

CFD's Tuesday Tech Tips #6



Welcome

Ever heard of OpenOffice? Dr. Bob Fowler told me about it a few years ago, and I wanted to share with you some additional information about the productivity suite that I have since discovered.

Some Interesting Scoop about OpenOffice

- First and foremost, OpenOffice is Open Source software¹, which means it's **freely downloadable** at OpenOffice.org. (Yay!!! from all us coupon-clippers.)
- OpenOffice components are **comparable to products most of us currently use**. The various applications in OpenOffice look similar to familiar applications, and work much like them, as well. Here's a sampling:
 - Writer (similar to Word),
 - Calc (similar to Excel),
 - Impress (works like PowerPoint),
 - Base (database program),
 - Math (program which allows easy creation of mathematical equations), and
 - Draw (from simple drawing to 3D design)
- Platforms currently supported include Microsoft Windows (98 - Vista), GNU/Linux ("Linux"), Sun Solaris, Mac OS X (under X11), and FreeBSD. (see OpenOffice.org for further information)
- OpenOffice enables you to share documents with **one-click PDF exporting!**
- Portable OpenOffice.org, distributed by OpenOffice is designed to **run the suite from a USB flash drive**. You will find instructions on their website.
- The Sun ODF Plugin for Microsoft Office is also a free download, giving **users of Microsoft Office Word, Excel and PowerPoint the ability to read, edit and save to the ISO-standard Open Document Format (ODF)**. The plugin works with Microsoft Office 2003, Microsoft Office XP and even Microsoft Office 2000. Support for Microsoft Office 2007 is planned for one of the next releases, according to the website. (see <http://www.sun.com/software/star/openoffice/> for more information)
- OxygenOffice Professional is an extension of OpenOffice.org, providing these features:
 - Possibility to run Visual Basic for Application (VBA) macros in Calc (for testing)
 - Multiple monitor support for Impress (the PowerPoint double)
 - Improved Calc HTML export
 - Enhanced Access support for Base
 - Security fixes

- Enhanced performance
- Enhanced color-palette
- Enhanced help menu, additional User's Manual, and extended tips for beginners
- Optionally it provides, free for personal and professional use, more than 3,200 graphics, both clip art and photos, templates/sample documents, 90+ free fonts, and tools like OOoWikipedia (source: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/OpenOffice.org>)

- According to their website, the OpenOffice.org Bibliographic Project is working toward adding robust reference management software into its suite within the next few years.

¹**Open source software** is computer software which source code is available under a license (or arrangement such as the public domain) that meets the Open source definition. This permits users to use, change, and improve the software, and to redistribute it in modified or unmodified form. It is often developed in a public, collaborative manner.
(source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Open_source_software)

Good teaching,

Sara