

# *In defense of OO*

I was informed our June TBCS monthly presentation contained numerous flames about Open Office saying “*it sucks.*” First off, this is not nice talk and hardly true. The presenter was and is a friend and former Microsoft employee: Chuck Oppermann.

I began the FOSS SIG more than four years ago as a personal quest to encourage members to use the zero cost software I've been using for years. In the DOS days we called it shareware or free-ware. Some of this software is copyrighted and others are in various degrees of open source.

Formerly I was a Microsoft hater but that is past. For twenty plus years my income came supporting Windows networks with hundreds of proprietary software licenses including Microsoft Office. I knew MS Office well and coached people to use it effectively. In a school environment software licensing costs are drastically discounted and were well within our budget.

Costs increase dramatically on the street. I see friends and members invest big dollars into software where they use a fraction of its potential. This includes the latest Windows, PhotoShop, Acrobat and MS Office to name a few. Too often, the investment in software exceeds the cost of the hardware on which it is installed. Consider also ongoing update costs that continue for the life of the product.



**Open Office (which has recently been updated and renamed Libre Office) is an open source gem.** It mimics all the Microsoft Office applications and is an ideal choice for home users. It reads and writes to old and new Microsoft formats and can be downloaded and installed for no cost. No registration is required. You can make a copy of the download to give to your friends. I'd also suggest the training curve is very short compared to newer versions of MS Office. There are unique OO features such as one-click exports to PDF files, equal OO versions for Mac, Linux and Windows, and default file saving in universal ODF (open doc formats).

Is OO the equivalent of MS Office? Probably not but I wouldn't know. For more than five years all my office work has been accomplished using OO. I use “Write” (the word processor), “Calc” (the spreadsheet) and “Base” (the database) to manage a non-profit business and things for home. I make club presentations using “Impress” (OO's PowerPoint clone) saving files in .ppt format. All the above I edit and easily move between Windows and Linux computers.

In my opinion for TBCS members and Joe and Sally HomeUser, OO will more than meet their need (heck if you only write one Christmas letter once a year even WordPad will do). Save Office upgrade costs and buy yourself a new PC.

**OpenOffice / LibreOffice hardly sucks!** (notice Chuck how I said this without trashing your product)

OpenOffice SUCKS

