Successful Stories: Migrating Libreoffice in Taiwan

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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)

Background

- In 2008, Yi-Lan County used to try to migrate OpenOffice.org.
- The solution that time: "portable OpenOffice".
- However...

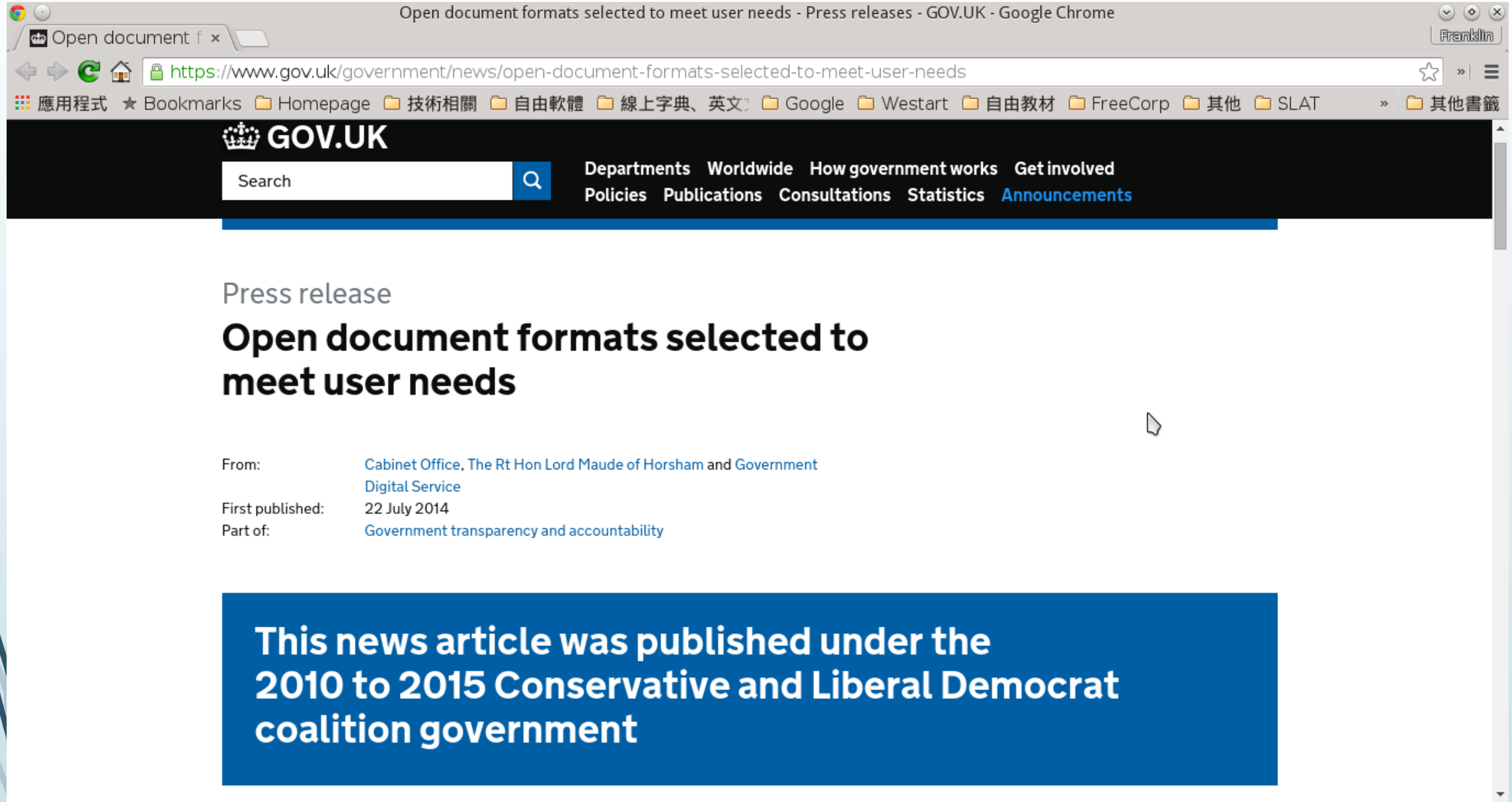
No surprise, it failed.

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...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Policies Publications Consultations Statistics Announcements
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.

How Coretronic Do It (Cont.)

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