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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

OPENOFFICE.ORG CAN SPEAK IN UP TO 27 LANGUAGES !

With Odt2DAISY, OpenOffice.org can produce Full DAISY Books, the world's most widely used talking book format

Leuven, BE. - November 9, 2009 – Today Vincent Spiewak launched a software add-on that makes it easier to create digital talking books with free and open-source software.

Odt2DAISY, designed for OpenOffice.org(TM) 3.0 or higher, enables the export of documents into digital talking books in the DAISY format.

DAISY is the standard for Digital Talking Books, developed and maintained by the DAISY Consortium and was adopted by NISO as a ANSI/NISO standard (Z39.86). Digital talking books are used by persons with a visual impairment, dyslexia or other impairments that hamper access to printed text.

The Odt2DAISY project is supported with the financial contribution of the European Commission in the context of the AEGIS project (Open Accessibility Everywhere: Groundwork, Infrastructure, Standards).
Partners involved in ODF-related work in AEGIS include Sun Microsystems, Inc. and Katholieke Universiteit Leuven.

General

Odt2DAISY is a free and open source software that can be downloaded at http://odt2daisy.sf.net. Odt2DAISY can be run on most platforms, including:

- Windows (XP, Vista and Windows 7)

- Mac OS X (Tiger, Leopard, Snow Leopard)

- Linux

- Solaris(TM) and OpenSolaris(TM)

After installation, the user will have the possibilities to export in both DAISY XML and Full DAISY (containing both XML and audio).

DAISY 3.0 XML

Odt2DAISY enables authoring of rich DAISY 3.0 XML files with multilingual[1] content.
You can convert DAISY XML to several other formats using tools like the DAISY Pipeline,
for instance:
- – DAISY Text Only books
- – Full DAISY books (Text and Audio)
- – Large Printing books
- – Braille books

More information about the DAISY Pipeline is available at http://www.daisy.org/projects/pipeline/.

Full DAISY (Text and Audio)

Odt2DAISY enables authoring of rich Full DAISY books (Text and Audio) with multilingual
content.
It uses the TTS engines installed on the user's operating system. For this reason, "Export As Full
DAISY" feature can provide different books quality, depending on your platform or your TTS
licenses.

On English versions of Windows, the user can author Full DAISY books in English out of the box.
It is also possible to author Full DAISY books in other languages if third-party voices compatible
with SAPI 5 (including Cepstral, Acapela, and Dolphin TTS products) are available on the
computer.

On Mac OS X, the support is the same, except that the voices should be VoiceOver compatible.

On Linux, Solaris and OpenSolaris, Odt2DAISY relies on the eSpeak TTS engine.
The user can generate content in up to 27 languages including English, French, German and
Spanish. Third-party voices from Loquendo and IBM can also be used.

Quality Assurance

Since the software should be usable by persons without DAISY expertise, quality assurance is an
important aspect of Odt2DAISY.
The Export As DAISY XML feature includes a DAISY 3.0 DTD validation process.
The Export As Full DAISY feature includes a ZedVal Validation process.
Odt2DAISY developments are now driven by unit tests. A set of 165 ODT files that covers the full
ODF specification is used for regression testing.

Notable Results

Vincent Spiewak started Odt2DAISY in January 2008 under the name odt2dtbook.
The project won a gold Award from the OpenOffice.org Community Innovation Program 2008.
It is currently used among others by BrailleNet (Paris, France), Curtin University Centre for
Accessible Technology (CUCAT, Australia), Alternative Media Access Centre at the University of
Georgia (AMAC), Association for the Blind of Western Australia (ABWA) and the Wyoming
Department of Education.

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1   "Asian" and "CTL" languages are not yet supported

DAISY format features

DAISY features include:

- the ability to navigate to specific pages and sections
- adding, searching for, and removing bookmarks
- the ability to skim the text
- portability

Playing DAISY

- Requires a DAISY player (software or hardware)
- Software and hardware players available
    - Software - free to $300
    - Hardware - $195 to $995
- DAISY players also play MP3 files
- DAISY players allow you to control speed and pitch

Freely available software players include:
- AMIS (for Windows: http://www.daisy.org/projects/amis/),
- AnyDAISY (cross-platform add-on for Firefox: https://launchpad.net/daisyextension),
- Emerson-reader (cross-platform: http://code.google.com/p/emerson-reader/),
- Olearia (for Mac OS: http://www.cucat.org/projects/olearia/),
- ButtercupReader (web-based: http://www.buttercupreader.net/default.htm),
- Dorina Daisy Reader (add-on for Firefox: https://addons.mozilla.org/en-US/firefox/addon/9276).
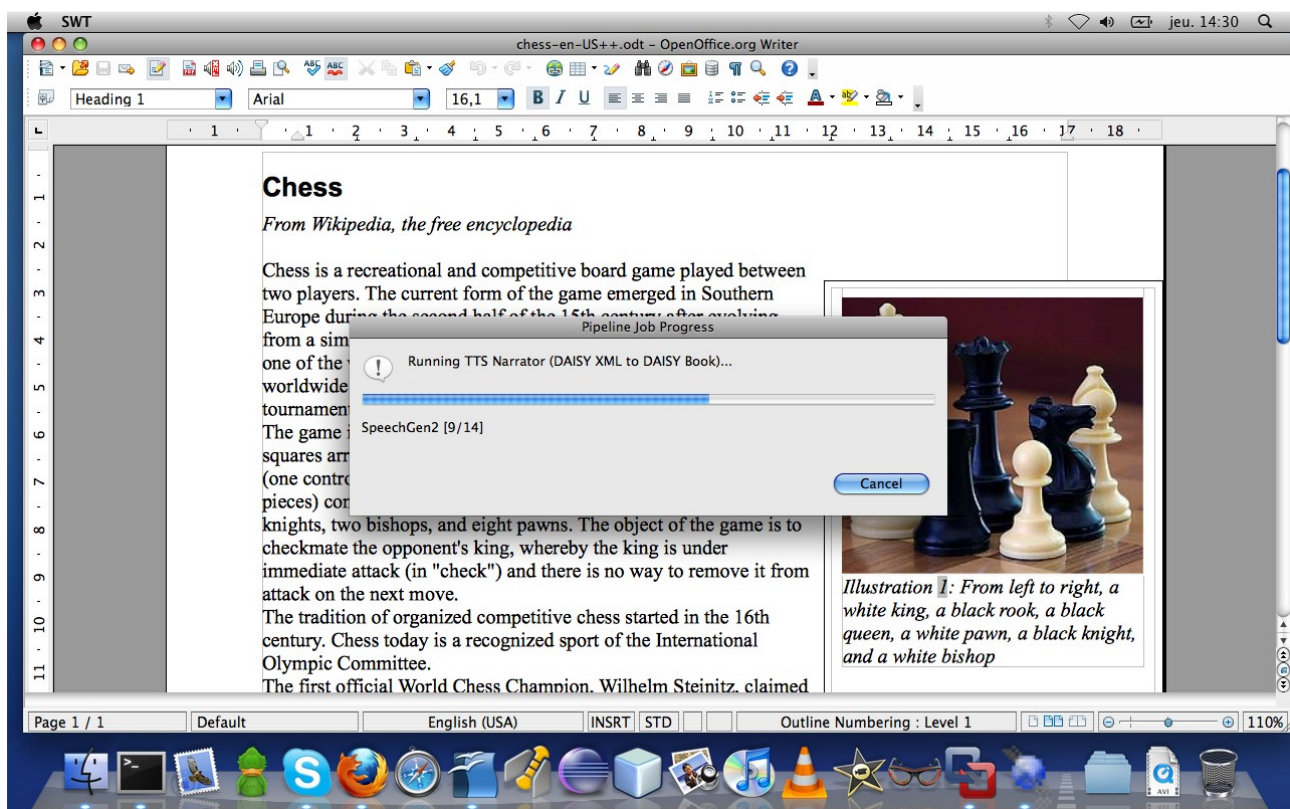

Illustration 1: Export as Full DAISY on Mac OS X Leopard - Voice generation process

DAISY

DAISY is the standard for Digital Talking Books, developed and maintained by the DAISY Consortium and was adopted by NISO as a ANSI/NISO standard (Z39.86). It is the world's most widely used format for Talking Books for blind, visually impaired, print-disabled or learning-disabled people.
DAISY is:

- DAISY Standard: an open-source standard for digital audio

- DAISY Consortium: the organization that oversees the standard

- DAISY format: the format for DAISY books

- DAISY books: electronic books in the DAISY format

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