



Suite Night

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SUITES

What are they?

- Groups of Software
 - generally distributed together
 - having a consistent user interface
 - usually can interact with each other
- Typical Office Suite
 - Word Processor
 - Spreadsheet
 - Presentation Application
 - Sometimes more


SUITE COMPARISON

- Microsoft Office
 - Most widely used especially in businesses
 - 95% of market
 - Full featured
 - Standard of comparison
 - Expensive for home user
 - ~\$400

ALTERNATIVES

- A Number of alternatives [comparison](#)
 - Commercial suites eg. Corel WordPerfect suite, Star Office, etc
 - None have made significant inroads against MS Office
 - Some are now being considered as cost reductions
- **Open Office** is a free alternative that has been available for some time
- More recently IBM Symphony and Google Docs & Spreadsheets are available for free download
- These are ideal alternatives for the home user

Tonight's Discussion

- Microsoft Office
 - Word  , Excel  , PowerPoint 
 - Also Outlook, Access, Publisher, Visio, FrontPage ...
- Open Office
 - Writer  , Calc  , Impress 
 - Also Base, Draw, Math
- IBM/Lotus Symphony
 - Documents  , Presentations  , Spreadsheets 
- Google Docs & Spreadsheets 

Comparisons

- I will not be comparing Usability
 - I have used MS Office for years and am not very familiar with others
 - Once you pick a favorite, all suites should be easily learnable with use
- I will be comparing Functionality
 - I have selected a relatively complex Document, Spreadsheet and Presentation created in MS Office
 - These were converted into the other aps and examined for loss of content

Default Settings

- Open Office, Symphony and Google Docs accept Microsoft formats - .doc, .xls, .ppt
 - Open Office and Symphony both default to open source formats - .odt, .ods, .odp
 - Google Docs imports .odt and .ods but not .odp (presentations)

General Impressions

- Open Office seems to have an interface most similar to MS Office
- Google Docs is intriguing
 - It loses most functionality compared to MS
 - But is probably adequate for most users
 - And it may be the most convenient for a home user
- All should be adequate for most home tasks - try and choose