

# Read Only View On Collabora Online

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Collabora  
Online



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# How Read Only Documents Were Treated Before and Why



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## Read Only Documents on desktop

- In LibreOffice, read only view of a document is a choice of the user who opens the file, unless the operating system permissions are not set otherwise.
- In Collabora Online, restricting the edits on a document is a choice of the user who shares the file.
- In Collabora Online, editing the shared file shouldn't be possible if it is read only. It works different than the desktop application.
- Collabora Online provides collaborative editing and viewing of a document. Assume a read only permitted user and an edit permitted user open the same file. Collabora Online should open the file on the server side with editing capabilities, because edit-permitted user may modify the file. Also, Collabora Online should prevent the edits from the read only permitted user.



# How Read Only Documents Were Treated Before and Why

- This scenario shows that, if read only permitted user's commands arrive at the document, they will be processed.
- Our approach to this issue is to prevent any actions of the read only permitted user, other than scrolling, zooming and the like.
- Preventing any modification is a difficult task and it also prevents users from selecting the portions of text, copying them or clicking on the hyperlinks.
- We changed this approach in Collabora Online 24.04.

# What We Wanted to Achieve



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- We want to provide more freedom to read only permitted users. Read only permitted users should be able to select and copy portions of text or click on the hyperlinks and navigate to the web addresses or copy the hyperlinks.
- Since the document is not read only on the core side, this means that we need well defined filters for the user actions. We need to allow the interactions of read only permitted users and then filter their actions.
- In read only view mode, we also wanted to allow users to add comments to the documents. This feature is bound to a different permission.

# Code Changes





# Code Changes

- In desktop LibreOffice, a view doesn't have a read only setting. Read only checks are done for data and storage layers.
- In order to achieve different view types, we need to be able to have "read only" and "edit" views at the same time.
- This requires views to have the read-only setting.
- We added a "read only view mode" to the view settings.



# Code Changes

- There are 3 parts of Collabora Online. Core part, server part and the client (browser) part.
- For read only view mode, we allowed most of the user interactions on client and server parts.
- We wanted to check read only allowed actions on the core part. With this, we can use some of the existing read only checks, like in UNO commands. Now, UNO commands are checked in read only view mode and commands are not allowed if they are not allowed in a read only document (view based).



# Code Changes

- Checking the validity of the actions on the core side also allows us to keep most of the logic in the same place.
- There may be some more small adjustments on the core side related to read only view mode. Because there are many ways to edit a document with the same action. For example, dragging the selection doesn't modify the document while dragging a shape does.

# Result



# Result

- Collabora Online now supports:
  - Selecting and copying portions of text.
  - Clicking on hyperlinks.
- It may seem a little basic but Collabora Online is turning a desktop app into a full featured collaborative app. Thus, sometimes small features require huge effort.
- We hope Collabora Online users like and benefit from the new read only view mode.



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# Thank you!

*By Gökay Şatır*



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