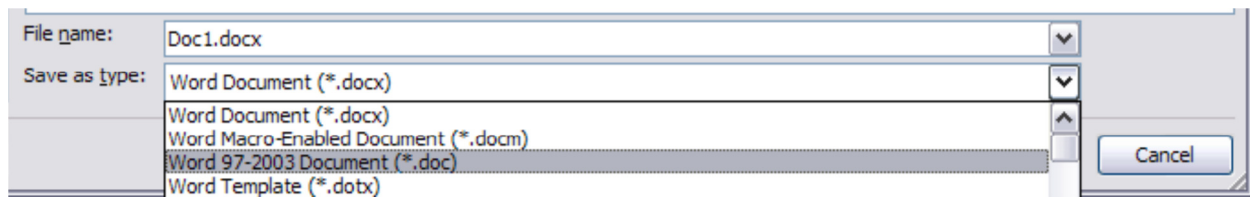


TANG Tech Tip: Office File Compatibility Issues and Upgrade Options

This month we will review Microsoft Office file compatibility issues between old and new versions. As many of you already know, files saved in file formats from newer versions of Microsoft office (Office 2007 & 2010) will not open in Office XP or 2003 versions. There are several things that can be done if you are still using Office XP or 2003. The best solution is always the one that works best for you so I listed various options for your reference.

Workarounds

1. Save files from Office 2010 in Office 1997-2003 format. From Office 2010 click File -> Save As -> then from the Save as type dropdown you can select an Office 97-2003 file format. Please see the image below for reference. If you have some computers with office 2010 and others with older office versions then you should do this when saving files on your Office 2010 computers. Unfortunately if a patron does not select this option at home they can't open their new files unless you have the office compatibility pack



2. Download the free Office compatibility pack from Microsoft. The office compatibility pack will allow you to view and save newer file versions with older versions of office. Please search online for Microsoft Office Compatibility Pack or use the following download link <http://www.microsoft.com/download/en/details.aspx?displaylang=en&id=3> Users have reported mixed results with this compatibility pack.

3. Direct patrons to free online office utilities. Documents can be uploaded from disk or usb drive then saved online. Changes can saved online and the document can be accessed from any other computer with internet access. This is also great for people who want to start a document at the library then finish it later or on another computer because they don't need a disk. The two most popular online utilities are

-Google Docs <http://docs.google.com/> A Google or Gmail account is required.

-Microsoft Office Web Apps <http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/web-apps/> A Hotmail or Microsoft account is required.

Upgrade Options

1. If you have the budget available then upgrading to Office 2010 is the preferred option. Office 2010 is the standard for business and the upgrade process is really easy. You simply insert the office 2010 disc, click yes to a few menu options, and it automatically installs office 2010. The install process takes 15-30 minutes per computer but it only requires interaction for the first few minutes. This means that you can start the upgrade then walk away.

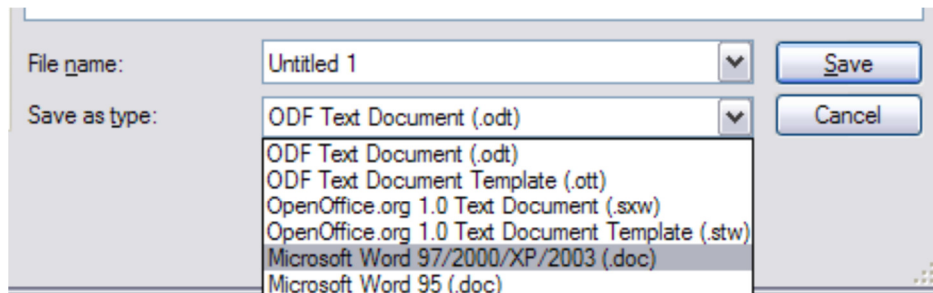
2. Upgrade to a free office suite. There are several free office suites that offer full versions at no cost to everyone. These can be downloaded from the internet at no cost and saved to a CD or USB drive for installation. They can be installed alongside Microsoft office, but it may be confusing to patrons if you

have both. For this reason you may consider uninstalling your old office software before installing a free office suite. The free suites are as follows

-Libre Office <http://www.libreoffice.org/> was developed by the Document Foundation as a fork of Open Office. This is now the standard office suite in many Linux distributions and it seems to work well. For testing purposes I started this document in Office 2010 format then switched between Libre Office and Office 2010 with no issues.

-Open Office <http://www.openoffice.org/> was the free office suite of choice for many years. Open Office was a product of Oracle who also makes Java but is now in incubation phase with the Apache Software Foundation. It seems that development will continue but please check their blog for updates <https://blogs.apache.org/OOo/>

Important Note: When you start a new document in these programs it will default to save in open document format which may not open in Microsoft Office on another computer. To fix this problem click File -> Save As -> then from the Save as type dropdown and select a Microsoft office file type. Please see the image below for reference. If you see an error message pop up after you click Save then click Keep Current Format to continue.



Questions or Comments: Email Zak Roussel tech@ctls.net or call 512-583-0704 X15