

## Some answers to questions

by Andy Pepperdine

### **Introduction**

This month, among some discussion of general internet-related things, we did manage to find some answers to the questions asked.

### **LibreOffice Calc**

Calc is the LibreOffice component that handles spreadsheets. This will be covered more fully in April, but some questions could be answered quickly.

### **Changing the size of what is printed**

Sometimes you may wish to make a spreadsheet fit onto an A4 sheet of paper, rather than be split across several sheets. depending on the shape of the spreadsheet, various parameters can be tweaked to help make the output easily readable.

The key menu item is under Format → Page, where a number of tabs can be found.

On the Page tab, you can switch between Portrait and Landscape to match the shape of the data to be printed.

Under the Sheet tab, you can change how the size of the printed output. There is a drop/down list, one item (Reduce/enlarge printout) will adjust the size of the text by a certain percentage, and so you can adjust the appearance and how many sheets it occupies.

Another option on the drop/down list is Fit print range(s) to width/height, which will automatically adjust the size to fit the number of pages selected.

### **Selecting a range to print**

To select a range of cells to print, first select the cells, for example, by clicking on one cell, and moving the cursor to the opposite corner of a rectangle of cells, and using SHIFT-Click.

Then use Format → Print ranges → Define. When you print, only those cells will be printed.

To add another range of cells, select the block as before, and then Format → Print ranges → Add to add another block to the selection. When these ranges are printed, they will appear on separate pages of the output.

Another way to create a number of selection blocks is to select the first block as before. Then CTL-Click on another cell, and again move the cursor to the opposite corner and SHIFT-Click to add the new range as well.

To clear the range to regain the default situation of printing everything, use Format → Print ranges → Clear.

## Navigating

The keyboard combination CTL-arrow keys will move the cursor to the beginning or end of a block of cells, separated from others by a blank column or blank row as appropriate.

Having selected a cell, then the SHIFT-arrow keys will add cells to the selection. Having selected a number of cells along a row, then the down arrows will add the corresponding elements from each row in turn.

## Read only mode

Sometimes you need to ensure that you do not edit a document, but do need to refer to it and make selections from it.

Using the menu item Edit → Edit mode, will first save the document (if necessary), and then switch to a mode that will prevent accidental modification. The header of the window will report “read-only mode”, and a button will appear to give you the option of switching back to editing again. If you remove that button with the adjacent cross, then it is even safer because you will have to use the menu item again to switch back.

## Protecting files

We talked a bit about the principles of using public and private keys for encryption, but these are in general difficult for people to grasp.

The question arose because of the new data protection regulations and the wish to keep data safe when passed between people who all need to see it. Rather than encrypting the communications, it is probably easier to encrypt the document being transferred.

In LibreOffice, this can be achieved when using File → Save As by clicking the Save with password tick box at the bottom of the window. When you do this, the saved document will need a password to open it. Every time it is opened, the password will be needed.

If a password is required, then saving it again will automatically apply the same password, and so you need to supply the password only once per document when first saving it, and that will reduce the chances of sending an unprotected document elsewhere.

Microsoft Office, I believe, has a similar feature.

## Tomb script

A recent addition to the encryption facilities on Linux is a script called tomb. This is a replacement for Trucrypt, and to which Zulucrypt is compatible. I have not tested it, and have no further comments. Details are found here: <https://www.dyne.org/software/tomb/>

## Locales

Mike reported that when upgrading Linux Mint systems (rather than re-installing for new versions), then it may be that a message reports that the locale chosen is not available. However by re-installing the required locales seems to clear the problem.

***What does that message mean?***

I am sure that at some time you have seen a message and had no idea what it meant. A simple technique to get some help is simply to copy the message into Google and search for it. Almost always someone somewhere has found it, discovered how to fix it, and reported in some way to the Internet. You may have to look at more than one page before you get to something that makes sense to you, but this is always a first resource and often very useful.