Successful Stories: Migrating Libreoffice in Taiwan

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Franklin Weng
About Me

• An active open source developer / translator / promoter in Taiwan
• Coordinator of KDE zh_TW L10N team
• Libreoffice translator & promoter
• President of Software Liberty Association Taiwan
• Own a company to provide open source solutions and services
Story 1 : Yi-Lan County

By Sunjun Information Service Company
(Composed of open source community members, expert in open source solutions and services)
In 2008, Yi-Lan County used to try to migrate OpenOffice.org.
The solution that time: "portable OpenOffice".
However...
No surprise, it failed.
Main Reasons (IMO)

- "software practice"
- "hardware practice"
- Files from superior (like Ministry of Finance in Taiwan) and other units were still of Microsoft Office's format.
- They didn't ask me to help them.
Then, in 2014...

Two incidents change the condition...
Press release

Open document formats selected to meet user needs

From: Cabinet Office, The Rt Hon Lord Maude of Horsham and Government Digital Service

First published: 22 July 2014

Part of: Government transparency and accountability

This news article was published under the 2010 to 2015 Conservative and Liberal Democrat coalition government
The Second Incident

Budget
In Yi-Lan County

- They're still using Windows XP.
- And Microsoft Office 2003
- Tragedy happened when they plan to upgrade from Windows XP to Windows 8...
Microsoft Office 2003 failed to work in Windows 8
If they choose to upgrade...

- **Both** Windows and Microsoft Office need to be upgraded.
- The total license fee is about...

100 million NT dollars (about £2.8 million)
Migrating Libreoffice

- Starting from March 2015
- Libreoffice 4.4 is selected
- Deploy Libreoffice to the whole county *first*
Migrating Libreoffice (cont.)

- 80 classes of training courses, include
  - Basic/advanced Writer
  - Basic/advanced Calc
  - Impress
- All units in Yi-Lan County Government and schools
- Mainly to teach *correct concepts* about making a document.
Help From the Government

- The director announces and emphasizes the policy and the reason in *every class*.
- Ask all the units to send ODF/PDF files *only*.
- Publish the units and names who "accidently send Microsoft Office files" *every day*. 
Help From the Sunjun and OSS Community

• Help the accounting units to convert old Excel files into ODF.
  – Check the functions
  – Check the tables and table frames
• Answer questions from users
• Promote Libreoffice and FOSS
Current Status

- ODF becomes the **national standard format** and it becomes a **national policy** to use ODF to make documents (leading by National Development Council in Taiwan).

  - **Goal**: Fully migrating to ODF/Libreoffice in 2017.

  - Different from central gov, **Yi-Lan County** becomes the **demo site** of migrating to Libreoffice, and of course, ODF.

  - Not many complaints from users so far. Main complaints are lack of Android/iOS editors.
Story 2: Coretronic

By OSS Integral Institute Co., Ltd.
(Founded by a senior FOSS community member, expert in Open Office / LibreOffice)
About Coretronic

- Founded in 1992, initially an display solution provider.
- The first LCD backlight module manufacturer in Taiwan.
- Lead in developing and mass-producing the smallest and lightest VGA single-panel LCD projectors and XGA DLP projectors in the world.
Background

- Still the budget problem
  - According to Microsoft's request, the EA license fee Coretronic needs to pay is almost their earnings in a whole year.

- In 2010, they started to rethink and find alternatives of Microsoft Windows and Office.
How Coretronic Do It

1. Clarify what they *really* need
   
   • For example, EA contains Access but less than 1% of employees need it.
   • The operating lines only need to run some automatic tools, no Windows is needed.
2. Cooperate with OSSII to investigate users needs and plan how to migrate to OpenOffice / LibreOffice.
   • Different departments need different solutions, so they planned a hybrid solution.

3. Training courses
   • Gradually change the user practices and migrate to OxOffice (derived from LibreOffice).
   • China branches uses WPS instead.
Hybrid Solution

- Microsoft EA, Open Value, Microsoft Open License Program
- Microsoft Windows / Ubuntu Linux
- OxOffice (derived from Libreoffice by OSSII)
- Keep some Microsoft Word and Excel to handle files from outside
Microsoft's Response

- In 2012 Microsoft went to Coretronic to audit their license usage.
- Passed.
- Happy ever after...
Key Success Factors in These Cases

- Support and determination from superior unit.
- **Right people** (from FOSS community) to help solving problem and make users accept.
- **Using a unified version** is a very important key success factor.
  - To simplify and avoid many problem caused by version differences.
Challenges in Taiwan

- Libreoffice still has many problem dealing with Chinese characters.
  - **Big5 is not supported.**
  - Default font size is different from Microsoft Office.
  - Text import in Calc would make Chinese characters show incorrectly in preview.
  - **Vertical text.**
  - …… and many more.
Challenges (cont.)

- ODF generated by Microsoft Office causes many problems
  - CTO in Microsoft Taiwan presented how Microsoft "contributed and supported" ODF. He admitted that Microsoft "has no choice but to add something in the generated ODF file so that some features can be supported."
  - It can be a key failure factor in Taiwan.
  - Not a Libreoffice's issue, but we need to deal with it.
Tell the world,

Taiwan is migrating to ODF/Libreoffice

now!
Thanks!

Q&A