LibreOffice IAE:
Integrated Authoring Environment

An IAE binds together all the amazing and powerful tools of LibreOffice to create an place where notes, chapter divisions, and character design are much easier to manage. Not so much a whole new application to the suit as an overlay that uses what already exists. I love LibreOffice and I don't want to use anything else.

Presently, when I want to start a new book I have to carry out all of the following steps.

1. Create a folder for the novel with two more folders (notes and novel) inside

2. Create a guidebook file in notes. This is usually done in Writer.

3. Create character sub files from a template. This is not very flexible and can require repetitive editing specific to the novel, character depth and so forth.

4. Hyper linking the character files from the guidebook.

5. Create a tracking spreadsheet. As this is manual data I have to rely on my own good note taking to be sure of reliable overviews such as characters in chapters, chapter length, plot threads, etc..

   ○ Only now can I start planning.

6. Create a master novel document in novel

7. Create a folder in novel called chapters.

   1. If I want to break chapters up into scenes I would have to create a Master chapter document and a scenes folder.

   2. Create sections in the master chapter file linked one to each scene

8. Create sections in the master novel file linked one to each chapter

   ○ Only now can I start writing.

This process has some strong limits.

- For example rearranging section (or sub sections) is not as intuitive as, say, with Evernote.

- At 330+ pages and 56+ chapters books written in one file are hard to convert

- Finished first drafts are still super clunky

- Sooner or later I will get too caught up in the work to track data properly

Features found in Bibisco can only be replicated up to the quality of my own reporting and correct data notes. Links between the master novel and the character, scene, narrative thread (and so forth) require manual window switching, searching and other activities that interrupt the flow of work considerably and take me "out of the zone".

An IAE, even if it were little more than a notes app, would be leaps and bounds better for writers such as me. While Bibisco is nice and has a lot going for it, Writer's editor is superior in every way.

I am dyslexic and dyspraxic. Writer helps me overcome this very nicely. I love it. The editor in most author software is super unhelpful (and harder for me to work with). Also, I rely heavily on styles which I define so I can rapidly change the font, formatting, and so forth in whichever way pleases an editor. Again, Writer handles this perfectly. You developers have done an awesome job with Writer (and Calc).

The IAE would handle folders and master documents with linked sections for the author. Base could handle the meta data of characters, and other author notes while Writer could also handle the storage and creation of notes. Thus storage would be a combination of Base, Writer and a bit of folder management.

A simple API could allow the community to create advanced author tools such as character tracking.

Writer's document awareness could be harnessed to do things like auto detected proper nouns via the hack of just looking for words with capital letters at the start. Thus the IAE could discover characters, locations and so forth and suggest them to the author allowing easy and wonderfully powerful story control and overview.

I am reasonably confident that something like 95% of what I am asking for exists already and the IAE would only be a solid UI (and API) on top of that. If an IAE is too specialised to fall within the project scope then perhaps a note system with a really good API might fit (in which case the community might be able to handle the rest).

Thank you for taking the time to read my proposal.

Matt.