Educate Users to Improve the Project Sustainability

Italo Vignoli
In term of number of users worldwide, we provide the following estimate based on a global number of PC users between 2 and 3 billion (90% Windows, 8% macOS, 2% Linux):

- 100% of desktop Linux users (between 40 and 60 million)
- 10% of desktop Windows users (between 180 and 270 million)
- 10% of desktop macOS users (between 16 and 24 million)

So, we pick the lower figure of 236 million users worldwide, and we further reduce it to 200 million users worldwide to account for some duplications.
Personal Productivity Market (1)

- **Before 1995**
  - Documents had to be printed to be shared
- **Between 1995 and 2005**
  - Evolution from sharing printouts (analog heritage) to sharing static digital documents (interoperability)
  - Birth of cloud solutions for personal productivity, from Google (based on business model) and Microsoft (to find an alternative source of revenues from desktop)
Personal Productivity Market (2)

- Between 2005 and 2010
  - Availability of XML based document formats: development of the ODF standard and the OOXML pseudo-standard
  - OpenOffice.org is the de facto FOSS alternative to MS Office
- After 2010
  - Announcement of LibreOffice, based on ODF, while OOXML is the cornerstone of Microsoft lock-in strategy
  - Several freeware office suites enter the market, while cloud based office suites grow and evolve
Ubuntu 18.04 LTS Default Desktops Applications Survey
Office Suites Category

- LibreOffice
- Google Apps
- WPS Office
- Apache OpenOffice
- Microsoft Office
- Latex
- Web
- OnlyOffice
- ABI Word
- Caligra
- FreeOffice
- Suite
- GNUmeric
- Emacs
- Others
Office Suites Lifecycle

- Office Suites are mature products seen as a commodity by most users (and as such their price might be an issue)
- Although they are a mature product, they will not decline as long as PCs will exist or a different paradigm will be developed (for the time being, there is nothing similar on the horizon)
- The growing attention for digital sovereignty might infuse new life on office suites, but users have to be educated about the importance of standard document formats
Office Suites Market: Revenues

Revenue
In million US$

Reading Support
Revenue in the Office Software segment is projected to reach US$25,653.42m in 2021.

Source: Statista (Forecast adjusted for expected impact of COVID-19, December 2020)
Office Suites Market: Growth

Reading Support
The Office Software segment is expected to show a revenue growth of 5.1% in 2022.

Source: Statista (Forecast adjusted for impact of COVID-19, December 2020)
LibreOffice Project Model

- The Document Foundation represents the community, provides the projects' governance, owns trademarks and Internet domains, and collects donations which support the activities of community members.
- The community, with volunteer contributors and corporate sponsored contributors, is managing development based on resources provided by The Document Foundation.
- The Document Foundation is a charitable organization, and as such is not supposed to release commercial software.
LibreOffice Stakeholder

- Community Members
  - High personal involvement (volunteering)
  - High project value (the project I am contributing to)
- Users
  - No personal involvement (free product)
  - Low product value (office suites are a commodity)
Some Numbers

• Based on data extracted from Git, developers sponsored by ecosystem companies provide 68% of all activity on the source code, while volunteers provide 28%
• Based on donation numbers, 90% are from individuals and 10% from SMBs
• Based on estimates, less than 5% of LibreOffice enterprise users contribute in any way to the project, including buying any kind of product/service from ecosystem companies
Background Thoughts

• The global open source ecosystem has evolved since 2010, and there have been lengthy discussions about the relationships with business using OSS without contributing back to OSS projects

• In 2014, the discovery of the Heartbleed Bug was a turning point to raise the issue of OSS sustainability

• In 2016, Nadia Eghbal published the paper “Roads and Bridges: the Unseen Labor behind our Digital Infrastructure”

• In 2019, Dries Buytaert published the blog post: “Balancing Makers and Takers to Scale and Sustain Open Source”
Defining Open Source Makers and Takers

Some companies are born out of OSS, and as a result believe deeply and invest significantly in their communities. With their help, OSS has revolutionized software for the benefit of many. Let's call these types of companies *Makers*. Now that OSS adoption is widespread, lots of companies, from technology startups to technology giants, monetize OSS projects without contributing back to those projects. Let's call them *Takers*.

The difference between Makers and Takers is not always 100% clear, but as a rule of thumb, *Makers* directly invest in growing both their business and the OSS project. *Takers* are solely focused on growing their business and let others take care of the OSS project they rely on.
**Takers** reap the benefits of the **Makers'** OSS contribution [...]. The **Taker** is likely to disrupt the **Maker**.

On an equal playing field, the only way the **Maker** can defend itself is by investing more in its proprietary offering and less in the OSS project.

To survive, it has to behave like the **Taker** to the detriment of the larger OSS community.

**Takers** harm OSS projects.

An aggressive **Taker** can induce **Makers** to behave in a more selfish manner and reduce or stop their contributions to OSS.
Toxic Solutions not Based on OSD

- Cloud Protection Licenses
  - Commons Clause License (RedisLabs)
  - Server Side Public License (MongoDB, Elastic Search, GrayLog)
- Confluent Community License (TimeScaleDB)
- Business Source License (MariaDB, CockroachDB)
- Ethical Source License
  - Hippocratic License (Coraline Ada Ehmke)

(These solutions are poisonous for FOSS)
SEPTEMBER 28, 2010

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 brand "LibreOffice" has been chosen for the software going forward
Relaunch the Innovation

Visual Representation of the Fork

The community, backed by several ecosystem companies, takes control to relaunch the innovation and develop a self-sustaining project, supported by a solid business ecosystem.

Risk of abandon by Oracle after 10 years of continuous growth backed by Sun and community.
THE COMMUNITY, BACKED BY SEVERAL ECOSYSTEM COMPANIES, TAKES CONTROL TO RELAUNCH THE INNOVATION AND DEVELOP A SELF SUSTAINING PROJECT, SUPPORTED BY A SOLID BUSINESS ECOSYSTEM
IN A NUTSHELL

We decided to create a new foundation because none of the existing ones was backing our vision:

an independent FOSS project where the community and the ecosystem work together to make it self sustainable, without the need of a corporate sponsor or a license tweak
The Document Foundation promotes a sustainable, independent and meritocratic community for the global development of free and open source software based on open standards.
After 10 Years

- The Document Foundation has reached its objective, and is recognized as a leading FOSS foundation.
- Thanks to the combined efforts of the entire project, with contributions from community and ecosystem, we have released LibreOffice for desktop, online and mobile.
- We are proud of being recognized by the LibreOffice brand name, which represents the common asset for community and ecosystem members (with a large number of people being active in both areas).
Development Last 2 Years

- Enterprise: 68%
- Volunteers: 28%
- TDF: 4%
All Contributions Last 2 Years

- People:
  - Core: 23305 (78%)
  - Regular: 107 (4%)
  - Casual: 4951 (17%)

- Commits:
  - Core: 298 (66%)
  - Regular: 1502 (24%)
  - Casual: 46 (10%)
Comment on Chart Numbers

- **Development**: around 68% of contributions to the source code are from ecosystem companies, while volunteer contributions are 28% (TDF is just 4%)
- **Community**: developers paid by ecosystem companies are around 40, so an extremely large portion of the 78% of "core contributions" is paid by ecosystem companies
- **Consequence**: without contributions from the ecosystem, we would have issues in keeping up with user expectations
Who Pays LibreOffice Development?

- 68% of development is paid by customers of ecosystem companies selling a LibreOffice Enterprise product
  - The majority of this activity is focused on new features and improvements to interoperability
- 28% of development is provided by volunteers, and paid by their willingness to contribute to the project
  - A large percentage of this activity is focused on the UX (user interface and usability)
Evolution of LibreOffice Ecosystem

- 2010 – 2014
  - Growth of ecosystem companies
  - From 20 to 60 full time paid developers
- 2014 – 2017
  - Loss of several ecosystem companies
  - From 60 to 40 full time paid developers
- 2017 – 2020
  - Stable number of ecosystem companies
Development Cycles

LibreOffice 3.x
- CODE CLEANING

LibreOffice 4.x
- USER INTERFACE

LibreOffice 5.x
- CODE REFACTORYING

LibreOffice 6.x
- UBIQUITOUS PRODUCTIVITY
Where Are We Today

- The community is growing and is extending its reach
- The ecosystem is not growing as much as the community
- Relationships between ecosystem and community are not ideal, and risk to create issues left and right, which are not beneficial for the health of the project
- A growing number of community members is not aware of the roots of the project, and while providing enthusiastic contributions may also create frictions
  - Together, we must develop a new strategy for the next decade, to support the growth of the project
LibreOffice Project

- Ideally positioned in the FOSS environment
  - Available for desktop, cloud and mobile platforms
  - Native support of the best standard document format
  - Best-in-class support of Microsoft Office documents
  - Support of other legacy proprietary formats
- Only viable FOSS alternative to Microsoft Office
- Sits at the crossroads of FOSS ecosystems
LibreOffice Project

Community

Volunteers

Ecosystem
LibreOffice Project
Objectives

- Provide the best FOSS office suite
- Leveraging the strength of LibreOffice brand
- Educating users, from individuals to organizations, about the values and the needs of a self sustaining FOSS project
- Finding the right balance between the free product and the enterprise supported product
- Underline the peculiarities of the LibreOffice project
- Improve transparency of decisions and process
LibreOffice USP

- The best open source office suite ever
- Backed by a strong community and a strong ecosystem
- Providing the standard document format for interoperability and digital sovereignty, and a superior compatibility with proprietary document format
- The best of open source, with professional support available for the organizations using office productivity for production and management of strategic business contents
Next 10 Years

- Use the LibreOffice Technology ingredient brand, to stress the platform difference/advantage over other office suites
- Reduce the perception that The Document Foundation is a software vendor, providing support and other services
- Communicate with a coordinated strategy to make it easier for users to understand which is the best LibreOffice version for their needs
LibreOffice Technology

- LibreOffice Technology is the result of 10 years of development in the right direction
- Same processing engine common to all modules
- Based on a cleaned and refactored source code
- With a focus on code quality and consistency
- Supported by easy and extensive APIs
- The best open source platform for personal productivity tightly integrated on desktop, mobile and cloud
LibreOffice Technology

LibreOffice Technology is the result of ten years of intensive activity on the software's open source code, coordinated by the Engineering Steering Committee and carried out by developers, software engineers, security experts, and Interface and user experience specialists of many affiliations.

The goal of this evolutionary process was to create a single software platform for individual productivity on desktop, mobile and the cloud: the only approach able to offer users the interoperability features that enable transparent sharing of all content, and independence from single commercial vendors and vendor lock-in strategies.

Today, there is a large family of products based on LibreOffice Technology for the desktop (both community and enterprise-optimized versions), for the cloud, for Android and iOS, and for Chrome OS. LibreOffice Technology is also used within larger products to convert and process document formats. These products are released by different organizations and have different brand names, but share the same common engine to offer users the same unique advantages in term of interoperability, reliability, robustness and security.

For more details, see the white paper.
### LibreOffice

#### The Document Foundation

**Proprietary and Open Core Office Suites**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Desktop Platforms</th>
<th>Mobile Platforms</th>
<th>Cloud Platforms</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Writer UI</td>
<td>Calc UI</td>
<td>Impress UI</td>
</tr>
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</table>

- **Open Document Format (ODT / ODS / ODP / ODG)**
- **Common Productivity Engine**

- **Desktop Platforms**
  - **WP Engine**
  - **SS Engine**
  - **PS Engine**

- **Mobile Platforms**
  - **WP Engine**
  - **SS Engine**
  - **PS Engine**

- **Cloud Platforms**
  - **WP Engine**
  - **SS Engine**
  - **PS Engine**

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** wcharUICalculatorImpresUICalcUICalculatorWriterUICalculator**

** LibreOffice **

** The Document Foundation **

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** Desktop Platforms **

** Mobile Platforms **

** Cloud Platforms **

** Proprietary and Open Core Office Suites **
LibreOffice: Product to Platform

- 2010: LibreOffice only for the Desktop
- 2020: LibreOffice for the Desktop, LibreOffice LTS optimized for Enterprises, LibreOffice Online for the Cloud, LibreOffice Mobile for Android & iOS, and LibreOffice for Chrome OS
- All these products, from different organizations, share the same engine, which is common to all modules
Steps from Product to Platform

- Improvement of Development Resources
- Code Cleaning and Code Refactoring Activities
- Improvement of Performances and User Interface
- Use of Static Code Analisys and Fuzzing Tools to Improve Code Quality & Security
- Development of New Easy APIs and Macro Libraries
- Continuous Improvement of MS Office Interoperability
- Evolution of the Open Document Format Standard
Roundtrip Test
Open Document Format
the true document standard
which offers freedom of choice
Open Document Format

- **Independent** from a single product: anyone can write a software that handles an open format
- **Interoperable**: allows the transparent sharing of data between heterogeneous systems
- **Neutral**: it does not force the user to adopt, and often buy, a specific product, but leaves a wide choice based on features and quality versus price ratio
- **Perennial**: protects user developed contents from the “evolution” based obsolescence of technology
LibreOffice Technology Based SW

- Desktop (TDF, Red Hat & SUSE)
- Enterprise LTS (Collabora & allotropia)
- Online / Cloud (Collabora & allotropia)
- Android (Collabora)
- iOS & Apple Store (Collabora)
- Windows Store (allotropia)
Differentiate LibreOffice Desktop

- **LibreOffice Community**: forever free, from TDF
  - Supported by volunteers, ideal for individuals, small & medium size business and non profits/NGOs
- **LibreOffice Enterprise**: only from ecosystem members
  - Professionally supported, suggested for production environments in enterprises and large organizations
LibreOffice Versions & Users

Beta / RC
- Early Adopters
- Quality Assurance
- Feature Testing (power users)

Community
- Community
- Individual Users
- SMB Deployments (desktop users)

Enterprise
- Enterprises
- Large Migrations
- Large Deployments (professional users)
Current LibreOffice Users

- LibreOffice Community
- Support with Donations: individuals, SMBs
- Free Riders: many universities, many government organizations, many enterprises
- LibreOffice Enterprise
- Purchase Product: some universities, some enterprises, some government organizations
What is LibreOffice Enterprise?

- LibreOffice Enterprise is not the name of a new product but the "family name" adopted by TDF for products provided by ecosystem companies.
- For historical reasons, these products may not include LibreOffice in their name, so the "family name" will make it easy to associate them with LibreOffice, and leverage the brand recognition.
- By having a "family name" which refers to different products based on the same technology, we avoid the risk of supporting a single commercial company.
Support LibreOffice Enterprise

- LibreOffice in Business Webpage
- Improved LibreOffice Download Webpage
- LinkedIn: LibreOffice Enterprise Company Page
- Relaunch of LibreOffice Certification
- Registration of business oriented domains
  - https://libreoffice.business
  - https://libreoffice-ecosystem.business
LibreOffice in business

LibreOffice Community from The Document Foundation is great for home and small office users. TDF does not provide technical support for the software; users can get help from others on our mailing lists and Ask LibreOffice.

LibreOffice is also great for schools, educational and research institutions, and large organisations. In these cases, we strongly recommend using LibreOffice Enterprise versions from one of our ecosystem partners, such as those listed below. In that way, you can get long-term Service Level Agreements (SLA), personalised assistance, technical support, and custom new features.

Furthermore, the work done by ecosystem partners flows back into the LibreOffice project, benefiting the larger community of LibreOffice users.

LibreOffice Enterprise doesn’t refer to a single product, but a family of products built upon LibreOffice with the additional benefits mentioned above.

Ecosystem partners

The following companies are part of our Advisory Board, and are shown in random order.

- akloipa - services, consulting and products around LibreOffice
- Adfin SyGroup - Enterprise-level support
- Collabora - Collabora Office, Collabora Online
- CIB - LibreOffice powered by CIB, LibreOffice Online powered by CIB

Note that additional professional support options are available.
LinkedIn: LibreOffice Enterprise
LibreOffice Certification

LibreOffice Certification

To check a list of certified professionals please visit this page.

Rationale for LibreOffice Certification

Certification has been traditionally associated with proprietary software vendors, although the system has been in place at FOSS vendors such as MySQL, Red Hat and SUSE for a number of years. Certification strengthens the relationship with partners while ensuring a quality of service good enough to avoid problems at final users.

There are two distinct aspects to certification. One is to certify organisations that are recognised partners or franchising, and the second is to certify the competence in specific areas. LibreOffice Certification has the objective of assessing the competence in areas such as LibreOffice development and LI support, migrations to LibreOffice and LibreOffice training.

According to TDF vision, certified professionals have the objective of extending the reach of the community to the corporate world, by offering SOIs and IT managers a recognition in line with proprietary offerings (in order to give them a comparable choice, not limited to software but including value added services).

Certified professionals are supposed to become a valuable channel for a deeper engagement with the corporate world, that will ultimately lead to an improved customer satisfaction. In fact, by communicating with the LibreOffice community through certified professionals, organisations should be able to improve the way they leverage the advantages of free software and the features of LibreOffice and get a better value added support.

In addition, through certified professionals, organisations should also be able to better communicate their ideas and needs to TDF, and ultimately co-operate with the LibreOffice Community in order to start contributing to the development of the free office suite by engaging certified developers to fix specific bugs and regressions, or to add new features.

TDF challenge is to grow the project, the product and the ecosystem (the components of the "whole" product), in order to cross the chasm between the adoption of LibreOffice by innovators and early adopters and the adoption of LibreOffice by the early and late majority (or group of pragmatists who are not going to buy into a discontinuous technology unless they can reference other pragmatist, which are highly support oriented).

LibreOffice Certification

LibreOffice Certification is completely different from commercial certification. TDF is looking for something more than simple development, integration, project management, migration, training or technical skills. TDF is looking for LibreOffice Ambassadors, able to provide value added professional services to grow the LibreOffice ecosystem.

In fact, certification is a key milestone for building the LibreOffice ecosystem, and increase the number of organizations capable of
Summary of Action Items

LibreOffice Technology
- White Paper
- Announcement
- Website Section
- Slide Deck

LibreOffice Enterprise
- Dedicated Webpage
- Improved Download Page
- Linkedin Company Page
- Business Websites
Summary of Action Items

Education Campaign
• Talks at Events
• By-Monthly Blog Post
• Bibliography/Webography about OSS Sustainability
• Interviews/Podcasts

Certification Marketing
• Promote the Certification Program
• Tips & Tricks provided by Certified Professionals
• Interview Certified Professionals
• Quarterly Webinar promoting LibreOffice Certification
Thanks

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