

Collabora or OnlyOffice: the decision on one page

Before co-editing without Microsoft 365: the prices, five questions, the ten-document test and how to read the result. Companion to the article "Collabora or OnlyOffice: edit documents online without Microsoft 365".

What you are deciding

Replacing Word, Excel and PowerPoint in the browser with a libre suite installed on your own server, connected to Nextcloud. The desktop is not affected.

Collabora Online

LibreOffice's engine, open formats (ODF) first. MPL 2.0 licence.

OnlyOffice Docs

Its own engine, Microsoft formats first, interface modelled on Office. AGPL v3.

Euro-Office

OnlyOffice fork launched in 2026 by Nextcloud and IONOS, offered in Nextcloud since Hub 26. Promising, still young.

The price of editing alone, 20 people

Microsoft 365 Business Standard

\$19.00 CAD per user per month: \$4,560 CAD a year.

Microsoft 365 Business Basic

\$9.50 CAD per user per month: \$2,280 CAD. Web and mobile apps only.

OnlyOffice Docs Enterprise

US\$1,500 a year, 50 simultaneous connections: about \$2,140 CAD.

Collabora Online

€3 per user per month, up to 99 users: about \$1,150 CAD.

Before taxes, Bank of Canada rate of October 2, 2026. CODE is not recommended for production, OnlyOffice Community comes without support.

Microsoft 365 includes email, Teams and storage. Add the server, hosting and support to the libre suites: they weigh more than the licence.

Five questions to ask your team

- How many edit at the same time, at peak?**
That number sizes the server and sets the price at OnlyOffice.
- Do you have VBA macros?**
Neither suite runs them as is. That is often the tipping point.
- Do your documents travel as Word or ODF?**
Partners on Office: OnlyOffice has the edge. LibreOffice already in place: Collabora.
- Who works offline?**
They need a free desktop app: LibreOffice or OnlyOffice Desktop Editors.
- Are you keeping Microsoft 365 for email?**
Then libre co-editing becomes a second habit to build.

Reading the result

Complex Microsoft files, Office reflexes

OnlyOffice starts ahead. Euro-Office offers the same engine under different governance.

LibreOffice or ODF already in place

Collabora is the clear choice.

Both pass the test

Decide on pricing: per user at Collabora, per simultaneous connection at OnlyOffice, which favours teams where few people edit together.

The ten-document test, half a day

- Ten real files that hurt**
Budget, proposal template, client deck, form with macros.
- Opened in both suites**
On a trial instance, never in production.
- Three people at the same time**
With track changes and comments.
- Back to Office**
Save in Microsoft format and reopen in Office, as a client would.
- Write down what breaks**
What shifts or disappears. The list decides.

Nothing is final: in Nextcloud, the editing engine changes without moving a single file.

Law 25: what a server in Quebec changes

- Section 17: before communicating personal information outside Quebec, a privacy impact assessment and a written agreement.
- A suite hosted in Quebec, next to your files, removes that assessment for editing.

The rest of Law 25 still applies: person in charge, policy, access management. Not legal advice.

Plan for it from day one

- A server sized for simultaneous editing, with the templates' fonts.
- Vendor support in production, and training for those who edit the most.
- No more opening from Teams or editing in place from Outlook.

Run the test with Blue Fox

We install Collabora or OnlyOffice in Quebec and run the ten-document test with you.

The full article: scan the code.

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