

TikiSheet : spreadsheet in your browser: in testing!

Marc Laporte - 08 May 2004 16:55 GMT-0000

TikiSheet is now available for testing under Mozilla, FireFox & Internet Explorer and is one of the exciting new features which will be released in upcoming Tiki 1.9

Why is this a Big Thing? read on!

Most software applications have an open source web-based alternative. Whilst web-based apps may not always have as many features or the nicest GUI, they will often be good enough to solve a significant proportion of issues and needs.

Open Source Web Applications offer several important advantages, such as:

- Less user support. (no software/OS re-installs)
- Cross platform (as much as possible, depends on browser feature-set)
- High portability (Use any computer, you just need to remember your username/password)
- Centralized data management (optional: you can install on your desktop/laptop)
- Unlimited users (depends on your hardware, no per user license costs)

You can use a wiki instead of a Word Processor. You can use a webmail client (+address book) such as IMP or SquirrelMail instead of Microsoft Outlook or Mozilla ThunderBird.

Productivity and Groupware applications (calendar, notes, todo, etc) are also available in many flavors for example more.groupware or TUTOS

To manage a website, you can use an open source CMS such as Xaraya instead of using Dreamweaver

Even for graphics, an option is available: JGraphpad. OK, it's not Photoshop or The GIMP. It is more like Microsoft Paint in your browser. However, as it is integrated in Tiki, this provides you with multi-user editing capabilities, while keeping document history/versioning. It preserves layers, too!

As you can see, web-based open source alternative are available for many things. However, there is (was!) one nagging *missing link*. The spreadsheet has been a key component for personal computers to become a powerful business tool. Please see the following links for background information:

- <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spreadsheet>
- <http://encyclopedia.thefreedictionary.com/Spreadsheet>

I have been searching for this for several months and compiled a list of Spreadsheet/table editors. To my great surprise, within such a vast open source community and for such an important feature, I found no active project trying to solve this issue. Among the few editors that I found, none were open source and at an acceptable level feature-wise.

Happily, Louis-Philippe Huberdeau has taken up the challenge! Since this will surely interest other projects, we agreed to make it very modular. Because TikiSheet shares Tiki's LGPL license, we hope to attract other open source projects to include TikiSheet within their application. They will have to write their own hooks. However, we can all contribute to the development of core features.

We are already working in a similar manner with 6 other major web applications on GalaxiaWorkflow.

I am very excited with this new feature and I am glad we are filling the *missing link*. Please proceed to TikiSheet and TikiSheetDev.

Best regards,

