Quo Vadis Helpcontent?

OLIVIER HALLOT – The Document Foundation
History of Help Content in LibreOffice

- 2011- Help was exported to wikihelp (Kendy)
  - Source of HC was still the old Help XMP (XHP)
  - Constrain to countries with poor telecom service.
  - Legal constraints in some countries

- 2011-2014
  - Nothing happened (marginally updated),
  - Feature x HC gap widens
  - Lots of new features with no Help Content
  - e.g.: Personas, Basic IDE, Calc Statistics, Calc xml streams, Calc xml filters, Calc new functions, Writers Front Pages, CMIS, New file format filters
If you don't document a feature..

- Users won't find first-aid assistance (doh!)
- User get lost...
  - LibreOffice seen as a lesser software
  - Loss of productivity, angry users
  - Unhappy managers, CIOs and CEOs
- User can do BAD THINGS

- And you loose the F1 excuse!!!!
But worse!

- An undocumented feature is a HIDDEN feature
- LibreOffice has hundreds of dazzling features
- It will not be advertised properly!
- No assistance from community members
- Your dev' work pass unnoticed, you shoot yourself you foot!
- LibreOffice must be more than a dev' personal sandbox:
  - get professional!
And worse..

- No reference for correct BUG FIXING
- No ground for feature behavior
- Dev' rotation
- ODF Author will suffer to write a proper user guide
What to do?

- Boys'n Girls: PLEASE write about your new feature implementation.
- Any document, writer ODT page, wiki page, blog post
- Explain what your feature does, benefits, how to use it.

**EXEMPLI GRATIA**

- Must be **SINE QUA NON** for GSOC students!!!
What to do?

- An alternate technology to write HC is not in place
- We will continue to use our old HC technology
- Instead, Help Authoring extension close to be fixed and usable
- Use LibreOffice Writer to edit/write HC pages
- Thanks to Kendy + Youssouf Philips + Regina Henschel hacks
- Many improvements in usability
- Corrections in xhp filter
Write these numbers...

- 80430
  - Meta bug for FEATURE x HC gap, that is: undocumented or new features
  - Must also report changes in features, menus, dialog boxes
  - Pick a bug in the dependency list and write the proper HC
  - Easy hack for members of the community
  - Add a bug to this list if you find a documentation gap
Write these numbers...

93580
- Meta bug for HelpAuthoring.oxt improvements or fixes
- HelpAuthoring is a set of
  - LibreOffice macros
  - 2 xslt filters (read and write xhp files)
  - One writer template, with specific styles for HC conversion
Where to focus

- **Step 1: Focus of a reference documentation**
  - Describe the feature
  - Document the dialog options
  - Insert internal or external references
  - Add page entry to the TREE file
  - Set the ground for later bug fixing

- **Step 2: Write a user guide**
  - Much less easy to write a good text.
  - Debate on having it in HC or as external documents
    - ODF Author user guide much better written
What is left to discuss

- Should we insert media in HC?
  - Less textual, boring reading
- Should we write the user guide?
- Can we improve the English writing
  - I am not a native English speaker/writer
- How can we bring the HC xml reference to LibreOffice?
  - Currently a PDF file from Sun Microsystem
- Use dialogs properties for HC tips?
- HC as a separate package for download
- And now...
What is left to discuss

The worst of LibreOffice
This is a reference documentation for the UNO IDL API.
Find documentation an object such as a Calc “cell”
  - Properties
  - Methods

Breaks SDK usage from XRAY macro

Instead, USE OPENOFFICE api DOC's
THANK YOU
LibreOffice Design Team

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Conference Presentation Template
Pre-defined Shapes

Here are some pre-defined shapes for your convenience: copy the shapes, copy their formatting, or use the LibO styles.

- Green Dark
- Blue Dark
- Orange Dark
- Purple Dark
- Yellow Dark

You may add your code examples, XML statements, or debug output here ;-)
Section Header Example

You may add additional text here ...
Thank you … for using this template!

- See you at the LibreOffice Aarhus Conference
- Find out more at http://conference.libreoffice.org