

Developer Tasks for Non-Code Hackers

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- ▼ 2011-10-15, 10:30, La Cantine

The Observation

- ▼ User oriented community feels separated from developers
 - ▼ “Developers are pushing code without asking us.”
 - ▼ “Developers don't take care about documentation.”
 - ▼ “They just do what they want and they do it very fast.”
- ▼ Developers (as other people) **focus** on their main tasks
 - ▼ **hacking code**
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 - ▼ (You may change the order)
- ▼ But no developer wants to deliver features that nobody uses
- ▼ So developers **are** interested in more than hacking code

The Idea

- ▼ Take an easy hack with visible effect for end-user
- ▼ Play the role of a developer and see where other people can help
- ▼ Go through steps of feature implementation
 - ▼ Evaluation and analysis
 - ▼ Refine and create prototypes
 - ▼ Implement and submit
 - ▼ Document
 - ▼ Test
- ▼ Document what has been done

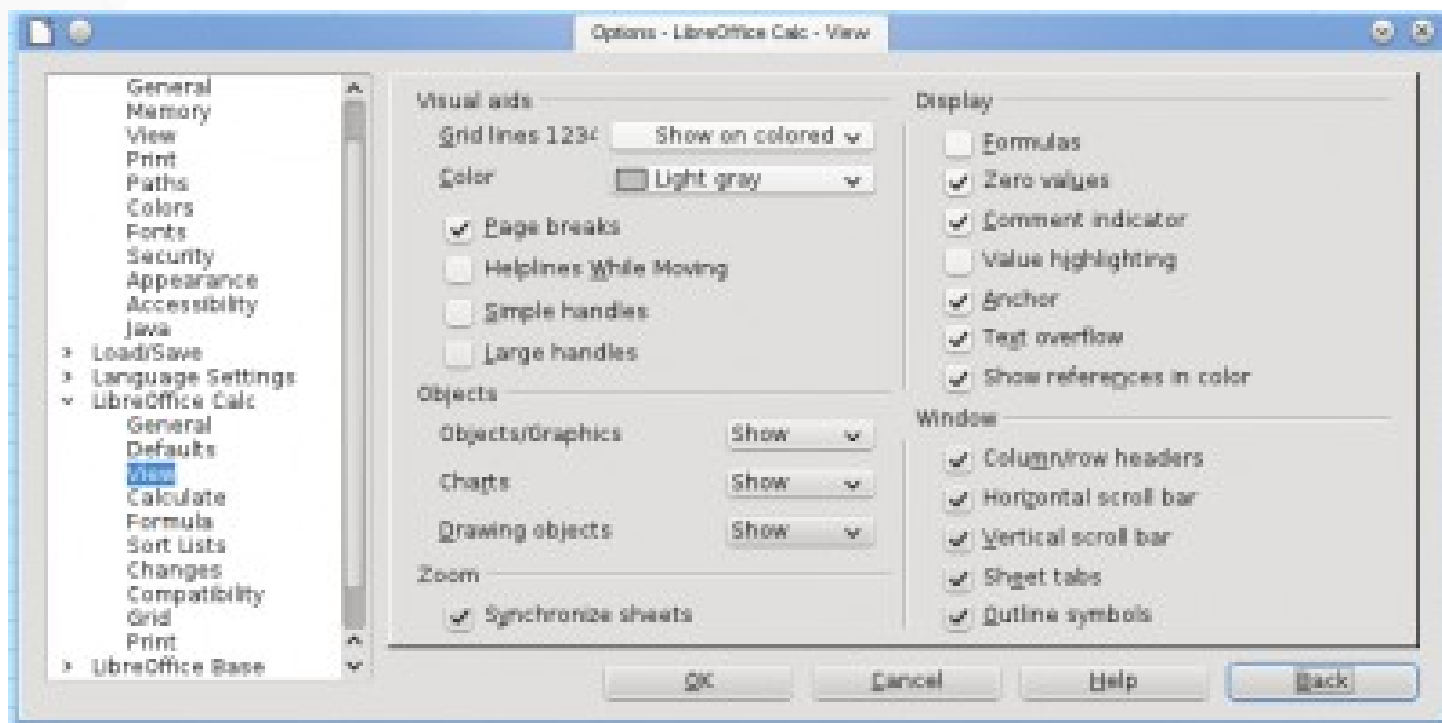
The Self-Experiment

- ▼ Bug 30800: grid lines disappeared in Calc for cells with background color
 - ▼ Introduce option for grid line display on cells with background colors
- ▼ Evaluation and analysis
 - ▼ What would be the best way from a user's perspective to implement the option
 - ▼ Play with option dialog, analyze usage tracking, interview Calc users
 - ▼ ~1.5 days of list communication (design, ux-advise, german users) three preferred ways discussed.
 - ▼ Surely no need to have a developer deeply involved

Documented at http://wiki.documentfoundation.org/User:Andreschnabel/Spec_Calc_grid_lines_on_colored_background

The Self-Experiment

- ▼ Refine and create prototypes
 - ▼ Hacking code (1.5 days including learning phase)
 - ▼ Used to document current status find possible layout problems, wording ...



The Self-Experiment

- ▼ Implement and submit
 - ▼ ~1 day final implementation and cleanup
 - ▼ Very friendly feedback, review and corrections at the developer list
- ▼ Test
 - ▼ No big effort
 - ▼ Done by people cc'ed to the issue in daily build
- ▼ Feedback some weeks later
 - ▼ My change triggered a bug in column header display in calc
 - ▼ Bug was fixed by Calc developers
 - ▼ They even excused to have my bug fixed without notifying me

The Findings

- ▼ ~ 4 work days spent
 - ▼ 15% coding
 - ▼ 25% learning and experimenting
 - ▼ 60% discussion and documentation
- ▼ >50% could be done by non-code hackers, but those
 - ▼ Are often not aware what is needed and helpful
 - ▼ Underestimate the value of their contributions
 - ▼ Don't know ways and places to hook in and start collaboration
 - ▼ Speak not (yet?) the developer's language (tech)

We need to improve on that!

Contribute on the UX Advise Mailing List



Subject

- ▼ Meeting ground for devs and UX concerned people
- ▼ Quick and painless feedback for “How do users need that?”

Proposed Tasks

- ▼ Quick-check proposals by devs and improve features
- ▼ Resolve User Experience questions (**no personal opinions!**)
- ▼ Summarize specific info (e.g. HIGs, OOo specifications)

Benefit

- ▼ Features will “just work” when released initially
- ▼ Lots of contacts and knowledge about the product

More at <http://wiki.documentfoundation.org/Design#Communication>

Improve Cross-Team Collaboration

Subject

- ▼ Currently only loosely connection between devs and other teams

Proposed Tasks

- ▼ Read commit logs, help to improve
- ▼ Follow the dev mailing list
- ▼ Ping other teams if required

Benefit

- ▼ Improved cross-team collaboration
- ▼ Devs can focus on hacking code

More at <http://sweetshark.livejournal.com/4478.html> (Blog posting by Björn)



index : libreoffice/core

main, development code repository

summary refs log tree commit diff

Age	Commit message (Collapse)
63 min.	deprecated decl. from ext. lib. HEAD master
71 min.	WaE: ISO C90 forbids mixed declarations and code
5 hours	WaE: ISO C90 forbids mixed declarations and code
12 hours	these can go behind DEBUG_CONTEXT_HANDLER
12 hours	Page Break: fade in / fade out the button when n
13 hours	Clone Caolán's work for wntgcci.mk too
14 hours	reduce noise, split c/c++ warnings flags
14 hours	ignore libxslt .memdump and Lib0 lock files

Maintain Information on Design Whiteboards

Subject

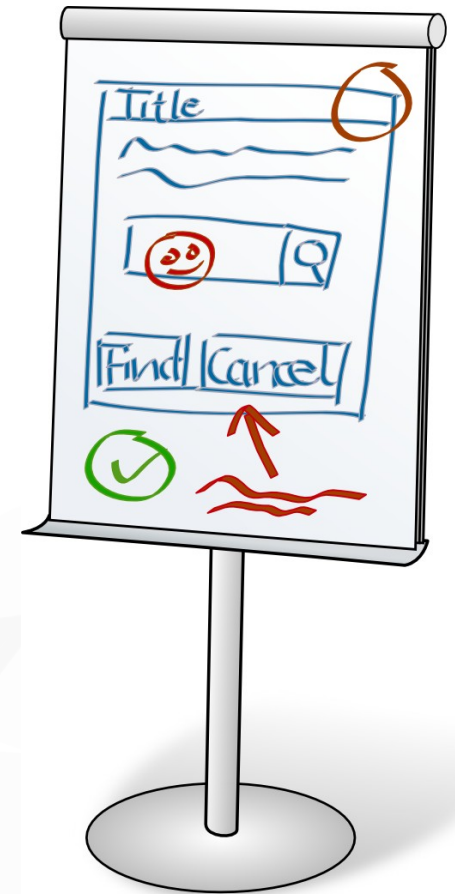
- ▼ Space for serious ideas and real dev work
- ▼ Provides a bigger pictures for all

Proposed Tasks

- ▼ Collect and maintain information (e.g. use cases, issues, DOC hints)
- ▼ Conserve mailing list discussions

Benefit

- ▼ Makes bigger feature changes manageable
- ▼ Be the maintainer for selected functionality



More at <http://wiki.documentfoundation.org/Design/Whiteboard>

Thank you ...

- ▼ ... for improving LibreOffice!
- ▼ ... for attending Kendy's upcoming talk
“Polish LibreOffice's rough edges”



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