

## Comments on the “Experimental Sidebar”

I recently discovered the new “experimental sidebar” in version 4.1.x and must say that I like it very much. But, since it is still experimental, I thought I would pass on the following comments to whoever is developing this feature in the hopes of making it even more useful (or at least more to my liking). I’m using LibreOffice Version: 4.1.3.2 on 64 bit Ubuntu 12.04 by the way.

### General

- If you could add a panel with elements from the Standard Toolbar to the new sidebar (yes, I know I can dock it, but the idea of having it collapsible inside the sidebar is very attractive). Additionally, this would permit the removal of all toolbars from the screen, thus freeing up more area for text.
- Every so often, when I selected Print Preview with the Sidebar visible, the sidebar would appear in the Preview window as well, but I couldn’t consistently reproduce this.

### The Properties Panel

The Paragraph Sub-Panel:

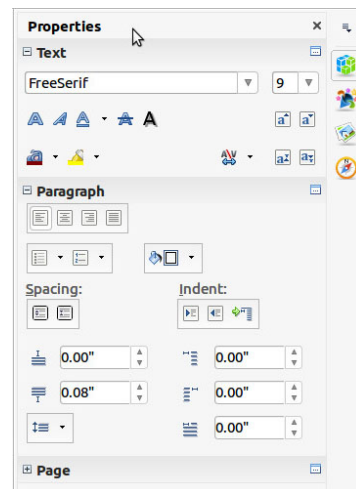
My first comment concerns the ability to resize the sidebar, which is just slightly inconsistent. Here’s an example of the sidebar as it appears by default:

But – when the horizontal sizing (width) of the sidebar is reduced, it appears as below:

Now the sidebar appears as shown on the right:

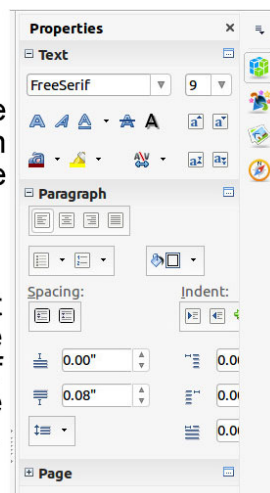
The Text Sub-Panel collapses nicely and intelligently.

Unfortunately, in the Paragraph Sub-Panel, the various Spacing controls seem to be fixed in size, and are cut off.



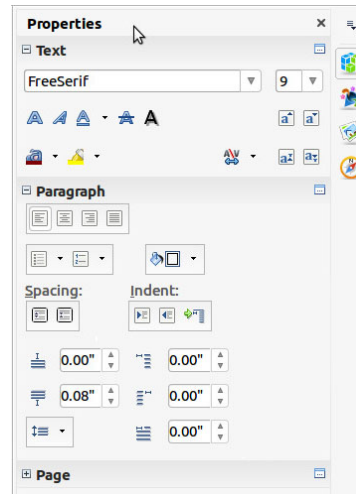
Note the clean collapse

Contrast with the lack of collapse here...



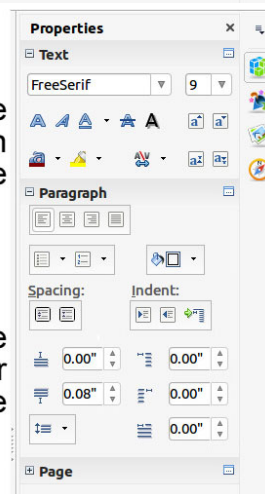
Part of the problem, it seems to me, is that the spin controls with the size values seem to be much wider than necessary. No matter what unit of measurement one might choose, it's difficult for me to think of any reasonable measurement that would require more than four or five digits in any box.

So if the spin boxes were re-designed with more realistic values, and dynamic placement when resizing were enabled, a greatly reduced width would become possible. The Paragraph Sub-Panel would act more like the Text Sub-Panel.



Note the clean collapse

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A similar issue concerns the “Page” formatting sub-panel, where the two right hand selectors (for Margin and Column) have their drop-down lists truncated on the right side when the overall sidebar is reduced in width.

If each of these dropdowns could be “right justified” rather than simply displayed as they are currently, this would be an improvement.

## The Styles and Formatting Panel

When the Styles Panel (why is it also titled Formatting?) is enabled in the new Sidebar, the ability to select “Clear Formatting” (which is on the drop-down list of Styles in the normal Formatting Toolbar) isn't present. I'm not sure if it's just because I'm a little undisciplined, but I find I use that capability fairly often, so if that could be added to the Styles Panel sidebar similarly to the way it works on the normal toolbar dropdown, I would consider that a significant improvement.

## The Gallery Panel

The existing standard option of using “Tools – Gallery” for this feature is not only non-intuitive and inconsistent, but occupies for too much vertical screen space. The implementation in the new experimental SideBar is far superior and much more useful. Kudos!!