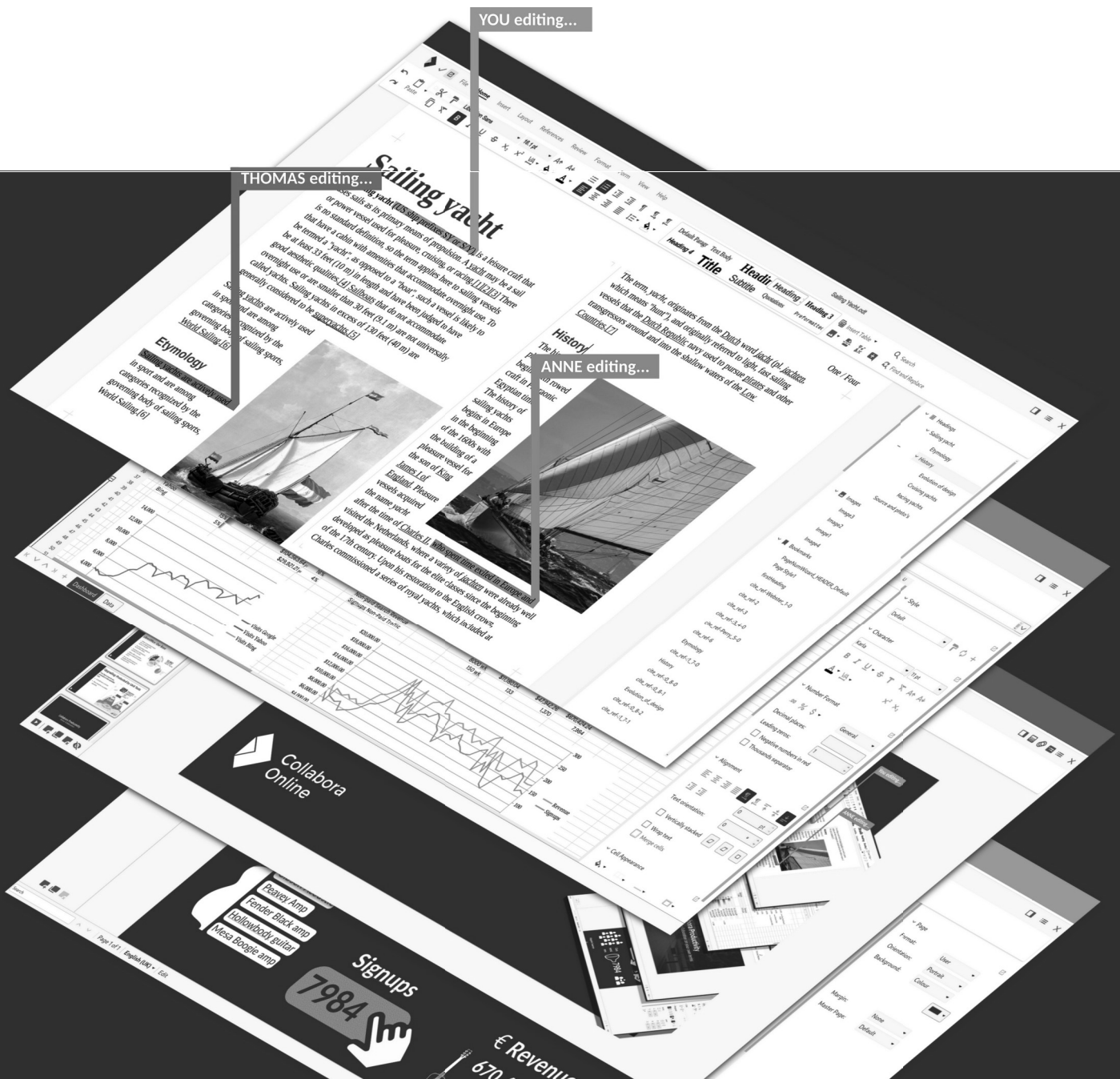


# Document Interoperability with Collabora Online



*The contents of this white paper were modified from a webinar between Collabora Online and Nextcloud Hub. Collabora Online works with over 200 partners worldwide with a great variety of hosting and deployment options. For more information, please contact us at [hello@collaboraoffice.com](mailto:hello@collaboraoffice.com).*



## A Complete Solution

**Collabora Online offers unrivalled interoperability with Microsoft and other file formats.** Over the past decade, we have helped millions of users moving their documents from proprietary systems and file formats into the open, accessible world, with many import and export functionalities for various file formats, including .doc .docx .xls .xlsx .ppt .pptx and so on... We also have support for Google Docs and of course open document formats. Unless you've managed to create your own proprietary file format with zero documentation, in 99% of cases, your documents will be beautiful in Collabora Online.

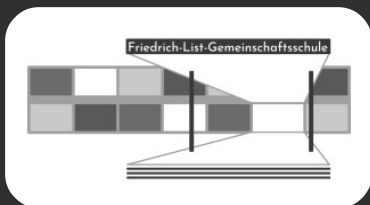
Combined with your file storage system of choice, Collabora Online is designed to be a complete solution for the entire life cycle of your documents. From migration or document creation, to storage, sharing, archival or destruction, **working with Collabora Online should be a pain-free and streamlined experience.**

## Where to edit?

Collabora Online runs in your browser. To be more accurate, we should say it runs on your server (or trusted hosting provider's) and is accessed through your browser. For this reason, it doesn't matter if you love Chrome or Firefox, are on Windows, Linux, MacOS, an iPhone, iPad, Android, other mobile device or Chromebook. If you can open a webpage, you can work on your documents!

In this way, we avoid a number of problems encountered on other platforms. Specifically related to interoperability, issues related to document versions, and online/offline formats are completely sidestepped. Version history can be maintained by your Collabora Online integration for example, but **there is only ever one live, central version of the document** to be edited or accessed by end users. Comments or changes can be tracked centrally, and further edited, or merged by any user with appropriate permissions. Gone are the days of emailing files with lengthy appendages `Financial_Report_v006FinalFINAL(withchanges).xls`.

In addition to the above, Collabora Online is the largest code contributor to and is built on a foundation of LibreOffice - an application with decades of experience working across a wide variety of file formats, and a **very advanced code base for handling office documents**. We support many kinds of exotic file formats, perhaps not frequently encountered, but nonetheless still useful and something other document editors will not offer. It's nice to know that if you work with, or encounter a Microsoft Works or WordPerfect file, you'll be ok with Collabora Online.



"It simply works. And it is reliable. That is crucial for us. In combination with Nextcloud, it works wonderfully and is very performant."

- David Binder, The Friedrich-List-Gemeinschaftsschul

## So what are the rare...but possible problems?

### Macros

It used to be very trendy to have Excel files with lots of embedded custom macros to perform some powerful operations. It turns out however that Collabora Online has a good story with Visual Basic for Applications (VBA). We have a powerful macro engine, and much work has been done so that your VBA macros, in many cases, run without issues. If you have a macro taking an input from one sheet, performing an operation, and outputting to another sheet, this will (in most cases) continue to operate correctly in Collabora Online. We also have support for handling forms inside spreadsheets.

For more unique operations, we encourage our customers to come to us, or one of our global partners for support. With Collabora Online, you are getting a document editor with support, and we are keen to help our customers get up and running.



# Fonts

Collabora Online is built around open-source principles, and ships with open-source fonts. This might sound like a problem if you know that Times New Roman, Arial and Calibri are in fact proprietary fonts, however you can rest assured that with Collabora Online, your documents are safe. You may legally download these fonts yourself for use within Collabora Online, but in most cases this is in fact not necessary.

When opening a new document with proprietary fonts, Collabora Online will use the metric-compatible open-source equivalent for you to use where available. These fonts are designed both to look the same, and more importantly use exactly the same spacing as their proprietary equivalents. This means your documents will not grow or shrink with Collabora Online. Alternatively in the case where we do not provide an open-source equivalent out of the box, it is possible for end users to add these fonts to the remote font config file.

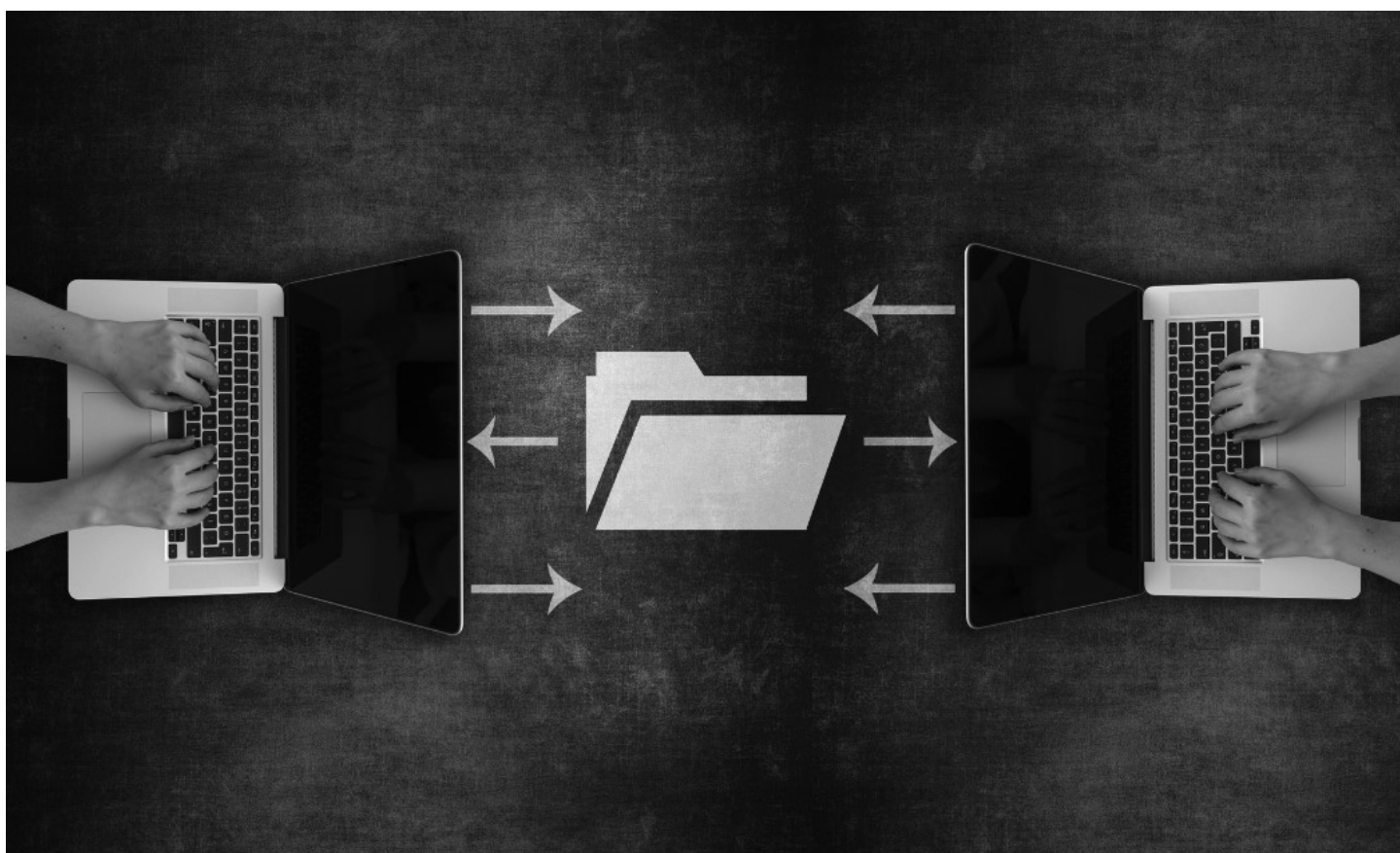
Agency FB The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog	Agdasima The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog
Baskerville Old Face The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog	Bacasime Antique The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog
<b>Berlin Sans FB</b> <b>The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog</b>	<b>Belanosima</b> <b>The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog</b>
Cambria The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog	Caladea The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog
<b>Caprasimo</b> <b>The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog</b>	<b>Cooper Black</b> <b>The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog</b>
Calibri The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog	Carlito The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog
Arial The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog	Liberation Sans The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog
Times New Roman The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog	Liberation Serif The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog
<i>Lucida Calligraphy</i> <i>The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog</i>	<i>Lugrasimo</i> <i>The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog</i>
<i>Lucida Handwriting</i> <i>The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog</i>	<i>Lumanosimo</i> <i>The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog</i>
Lucida Grande The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog	Lunasima The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog

*Collabora Online will substitute Arial with Liberation Sans, Times New Roman with Liberation Serif, Cambria – Caleda, Calibri – Carlito, Cooper Black - Caprasimo and so on (the list of metrical-compatible fonts is extensive!)*

## Switching Formats

You may run into problems if you frequently switch between document formats. This is not a problem unique to Collabora Online, this will be true of all document editors, but we feel it worth pointing out still. Document formats are very complicated. For example, the specification document for the Microsoft-developed Office Open XML format is 5,000 pages long. Consequently, every document format contains some functionalities available only in that format. For this reason, we encourage end users to stick to one document format.

We are great promoters of open-source formats, but as mentioned previously, Collabora Online is compatible with all major (and many minor) file formats, so **if you have a large corpus of existing Microsoft Office files, then we would advise you to continue using this format within Collabora Online**, not to do a mass conversion to Open Document Format.



## Unexpected Interoperability Gains?

One likely benefit of migrating to Collabora Online is a reduction in costs for your document-editing solution. For this reason, we encourage organisations switching to Collabora Online to consider using some of the associated savings on further staff training. **The Collabora Online interface is familiar and intuitive, and should not require any special training** for users familiar with other document editors, but to further increase productivity, a small amount of training could be an excellent use of company resources.

Headline

He heard quiet steps behind him. That didn't bode well. Who could be following him this late at night and in this deadbeat part of town? And at this particular moment, just after he pulled off the big time and was making off with the greenbacks. Was there another crook who'd had the same idea, and was now watching him and waiting for a chance to grab the fruit of his labor? Or did the steps behind him mean

Headline.....He heard quiet steps behind him. That didn't bode well. Who **WHEN I TYPE  
HERE IT BREAKS!** could be following him¶  
.....this late at night and in this deadbeat part of town? And at this particular moment,¶  
.....just after he pulled off the big time and was making off with the greenbacks. Was¶  
.....there another crook who'd had the same idea, and was now watching him and¶

*[A commonly encountered problem common to all document editors]*

We have discovered for example many users are unaware of shortcuts for bold or italics, or how to use Ctrl+C/Ctrl+V for copying and pasting, or some users were unaware that you can pin the first row of a spreadsheet as a header at the top, instead scrolling up and down to check what column they were looking at. In one extreme example, we learned of a user who retyped an entire document because the scanned original was all caps. With a little training however, these issues can be quickly resolved.



## A Supported Solution

For any large migrations, we advise organisations to share templates or frequently used documents ahead of time. That way we can do testing for you and identify any possible issues, before they start affecting your end users. As mentioned above, **we offer a supported document editor**, so as part of a subscription we can provide you with fixes either to documents, or the product itself. This comes with the added benefit of meaning you aren't left alone in the migration process. **We are responsive, and care about your documents. We aren't a faceless organisation.**



“For me the experience of integrating Collabora Online was pretty straightforward, you have everything you need so I don't see why would you use something else, something proprietary when you already have something so good in the open source world.”

– Lavinia Florean, Junior Software Development Engineer, XWiki

One final consideration is that migrating to Collabora Online is an excellent opportunity to reconsider any outdated, unwise, or insecure file-creation, editing, or sharing practices that may well be leading to interoperability or other more serious problems. Alongside our partners, we have a great wealth of experience in this field, and would love to help you. Alternatively, try out Collabora Online for free yourself with our Collabora Online Development Edition.



See why thousands have made the change, and let us free your documents.  
Collabora Online - Secure document collaboration, controlled by you.