

A brief history of Free and Open Source

CSC 586E OSSE

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January 7, 2005 Version: 1.0.1

Originally Software was free



- You paid for the hardware
- The software was free (as in beer)
 - It included source code!
- Software became a commercial enterprise in the 70-80s

In the Beginning



- As told by Bruce Perens, from the Open Source Initiative (BP)

The Beginnings: the GNU project



- As told by Eric Raymond (ESR) and Richard Stallman (RMS)

What is Free Software?



- In the words of Richard Stallman:

Copyright



- Free software is not in the public domain

What is Free Software...



- Based on the General Public Licence (GPL)
- It gives users 4 main rights or freedoms:
 1. The freedom to run a program, for any purpose (freedom 0).
 2. The freedom to study how a program works, and adapt it to your needs (freedom 1).
 3. The freedom to redistribute copies of a program so you can help your neighbor (freedom 2).
 4. The freedom to improve the program, and release your improvements to the public, so that the whole community benefits (freedom 3).
- In the words of BP

Free is ambiguous



- Many confuse free software with **freeware**
- Free software is not very business friendly
- RMS opposes any type of “close” software

Open source is born



- As told by Erik Raymond (ERS)

What is open source?



- As told by Bruce Perens (BP)

Open Source



It is defined in terms of 10 points:

1. Free Redistribution
2. Source Code
3. Derived Works
4. Integrity of The Author's Source Code
5. No Discrimination Against Persons or Groups

Open Source...



6. No Discrimination Against Fields of Endeavor
7. Distribution of License
8. License Must Not Be Specific to a Product
9. License Must Not Restrict Other Software
10. License Must Be Technology-Neutral

Free vs. Open



- Free emphasizes the importance of the principles of liberty and freedom
- Open source is more pragmatic, emphasizing the technical merits of code developed in an open fashion
- As told by RMS

FOSS is more than just a software engineering process



- It has become a social phenomenon

Nescape breaks Free



- On March 31, 1998, Nescape releases Navigator an Open Source project
- “It is the computer-industry equivalent of revealing the recipe for Coca-Cola.” The Economist
- The Economist asked 3 questions:
 - First, will code writers rise to the challenge, and will they write software that is useful to commercial companies, rather than to hackers?
 - Second, will Netscape users worry about the impact on their browsers of the experiments of inventive programmers?
 - Netscape be able to keep control of its software?

Firefox



- On Dec. 16, 2004, Firefox has an 2 page add in the NYTimes.
- “Beware of spyware. If you can, use the Mozilla Firefox browser.” Signs your PC’s under siege, and what you can do, US Today, Nov. 18, 2004

What Is The Social Value of Open Source?



In the words of BP (The Open Source Phenomenon: Its Social Value, Why It Works, and Where It's Going)

- Gives The User, Rather Than The Vendor, Control.
- New Mechanism For Collaboration With Tremendous Success To Show.
- Enfranchises The Small Software Developer, Lets A Multinational Cooperate.
- Produces Software That The Proprietary Market Can't Afford To Make.

What Is The Social Value of Open Source?...



- A Real Sustainable Model - Survives Creator's Demise, Business Changes.
- Competitive Market For Support Means Higher Quality, Lower Prices.
- Source Code Means Back-Doors Are Found And Removed
- Helps Correct Unhealthy Monopolistic Software Market - Deflates Prices.
- Businesses No Longer Have To Contend With A Domineering Vendor.

What Is The Social Value of Open Source?...



- You Can See Whether Or Not It's Keeping Its Promises.
- Stands For Interoperability - End Of Artificial Upgrade-Enforcing Differences.
- But One Tool Doesn't Fit All - Customize It As You See Fit.
- A Better Tool For Democracy: Communication, Creation, Science, Study.
- Open Source Is Pro-Bono: Some OS Operations Are Legitimate Charities.

Where FOSS does not work: Tax software



- Not Done For Love.
- Product Of Accountants Rather Than Programmers.
- Very Large Added Value.
- No Gain Through Collaboration.
- No Incentive To Do It In The University.
- Severe Liability Cost.
- Service Revenue Is Insufficient To Support Product.

What is overstated about FOSS?



- It's Not Going To Make You Super-Rich.
- Fair Markets Limit How Big Any Business Can Become.
- Can You Be Satisfied With Being Merely Successful?
- Volunteers Don't Do Industry's Programming For Free With No Strings Attached.
- Reputation Is Important, But Eric Raymond Overstates It.
- Software-Services Model Is Underperforming.
- Microsoft Overstates Its Case Against Open Source.