

THE TOOLS FOR CREATING AND VIEWING PDF/ODF FILES AND EDITING ODF FILES

1. PDF FILES

PDF (Portable Document Format), an open standard format, is widely used publishing tool in situations where the end user does not need to edit the document.

1.1. **How to view PDF files?** PDF viewers are available on all platforms. In addition to viewing pdf files, such viewers allow also for printing PDF documents. There are also web-based viewers.

On Linux and Mac OS X platforms, PDF format is supported natively, i.e., no additional installations/downloads are needed to view PDF files. In fact, Linux and Mac users can choose from several different pdf viewers.

Although at present time (December 2008), Microsoft Windows platform does not support PDF format natively, it is easy to install/download additional software packages to view PDF files. Most of them are free of any costs. The most popular one is Adobe Reader, found at:

<http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep2.html>

The above site automatically recognizes user's computer platform, and thus it can be used to download Adobe Reader for Linux and Mac platforms too.

For a long list of PDF viewers for all platforms, including web-based viewers go to:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_PDF_software

1.2. **How to create PDF files.** There also are many available tools for creating PDF files or converting existing documents to PDF format. Linux and Mac OS X platforms provide them natively. The printing systems of both Linux and Mac OS X enable exporting to PDF format from any application.

Most of PDF creators/converters for Microsoft Windows platform are commercial, although there are two free products: Open Source *PDFCreator* and freeware *DoPDF*. See the link at the end of this section for further information on those products.

Additionally, the users of Microsoft Office 2007 (on Windows Server 2003, Windows Vista, and Windows XP Service Pack 2) can install pdf add-on from the Microsoft Download site:

<http://www.microsoft.com/downloads/Search.aspx?displaylang=en>

Here is the list of know PDF viewers/creators/converters for all platforms:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_PDF_software

2. ODF FILES

ODF (Open Document Format) is an open standard format for saving and exchanging editable office documents.

2.1. How to view and edit ODF files? As in the case of PDF format, ODF support in both Linux and Mac OS X (version 10.5 or higher) is native, i.e., no additional installations/downloads are needed to view or edit ODF files. Furthermore, Linux/Mac/Windows users can download freely available Open Office Suite from:

<http://download.openoffice.org>

The above site recognizes user's computer platform and automatically downloads platform's specific version of Open Office.

Additionally, the users of Microsoft Windows 98, ME, 2000 (Service Pack 2 or higher), XP or Vista that have MS Office 2000, Office XP, Office 2003, Office 2007 (Service Pack 1 or higher) or the equivalent stand-alone version of Microsoft Office Word, Excel or PowerPoint, can download Sun ODF Plugin for Microsoft Office:

http://www.sun.com/software/star/odf_plugin

SUN's plugin is well integrated into Microsoft Office Word. It's just another filter, and when ODF file is opened, one really works with the ODF file. This means that one can save the modifications by pressing Ctrl+S. One can even configure Microsoft Office Word to make ODF its default file format.

Furthermore, according to Microsoft press release:

<http://www.microsoft.com/Presspass/press/2008/may08/05-21ExpandedFormatsPR.mspx>

MS Office 2007 SP2 (due in early 2009) will include ODF support in MS Word, Excel, and PowerPoint applications.

Finally, here is the list of dozens of applications supporting ODF format:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_applications_supporting_ODF

Note: *A peculiar behavior of Internet Explorer (at least in versions 6 and 7) prevents proper downloads of ODF files from CSUN's webserver. Until suitable changes are made to CSUN's webserver, this quirk can be manually overridden as follows (file foo.odt serves as an example in the instructions below):*

When File Download window opens with three buttons: Open, Save, and Cancel, choose Save button and in the Save As window change foo.zip in File Name dialog box to foo.odt. Next, (and that is also essential) change Compressed (zipped) Folder setting in Save as type dialog box to All Files. Actually, there are only two possible choices to pick from: Compressed (zipped) Folder or All Files. Finally, hit Save button in Save As window and foo.odt file is in a designated place on a local system. Now one can open/view/edit foo.odt file using either Open Office or MS Office Word, with SUN's plugin installed.