Joining the OpenOffice Project

BBST needs a testing ground, an application we can practice our techniques on. OpenOffice will be that application for us. OpenOffice is general office application, competing with Microsoft Office. This is intended for professional use. Anything that you would report as a weakness of Office (usability, reliability, performance, or whatever) should be reported against OpenOffice.

We're going to work primarily on Impress, the OpenOffice analog to PowerPoint, because it has historically (in my experience) offered a good mix of understandability and available bugs. Key documentation for OpenOffice is available at the [OpenOffice Graphics Project](#) site.

Today's task is preparation. Download the OpenOffice application, join the OpenOffice project's Quality Assurance team, and read the project documentation on entering and searching bugs in the Issue Tracker (bug tracking system). That gives us access to their bug tracking system and rights to annotate old reports and file new ones.

These notes were last updated on May 21, 2008. Websites change so some links might not work when you take the course. If that happens, please:

- report the error to your instructor
- find the new path to the appropriate page and do the task
- send the link to your instructor to make it easy for us to update these instructors

1. Download OpenOffice

- Go to the [OpenOffice](#) website
- Click on the Download tab
- Click on "Get Release Candidates and Snapshot builds". (This wording may vary in time.)
- Download the current Beta version of OpenOffice. This is build BEA300_m2 as of this writing.

We are going to work with OpenOffice for Windows. That is, the instructors will assume you are running on the Windows XP platform and will not attempt to help you troubleshoot problems that appear related to other platforms. This is not because we are trying to persuade you to buy Windows. What we're trying to do is to manage the instructional complexity that a few time-pressed volunteers have to manage. At time of writing, Vista seems to offer enough problems that many of the people volunteering to be instructors are sticking with XP.

2. Sign Onto the OOo team

You can start at [OpenOffice's page for testing](#) or look first at the page that identifies the [ways you can contribute to the OpenOffice project](#) or this [page that discusses the OpenOffice community](#) in more detail.

In either case, you'll see a registration area at the top of the screen as you slide the cursor over the "Log In" tab.

Click [Register](#) to join the project.

The OpenOffice project has three levels of participation (see the How to Start page):

1. Report bugs
2. Create, file specifications for, and execute manual test cases
3. Join the "QA Team"

For now, we just need to report bugs. Register as a bug reporter.

The main OpenOffice Specification is at http://specs.openoffice.org/

In general, OpenOffice is a direct competitor to Microsoft Office. Incompatibilities between them or things that would disappoint you about OOo if you had started as an MS Office user are violations of user expectations and (as heuristic oracles go) a good starting point for thinking there is a reportable problem.

3. In the Meet & Greet Forum, add your OpenOffice User ID (just the name, not the password) to your topic.

4. Learn the OOo Conventions for Handling Bug Reports

You must read the following documents:

- About Issues (an overview)

- Basic Rules (writing style and structure)

- Entering and Modifying Issues (using their bug tracking system)

The Issue Tracker itself is here. In the tracking system, I usually start at the Query page

5. Join the OOo Graphics Project

- Join the Graphics Project (this is the main project for Impress, the OOo equivalent to PowerPoint)

You might also find these links useful.

- The full set of OpenOffice projects.

- Basic info about projects and about joining projects.

6. Peek through the bug database

- Go to the Issue Tracking Query page
- Browse the database to see what kinds of bugs are open. I suggest a search on Defect, Enhancement, and/or Feature of the Presentation component.
- If you have problems making this first query, ask for Help on our course's Help forum