

LibreOffice Rethinks the Office Suite

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LibreOffice only forked from OpenOffice.org six weeks ago. Already, however, news about its future directions is starting to trickle out. The details are sometimes sketchy, but they suggest that LibreOffice and OpenOffice.org could diverge more quickly than most observers imagined.

Initially, The Document Foundation (TDF), which oversees LibreOffice development, announced a general set of principles in The Next Decade Manifesto, a name that refers to the fact that OpenOffice.org recently celebrated its tenth anniversary. This manifesto promises that TDF will support free software and open standards and work methods, as well as other causes, such as the preservation of endangered languages. To make matters clearer, the manifesto also states what TDF rejects, including monopolies and proprietary formats. The manifesto also promises open, peer-reviewed development.

These declarations are promising, so far as they go. They try to distinguish TDF not only from Microsoft Office, its main proprietary format, but also from Oracle Corporation, the current owners of OpenOffice.org, which many people believe lacks dedication to free software practices. However, the declarations are too high-level to give much indication of what directions LibreOffice might be heading.

[Recently, though, more concrete information has been released.](#) [2]

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