

Bonus Chapter 5

Setting Up OpenOffice.org

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The appendix explains how to install OpenOffice.org, but after you install you may need to make some adjustments, depending on your operating system. You may also need to make some decisions about how to switch from the office suite that you used previously.

In this chapter, we provide some technical information (mostly) that you may need to make your OpenOffice.org experience be a happy one. (And we want you to be happy!)

Chapter 7 explains the basics of configuring OpenOffice.org after you get it up and running.

Migration Issues

If you have been using another office suite, you need to decide whether you want to continue to run both office suites or bite the bullet, take the plunge, walk the walk, or — well you get the idea — just use OpenOffice.org. You need to consider how to handle your existing documents and how to save future documents. Table 1 investigates some issues and their possible solutions.

Table 1 Migration Issues and Solutions	
<i>Issue</i>	<i>Possible Solution</i>
You want to see how OpenOffice.org works for you before uninstalling your other office suites.	Keep both suites for a while. If you're using Microsoft Office, don't choose to open them with OpenOffice.org when you install. (See the appendix for information on making this choice.) Save documents in Office format (if you're using Office). Chapter 3 explains how to save OpenOffice.org files in Office format.
You need to train people to use OpenOffice.org before they can use it on a daily basis.	Continue to use your other office suite, and schedule training sessions. Gradually start doing individual projects in OpenOffice.org until everyone feels comfortable. Use the same techniques mentioned in the previous item of this table.
You often send documents to other people who need to open and edit the documents but don't have OpenOffice.org.	Save documents in Office format (if you're using Office). See Chapter 3 for instructions.
You have a large number of existing documents that you need to access from time to time.	You can probably open these documents in OpenOffice.org. To maintain these documents unchanged, make copies either before opening them or by choosing File⇨Save As when you open them.
You use many custom templates.	If you're using Microsoft Office, you can import them into OpenOffice.org. See Chapter 4 for instructions on using the Style Organizer to import templates.
You use many custom macros.	Conversion to OpenOffice.org may be too expensive for you. Translation of macros can be a big job — and can be costly. OpenOffice.org estimates that less than 5% of the leading office suite users may be in this category.

Migration from StarOffice 5.x

When you install OpenOffice.org, you can update an existing StarOffice installation (version 5.2 or higher). If the installation program detects the StarOffice installation (or an earlier OpenOffice.org installation), you can choose to update (in the same language) or install in a different folder. If you choose to update, OpenOffice.org keeps your existing configuration settings automatically. If you choose to install in a different folder, a screen

asks you whether you want to transfer data, such as templates and dictionaries that you have modified, to the new installation. The screen also asks whether you want to import personal data. If you choose no, a screen asking for personal data appears. For more information on this screen, see the appendix.

If you are installing an OpenOffice.org beta version, you may want to choose to install in a different folder, in case you have problems with the beta. Then you can always go back to your earlier program.

To continue to use StarOffice side by side with OpenOffice.org, save your documents in StarOffice format. See Chapter 3 for instructions.

Migration from Microsoft Office

When you install OpenOffice.org, you can choose to open Microsoft Office documents with OpenOffice.org. To continue to open Office documents in Office, make sure that you don't select those check boxes when you install. (See the appendix for more details.) To continue to be able to use Microsoft Office, set OpenOffice.org to automatically save all documents in Office format. Chapter 3 explains how to accomplish this.

If you are accustomed to using certain keyboard shortcuts in Office, you can customize your shortcuts in OpenOffice.org. Many shortcuts are the same, but some are different. Chapter 8 explains how to customize keyboard shortcuts.

OpenOffice.org has a Help page that compares OpenOffice.org features with Office features so that you can find help on them. For example, if you can't find the Document Map, this page explains that in OpenOffice.org, it's called the Navigator. Likewise, Office wizards are called AutoPilots in OpenOffice.org. Look under "Microsoft Office; feature names" in Help.

Finally, when you are ready to take the plunge, you can convert all your Office documents to OpenOffice.org documents. Choose File→AutoPilot→Document Converter to start the AutoPilot. You can choose specific folders to convert, so you can convert only certain documents if you want. You can also specific file types, such as only Word documents.

Migration from WordPerfect

Migration from WordPerfect can be somewhat problematic, because OpenOffice.org doesn't open WordPerfect files and you can't save OpenOffice.org files in WordPerfect format. StarOffice for Windows can open WordPerfect files. Unfortunately, StarOffice obtains this feature from a third-party source and cannot make it available in OpenOffice.org's open source structure. SourceForge.net, a Web site that contains open source resources

and code, has a preliminary project for developing a WordPerfect reader. Go to <http://sourceforge.net/projects/libwpd/>.

You can, of course, try saving your WordPerfect documents in RTF or text format and then opening them in OpenOffice.org. If your documents are not complex, you may get good results with the RTF format.