

Open Source 101 For Managers

Corey Shields - Infrastructure Manager
Oregon State University Open Source Lab



With content from Andy Stein, Scott Kveton, and other sources where noted

Key points to cover

- Open Standards
- Open Source
- Community Source
- Licensing (basics, IANAL)

Open Source begins with Open Standards

- Essential for interoperability
- Internet open standards like email, http
 - versus, for instance, IM closed standards (AIM, MSN, Yahoo!, etc.. etc..)
- Document formats & ODF

So what is Open Source?

- Code is the building blocks of software
- Open Source code is available:
 - to use for free.
 - to modify, adapt, improve upon.
 - to redistribute.
- “Free Software” is not always Open Source, nor is Public Domain

Open Source Definition

- Free Distribution
- Source Code
- Derived Works
- Integrity of the Author's Source Code
- No Discrimination Against Persons or Groups
- No Discrimination Against Fields of Endeavor
- Distribution of License
- License Must Not be Specific to a Product
- License Must Not Contaminate Other Software
- The License must be technology-neutral

* The Open Source Definition Original Draft by Bruce Perens.
Copyright 2003 - <http://www.opensource.org/docs/definition.php>

Open Source Definition

- 1. Free Distribution

- “The license may not restrict any party from selling or giving away the software as a component of an aggregate software distribution containing programs from several different sources. The license may not require royalty or other fee for such sale.”

- 2. Source Code

- “The program must include source code, and must allow distribution in source code as well as compiled form”.

- 3. Derived Works

- “The license must allow modifications and derived works, and must allow them to be distributed under the same terms as the license of the original software.”

Open Source Definition

- 4. Integrity of the Author's Source Code
- “The license may restrict source code from being distributed in modified form only if the license allows the distribution of ‘patch files’ with the source code for the purpose of modifying the program at build time.”
- 5. No Discrimination Against Persons or Groups
- 6. No Discrimination Against Fields of Endeavor
- 7. Distribution of License
- “The license must be automatic, no signature required.”

Open Source Definition

- 8. License Must Not Be Specific to a Product
 - “The rights attached to the program must not depend on the program’s being part of a particular software distribution.”
- 9. License Must Not Contaminate Other Software
 - “The license must not place restrictions on other software that is distributed along with the licensed software.”
- 10. The License must be technology-neutral
 - “No provision of the license may be predicated on any individual technology or style of interface.”

Where is Open Source developed?

- In communities around the world
- In institutions that need a certain application
- As groups who all work to meet the same need (wait for “Community Source”)

Who develops Open Source Software?

- Professional programmers, paid to do it
- Volunteers working after hours
- College students building experience
- Teenagers burrowed in their bedrooms

Why Open Source?

For developers, they often have an itch to scratch. They see a need for a piece of software and they start to work on it. The desired result is in the software, not in a profit, so freeing the code is natural.

For users, Open Source is becoming a stable platform to use. It adds security and adoption of open standards in a cost effective way.

Commonly used Open Source applications

- Mozilla Firefox - web browser
- OpenOffice.org - office suite
- Apache web server - 61.64% of the internet*
- Linux - free UNIX operating system

* Netcraft September 2006 survey.

Community Source

- Pool money and resources with other groups who have the same need
- Develop your application together
- In the end, everyone gets the necessary application for less money than buying the application from a vendor
- Friday - 1:00 Keynote with Brad Wheeler

Community Source

- Sakai - sakaiproject.org
- Community source online education platform
- Quali - quali.org
- Financial, research, and workflow management system

Licensing

- Many licenses to choose from
- A license is certified “Open Source” by the Open Source Initiative - opensource.org
- Refer to the Open Source Definition...

Licensing

- GNU General Public License (GPL)
- Requires derivative works to also fall under the GPL.

- Berkeley Software Distribution (BSD)
- Does not require derivative works to also fall under the BSD license

- Licenses created by commercial companies that decided to release part of there application as Open Source.

Pros of Open Source

- Peer review (possibility for added security)
- Motivated developers
- Community
- Low cost
- High quality
- No vendor lock-in

Cons of Open Source

- Abandoned projects
- “Forks” & fragmentation
- Niche projects

Getting involved

- Use Open Source!
- Contribute back to the community
- Read Succeeding with Open Source by Bernard Golden
- Talk to people like us. Visit osuosl.org

Questions & Comments Please..

- Thank you for attending
- cshields@osuosl.org