

Free & Open Source Software (FOSS) – Additional Resources

Information Strategy Seminar Handout (15 November, 2007); Victoria Tan & Ameel Zia Khan

(MUCH) MORE ABOUT FOSS, BUSINESS CASE FOR OPEN SOURCE

- Wikipedia: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Open_source_software – Information
- Free Software Foundation: <http://www.fsf.org> – Information, evangelism
- Open Source Initiative: <http://www.opensource.org> – Information, evangelism, standards
- UNDP-APDIP International Open Source Network: <http://www.iosn.net> – Business case, practical advice
- Open Source Academy: <http://www.opensourceacademy.gov.uk> – Business case, practical advice
- Source IT: <http://www.sourceit.gov.au/sourceit/oss> – Information, practical advice
- Business Readiness Rating: <http://www.openbrr.org> – Benchmarking
- OSS Maturity Model: <http://www.navicasoft.com/pages/osmm.htm> – Benchmarking
- Open Source as an Alternative: <http://www.osalt.com> – Information, FOSS software equivalents
- Open Source Resource Center: <http://osrc.org.pk> – Information, training, resources
- OSS Watch: <http://www.oss-watch.ac.uk> – Information, advisory services

MAGAZINES

- CIO: http://www.cio.com/topic/1486/Open_Source
- ZDNet: <http://www.zdnet.com> (search for open source in whitepapers)
- InfoWorld: <http://www.infoworld.com/topic-center/open-sources>
- ComputerWorld: <http://www.computerworld.com.au/index.php/sectid;1968336438>
- Enterprise Open Source Magazine: <http://opensource.sys-con.com>

VENDORS

- Sun: <http://www.sun.com/software/opensource>
- Microsoft: <http://www.microsoft.com/opensource>
- Apple: <http://www.apple.com/opensource>
- IBM: <http://www.ibm.com/developerworks/opensource>
- HP: <http://opensource.hp.com>
- Nokia: <http://opensource.nokia.com>
- Optaros: <http://www.optaros.com> – Specialist FOSS Vendor, excellent whitepapers & reports
- Navica: <http://www.navicasoft.com> – Specialist FOSS Vendor

FOSS DEVELOPMENT WEBSITES

- SourceForge: <http://sourceforge.net>
- FreshMeat: <http://freshmeat.net>

USEFUL ARTICLES

- The Growth of Open Source Software in Organizations
http://www.optaros.com/en/publications/white_papers_reports/the_growth_of_open_source_software_in_organizations
- Open Source Catalogue 2007
http://www.optaros.com/en/publications/white_papers_reports/open_source_catalogue_2007
- Open Source Software's Expanding Role in the Enterprise (Forrester Research)
<http://whitepapers.zdnet.com/whitepaper.aspx?qtq=open+source+enterprise&docid=298185>
- Bristol Council says it can save £1m with open source
<http://news.zdnet.co.uk/software/0,1000000121,39260274,00.htm>
- Assemble Enterprise 2.0 with Open Source
http://www.optaros.com/en/publications/white_papers_reports/assemble_enterprise_2_o_with_open_source
- Use open source to build your own top-class online presence for nothing
<http://www.itwire.com/content/view/full/15281/53/1/0/>
- Determining the Value of Open Source Software
<http://java.sys-con.com/read/452357.htm>

DEFINITION OF OPEN SOURCE (OPEN SOURCE INITIATIVE)

- **Free Redistribution:** Should be given away or sold
- **Source Code:** Should be included or freely available
- **Derived Works:** Can redistribute modified code
- **Integrity of Author's Source Code:** Depending on license, modifications must be in the form of patches
- **No Discrimination Against Persons or Groups:** No one should be locked out
- **No Discrimination Against Fields of Endeavour:** Can be for commercial use as well
- **Distribution of License:** Rights apply to all users to whom this is redistributed
- **License Must Not Be Specific to a Product:** Should be able to use program regardless of which larger software product/project it is a part of
- **License Must Not Restrict Other Software:** Can be part of commercial software package
- **License Must Be Technology-Neutral:** Shouldn't dictate how the license is delivered

THE GOOD, THE BAD, AND THE UGLY

Pros

- License is free
- No vendor lock-in
- Large developer base
- Community support
- More reliable
- More secure
- More flexible
- More localization

Cons

- Many versions, vendors
- Fear or no one to blame
- Fewer features
- Limited desktop use (for now)
- Limited marketing
- May have limited interoperability
- Documentation quality varies

Myths

- Attraction is price tag
- Savings aren't real
- There's no support
- It's a legal minefield
- It's insane for mission-critical applications
- It isn't ready for the desktop

FOSS EXAMPLES

Servers, Middleware

- Apache, Squid, Sendmail
- BIND, JBOSS, Tomcat
- MySQL

Operating Systems

- Linux (and variants)

Languages

- Perl, Python, PHP
- Ruby on Rails

Content Management

- Drupal, TYPO3, Alfresco
- MediaWiki, WordPress

Desktop

- Firefox, Thunderbird
- OpenOffice.org
- LimeWire, BitTorrent

Other

- Sugar CRM, Clam Antivirus

RETURN ON INVESTMENT CALCULATIONS

Options	One-off Licence Purchase	Annual Supplier Support and Upgrade	5 Year Costs
Microsoft	£618,682	£282,000	£1,464,684
StarOffice	£88,000	£19,602	£186,010

When combined with the implementation costs listed at the end of section 4 the total costs were as shown below. (We discounted the implementation costs by 50% in Microsoft's favour, due to the existing installed base, which was assumed to require no further effort.)

Options	Licence, Support and Upgrade	Implementation and Support	Total 5 Year Costs
Microsoft	£1,464,684	£242,000	£1,706,684
StarOffice	£186,010	£484,000	£670,010

[Source: "Open Source Office Software: Building a Business Case for StarOffice or OpenOffice.org"; Gavin Beckett (Bristol City Council); Open Source Academy; November 2005]