Bibliographic

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Vision

The OpenOffice Bibliographic project (OOoBib) will make it easier for people to store and manage their reference data, to format their documents, and to collaborate with other users.

It will be simple to use for the casual user, but will meet all the requirements of the professional and academic writer.

The features we will build include -

- A greatly improved Graphic User Interface for entering, editing and searching for bibliographic records.
- An improved bibliographic database (and internal data model) compatible with the emerging the industry standards, such as the "Metadata Object Description Schema" (MODS), and the "Resource Description Framework" (RDF), a framework for describing and interchanging metadata. These standards will support new collection types in different media, not just limited to books and journals but also supporting video, audio, maps, pictures etc.
- Improved metadata support in OpenOffice and the OpenDocument file format. See our OpenDocument XML Citation Proposal.pdf. (Co-project leader, Bruce D'Arcus has became a member of the OASIS OpenDocument Technical Sub-committee on Metadata) NEW The proposals will improve citation support in OpenDocument but also provide the ability to tag text and other document objects (tables, charts etc.) with their source metadata. This means that a piece of text could have its reference details (e.g. source url, or publisher details) maintained along with it, even if no bibliographic reference is displayed. A lawyer could do a query on a case document that returned, say, all documents that referred to a specific case.
- For the first time, the opportunity for the creation and distribution of opensource bibliographic style definitions that are not specific to a particular word-processor or bibliographic package. We propose to implement Bibliographic table and citation formatting using a process called CiteProc. See BiblioX for technical discusion of this approach. We now have working examples. In fact CiteProc has been used to prepare a book for publication.
- The ability to support all the common styles and conventions for citations and reference tables. This will include support for footnote / endnote citation styles and for differing first and subsequent citation formats. Also enhancements to Openoffice Writer Footnote/ Endnote location selection and headings.
- The ability to change a document from one style to another with no or minimal further editing.

- Import and export filters for the common formats for bibliographic data, such as BibTeX, RIS, EndNote, MARC.
- The ability to connect to, and to exchange data with bibliographic databases, using RDF and Z39.50 and SRU/W.
- The ability to query internet reference sources (e.g. reference databases and library catalogues) directly and to add the responses received to the bibliographic database.
- A note taking facility, with the ability to link notes to references, notes to other notes, notes to keywords; and a notes search ability.

When the project's objectives are achieved, it will be possible to convert a scientific, technical or academic paper from one bibliographic style to an other bibliographic style, such as one required by a journal, simply by selecting the required style convention and automaticity reformat the document to the new style. So far as we know, the only WYSIWYG word processor that provides these features is Nota Bene, it is a good example of the type of Bibliographic and word processing integration we would like to achieve with OpenOffice. Another good bibliographic application model is Biblioscape.

When will this wonderful facility be available ? Bibliographic enhancements are planned to be included in OpenOffice version 3.0 (No date yet).

NEW We have now started our development work. See our development plans on the Developers' Wiki and the list of project tasks below.

The, project still needs some experienced developers to get this important work to the programing stage. We urgently need people with C++ experience.

But what can I do now ? In the meantime, if you are not happy with OOo's basic bibliographic support, you may like to use some of the third-party bibliographic applications that can work with OpenOffice. See the bibliographic software page for more details. You may like to look at the package B3 or Jabref both of which have a nice user interface and can write bibliographic records to a Openoffice Bibliographic text database. Bibus is Bibliography application with good integration with OpenOffice.

Background

The terminology used by bibliographic applications can be confusing, so we have fixed upon the following three definitions:

citation
    a short description that points to a fuller description of an information source, or reference item elsewhere, either in a note or a reference list.
reference item
    a fuller description of an information source; also called a bibliographic entry or item.
reference list
    a collection of references; also called a bibliography.

Bibliographic applications help people manage their reference items and to create formatted citations and reference lists. Publishers, academic and other institutions generally specify detailed requirements of how their documents are to look, including the reference lists and the citations. Citation and reference list formatting is an often tedious and error-prone task, particularly if one has to later change styles. An ideal bibliographic application, then, allows a user to forget about these arcane details and focus on writing.

The collection of bibliographic data (which includes author and publication details) for works cited in a document can also be a tedious and time consuming task and often involves the manual entry of these details into a database. An ideal bibliographic application would simplify or automate this process.

Microsoft Word does not provide any bibliographic tools and the users of this product have had to make use of third-party, and usually commercial bibliographic applications, such as Endnotes and Reference Manager. Workers in many academic and scientific fields have used Latex, and it variants for technical word processing, and this software does have its own bibliographic facilities called Bibtext. OpenOffice does provide basic bibliographic functions, these include; a simple bibliographic database, a process to insert in-text or endnote citations into a document and a bibliographic table generator to produce a reference table of citations formatted as specified by the user. However, considerable improvement is needed for OpenOffice to approach or improve on the facilities provided by the commercial bibliographic products.

Project Tasks

As our first step in the first Stage of the Bibliographic Facility Redevelopment we will implement the most simple changes to the OOo core code (the API basic code, and UNO mappings, but not yet the graphical user interface code (GUI)) necessary to implement basic support for:

1. Saving and reading enhanced citation support in OpenDocument
2. Inserting and displaying citations in OpenOffice Writer using the new format. (Note: this task does not include the graphical user interface to insert the citation in the new format, only the UNO interface to provide the basic function. The GUI is to be developed in stage 2).
3. Storage of document bibliographic data in the OOo document save package and the code changes necessary to read and save that bibliographic data.

We urgently need volenteers to do these tasks. For further details on development tasks go to the Developer Pages

More Details, links to -

General information

A detailed list of OpenOffice bibliographic deficiencies.
Bibliographic Software and Standards list
Bibliographic Styles Information   NEW   on a wiki - contribute
OpenDocument Fellowship Metadata project
The Importance of Style Manuals. A poetic view
An interview with David Wilson about the Bibliographic Project

Technical information

Overview of Bibliographic project components
Technical Information about the Openoffice Bibliographic Implementation
An analysis of Bibliographic components and their relationships
Writer enhancements needed for OOoBib on a wiki - contribute
Bibliographic Database needed enhancement proposals on a wiki - contribute

Developers Needed

The bibliographic project needs developers to help us implement our vision. The bibliographic project team will offer them every assistance. If needed they will also receive support from the Sun Microsystems' OpenOffice developers. See our Developers' Wiki for more details.

Participation

First, subscribe to the bibliographic mailing lists that interest you. You could join the users@bibliographic.openoffice.org or the more technical dev@bibliographic.openoffice.org list. You can become a project member or 'observer' by registering on the members' page.

Then, scan the archive of the lists you have joined to catch up with what has been discussed so far. Also check our 'Documents and Files' page.

Then you might consider introducing yourself. You could let us know how you found out about the project, what your interests are, and anything else you care to share with us.

The originator of this project is David Wilson. Bruce D'Arcus of the Geography Department of Miami University is the co-project leader. He has a blog. We would be please to hear from you, also please feel free to tell the community about what interests you and what you would like to find in this project.