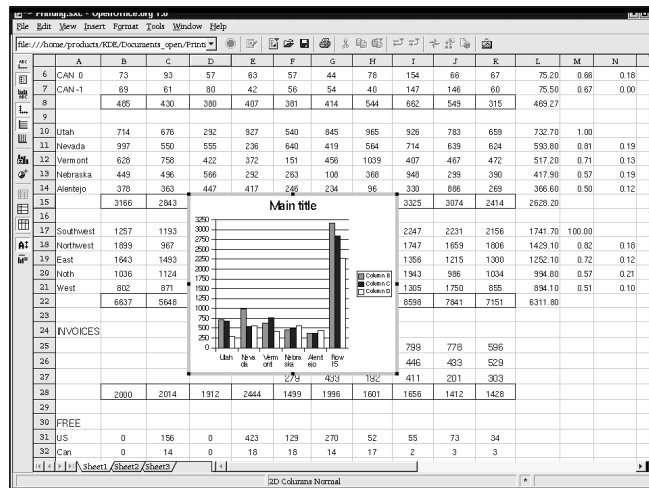Select Create new, then Chart. Click OK. Your chart appears.

Figure 5.19: Creating Your Chart

You easily can change the size of a chart by clicking and pulling on the outlines of the box. To change text within the chart, click within the box on the appropriate text. Right-clicking within the chart pops up many additional customization options.

You can choose from many different types of charts. Double-click within the chart, then select Chart Type from the Format menu. The Chart Type dialog box appears, prompting you to select one of several 2-D or 3-D charts.
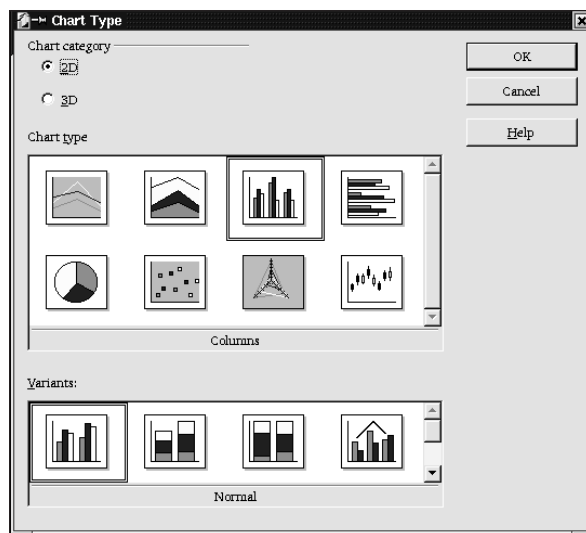
Figure 5.20: Chart Type Dialog Box

Saving Your Spreadsheet

To save your spreadsheet, use the same menu items as for saving a word-processing document.

Select the Save or Save As options from the File menu. The Save dialog box appears, once again instructing you to name your file (if it is not already named) and choose the file format in which you want your spreadsheet saved (click the arrow next to File type to see a list of file format options).

As with MS Word documents, you can import or export MS Excel and other popular spreadsheet file formats in OpenOffice. Follow the example in the earlier section "Opening an Existing Spreadsheet" to import a foreign file format. To save a spreadsheet in a foreign file format, from the Save As dialog box simply click the arrow within the File Type box and select the desired file format.

Working with Multiple Pages in One Spreadsheet

Sometimes you may want to have multiple separate pages in one spreadsheet. For example, say you create a detailed report every month. You want to have every month on its own page, but you'd like to keep all the pages together. Notice the tabs at the bottom of the screen that say Sheet 1, Sheet 2, and so on. You can use your mouse to flip between the pages and rename them by right-clicking a tab and choosing Rename. You can also change the order in which the sheets appear by placing the mouse pointer on the tab, and then dragging and dropping the sheet to the new location.

Printing Your Spreadsheet

Before printing your spreadsheet, you should take the time to think about how you want your spreadsheet to look. Do you want the grid boxes to appear? Do you want all of the spreadsheet or only certain data within it to appear?

To print the entire spreadsheet, select Print from the File menu. To print just a portion of your spreadsheet, highlight that portion, and then select Print Ranges from the Format menu. From there, select Define. Now continue on with the standard printing procedure.

It is common to turn off grid boxes on a spreadsheet before printing it. Other formatting features include scaling the spreadsheet to fit on one page, printing only a chart, and printing only the data. To access any of these formatting tools and others, select Page from the Format menu.
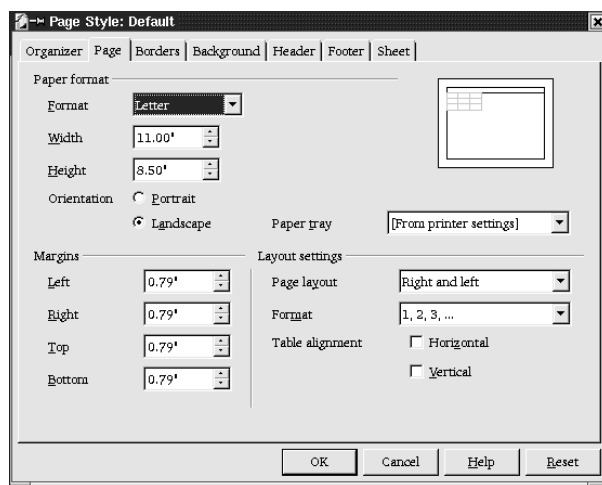

Figure 5.21: The Calc Page Style Dialog Box

Often spreadsheets look better, and are more efficient and effective, if they are printed across the page sideways to show more columns on a single printed page. By default, all documents print in the normal 8½-inch by 11-inch layout, called portrait mode. You can change the layout to landscape mode, which uses an 11-inch by 8½-inch layout, by selecting Page from the Format menu. From the resulting dialog box, choose the Page tab, and within the Page format section, select Landscape.

OpenOffice Impress: Presentations and Slideshow

You can create presentations quickly and simply with Impress. The format for information in a presentation is slides, which are a single screen in size and can combine text and graphics. The presentation can then be printed or shown on the monitor.

From the menubar, select File • New • Presentation. Select Empty presentation from the AutoPilot Presentation dialog box, then click Next. On the following screens you are asked to make selections to customize your presentation. The third screen allows you to add effects such as fades. After making your selections, click Create.

At this point the Modify Slide dialog box appears, and you can choose the layout of your slide. Make your selection and click OK.
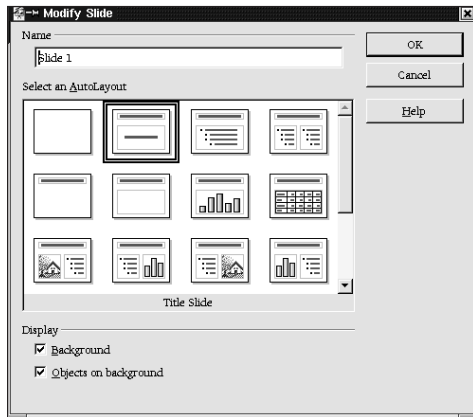
Figure 5.22: Specifying a Layout

The first slide of your presentation now appears. Click the area where you want to feature text or insert a graphic. Begin typing (where there is existing text, simply click the text and begin typing over it), or select Graphics from the Insert menu and proceed by selecting the graphics filename of your choice.
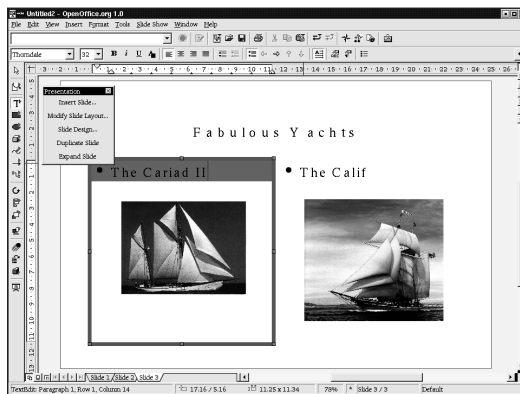
Figure 5.23: Adding Text to Your Slides

When you've completed the first slide of your presentation, you can insert another slide by clicking the empty gray bar next to the tab of your first slide's page at the bottom left side of the screen. To alter this newly created slide, simply right-click the new tab titled Slide 2 and select Modify Slide. You then continue as you did when creating your first slide.

Fine-Tuning Your Presentation

To alter a slide, click the drawing view icon, which is located in the icon set above the vertical scrollbar.

To change the sequence in which your slides appear, click the slide view icon, located above the vertical scrollbar. From here you can easily drag and drop slides into the sequence you desire.

Many other formatting options are available to you in OpenOffice Impress. In fact, these are easily the topic for their own book. But truthfully, once you have the basics, a little clicking around helps you discover what you need to know.

Saving and Exporting Your Presentation

You've finished the slides, and now it's time save your presentation. To do so, select Save As from the File menu, name your presentation, and select Save. Impress is the default file format, although you can save in a Draw or MS PowerPoint format, if you prefer.

Exporting as a Web Presentation

Exporting your file as a web presentation is particularly handy, as it can then be viewed by any web browser. Begin by selecting the Export option from the File menu. Don't worry about which slide you are on when you do this. This action exports the entire presentation.

Give your presentation a filename and save it. You are then guided through the exporting process. First select an HTML design. Select New design from the HTML Export dialog box, and click Next. You are instructed to choose a publication type. How do you want your HTML presentation to be displayed? Options include plain HTML pages, frames, automatic slideshow view, or webcast. Select the desired customization options, and click Next. Depending on which option you choose, you may be guided through the selection of a short series of other HTML characteristics.
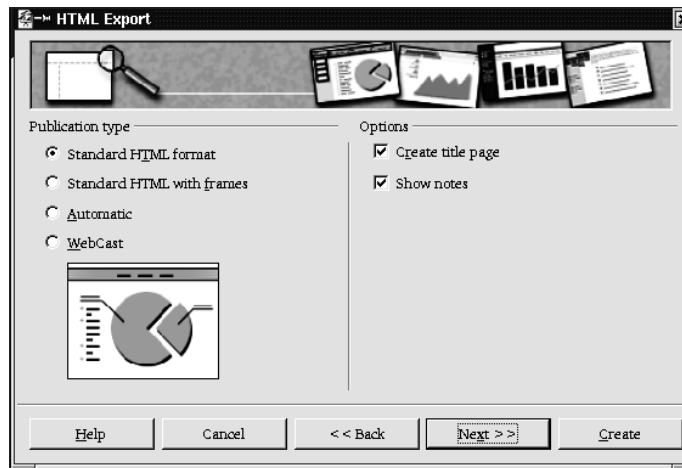

Figure 5.24: Exporting to HTML

Once you've selected your HTML characteristics, you are ready to save your HTML presentation. Select a file type (options include GIF or JPG), compression value, and screen resolution (the lower the resolution, the smaller the graphic image files), and indicate whether you want a sound played when slides advance. When you are finished, click Create.

Now you're ready to view your HTML presentation in a browser (or OpenOffice). Simply open your web browser of choice and point your browser at your HTML presentation's filename.

Printing Your Presentation

Printing your presentation (especially handy for overheads) is as simple as clicking the print icon at the top of the screen.

Viewing Your Presentation

To view your presentation as a slide show, click the start slide show icon above the vertical scrollbar. Your presentation starts immediately and advances automatically. You can select the time intervals, or you can choose to advance slides with a mouse click, which is handy if you're doing a presentation with input from other people.

To alter presentation settings, choose Slide Show from the menubar, and then select Slide Show Settings.
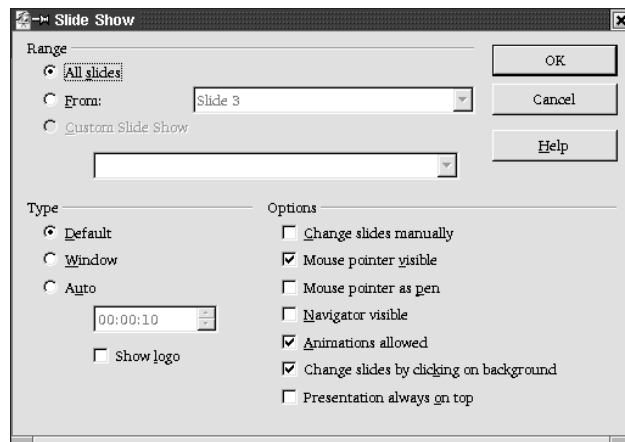

Figure 5.25: Accessing Slide Show Settings

A dialog box appears giving you the opportunity to change basic settings, such as whether to include previously created slides or altering how the slides change.

OpenOffice Draw for Graphics

OpenOffice features a graphics program called Draw. While it is technically a vector program, it provides some of the bitmap functionality of programs such as The GIMP and could be classified as a beginner- to intermediate-level graphics program. It is well suited for combining text, shapes, lines, and images into a single document, and has a limited ability to do a wide variety of tasks that usually require a specialized program. While some of its features are not as refined as they are in programs such as The GIMP, the advantage is that they are combined in one program. So if you want to create a business card with a graphic, you can do it without moving back and forth between programs.

As with Kontour, Draw allows you to draw Bezier curves, geometric shapes, and to import bitmap images into your document. You can also import spreadsheets or charts from spreadsheets. With Draw, you can add 3-D shapes and convert the boundaries of 2-D images to 3-D so they can be manipulated as 3-D objects.

A Sample Draw Document

Let's say you're a used taxicab salesman and want to create an advertisement for a community newsletter. You'll want some captivating text, an illustrative graphic, and some data in the form of a graph demonstrating the superiority of your product. You may even want some special effects for good measure.

Starting a new document in Draw is the same as with the other OpenOffice programs (New • Drawing).

Let's start with the text. Click the capital T icon in the left toolbar. This converts the mouse pointer to crosshairs. This allows you to draw a text box where you enter your text. Hold down the left mouse button to begin drawing the box, and drag until the box reaches the desired dimensions (the outline appears as it is drawn). Release the button when done. Then click inside the resulting box to begin entering text. Remember that the features of OpenOffice Write are available to you when working with text in Draw—such as spell checking and the thesaurus.
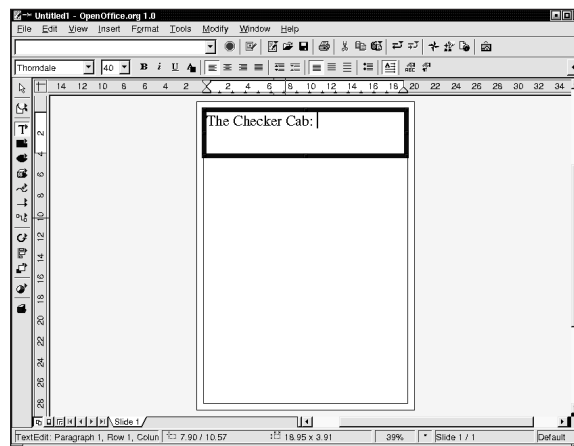

Figure 5.26: Entering Text

To add a graphic, select Graphics from the Insert menu. This presents a dialog box allowing you to browse for the desired file. Like the text, the graphic appears in a box with border points, and it can be manipulated by clicking and dragging on the borders.

TIP *If you want to add an image from another document to the current one, you can right-click on it and select Cut or Copy. Then right-click on the current document and select Paste.*
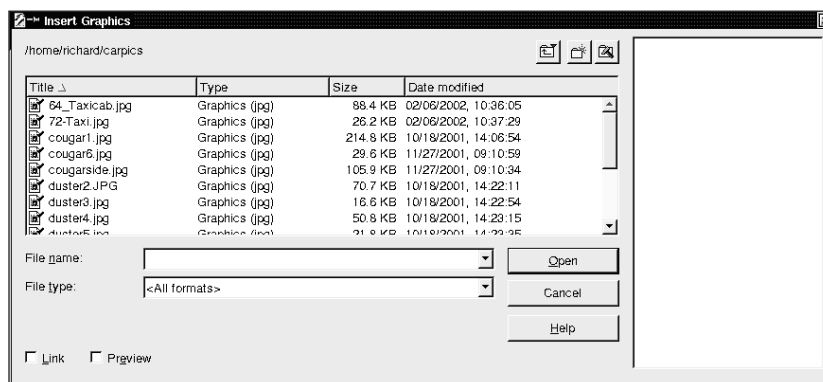

Figure 5.27: The Insert Graphics Dialog

To insert a chart, select Insert • Object • OLE Object. A dialog box appears to allow you to choose the desired object. Select your chart, and it appears in your document.
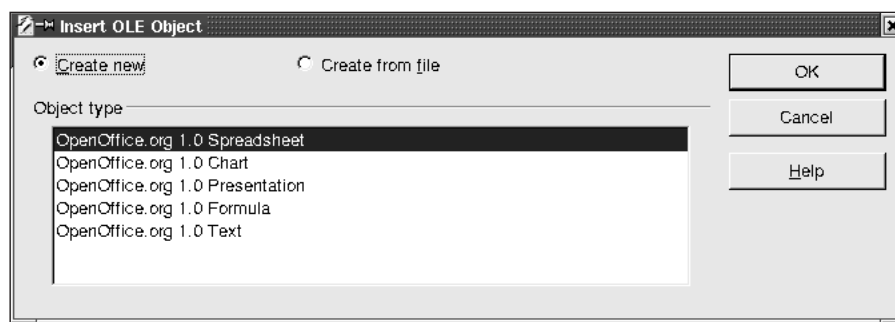

Figure 5.28: The Insert OLE Object Dialog

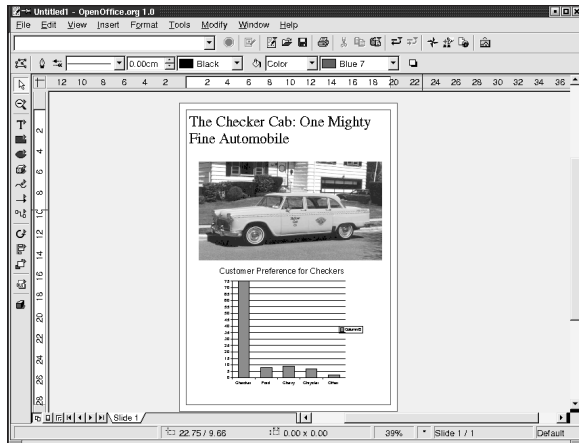Now you've got a document with text, a graphic, and a chart.

Figure 5.29: Sample Document with Text, Graphic, and Chart

To spice up your ad, you may want to add some kind of effect such as converting your graphic to look like a charcoal sketch. Select the graphic by clicking on it, making the Edit Points icon in the upper left corner of the Draw window become a filter icon. Clicking on it reveals a number of options for modifying the look of your graphic. These include solarization, mosaic, smoothing, relief, charcoal sketch, and seven other options.
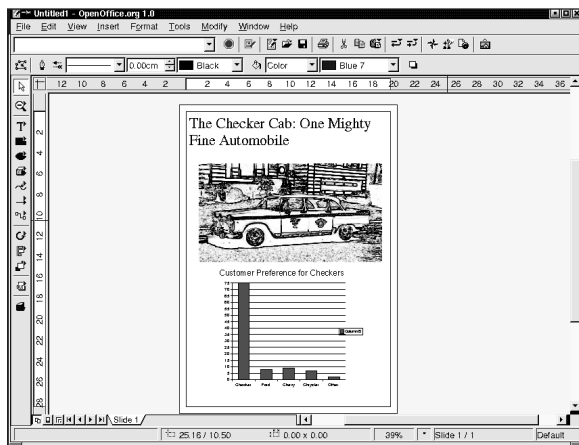

Figure 5.30: Turning Your Graphic into a Charcoal Sketch

To gain an appreciation of Draw's other features and an understanding of working with graphics in general, it is recommended that you read Chapter 7, "Working with Graphics," and Chapter 8, "More on Graphics: The GIMP." Then you should be able to navigate through OpenOffice Draw's features fairly easily.

Keyboard Shortcuts in the OpenOffice Suite

Though moving around OpenOffice with the mouse pointer works very well, you may want to speed things up a bit with keyboard shortcuts as you become more proficient. Not moving your hand from the keyboard to the mouse can save considerable time.

Two different kinds of shortcuts exist in OpenOffice. The first shortcut uses the ALT key plus a letter to open a menu, and then a keystroke to select an option within the menu. All shortcut letters are underlined in their menu listings. For example, if you want to insert a horizontal line into a document, you can press ALT-I to open the Insert menu, then press the Z key to open the Insert Horizontal Line option box. Notice the underlined "z" in the word Horizontal, indicating the keyboard letter to effect the shortcut.

The second type of shortcut is called an *accelerator*. Using the CTRL key with a keystroke, you can execute a task instantly, such as saving a file or printing a document. Accelerator shortcuts are documented in the menus to the right of the listed items. For example, assume that you're in a document and want to print it. Rather than using the mouse to select File and then Print, you can press CTRL-P to open the Print dialog box. Spend some time looking through the menus and experimenting with the many available shortcuts.
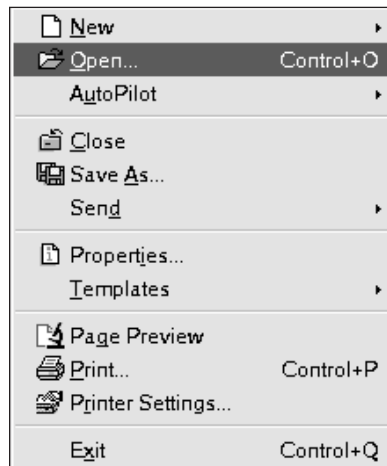

Figure 5.31: As shown in the menu, the Accelerator to open a file is CTRL-O

After you've spent some time working with the OpenOffice suite and learning the shortcuts for the functions you use most, you'll come to appreciate its power, features, and flexibility, and wonder how it is free of charge.