

The Open Source Landscape

Randy Metcalfe
Communications Manager
OSS Watch

Overview

- What is OSS Watch?
- Open Source Fundamentals
- Development vs Deployment
- Open Source in the UK

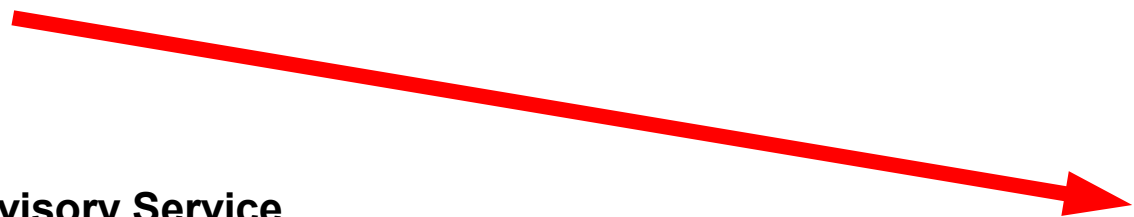
What is OSS Watch?

OSS Watch is a pilot advisory on free and open source software for UK higher and further education.

It provides neutral and authoritative guidance on open source software development and deployment for:

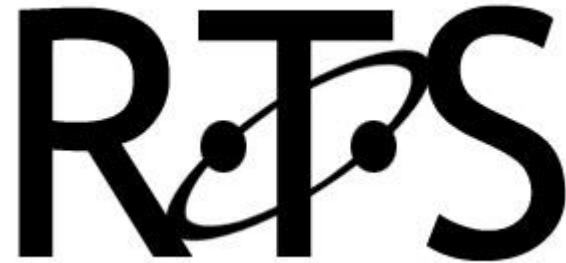
- Senior institutional decision-makers
- IT managers and technicians
- Software developers (especially JISC-funded ones!)
- End users (but not too much since we are very small)

It is funded by





OSS Watch is part of



Research Technologies Service
University of Oxford

Open Source Fundamentals

- What is open source?
- Why is open source?

Open Source is about the licence, right?

GNU General Public License

The GPL

<http://www.gnu.org/licenses/gpl.html>



Or is it licences?

- *Academic Free License
- *Apache Software License
- *Apache License, 2.0
- *Apple Public Source License
- *Artistic license
- *Attribution Assurance Licenses
- *BSD license
- *Common Public License
- *CUA Office Public License Version 1.0
- *EU DataGrid Software License
- *Eiffel Forum License
 - *Eiffel Forum License V2.0
 - *Entessa Public License
 - *Fair License
 - *Frameworkx License
 - *GNU General Public License (GPL)
 - *GNU Library or "Lesser" General Public License (LGPL)
 - *Lucent Public License (Plan9)
 - *Lucent Public License Version 1.02
 - *IBM Public License
- *Intel Open Source License
- *Historical Permission Notice and Disclaimer
- *Jabber Open Source License
- *MIT license
- *MITRE Collaborative Virtual Workspace License (CVW License)
- *Motosoto License
- *Mozilla Public License 1.0 (MPL)
- *Mozilla Public License 1.1 (MPL)
- *Naumen Public License
- *Nethack General Public License
- *Nokia Open Source License



Or is it licences? (2)

- * OCLC Research Public License 2.0
- * Open Group Test Suite License
- * Open Software License
- * PHP License
- * Python license (CNRI Python License)
- * Python Software Foundation License
- * Qt Public License (QPL)
- * RealNetworks Public Source License V1.0
- * Reciprocal Public License
- * Ricoh Source Code Public License
- * Sleepycat License
- * Sun Industry Standards Source License (SISSL)
- * Sun Public License
- * Sybase Open Watcom Public License 1.0
- * University of Illinois/NCSA Open Source License
- * Vovida Software License v. 1.0
- * W3C License
- * wxWindows Library License
- * X.Net License
- * Zope Public License
- * zlib/libpng license



At present (11 June 2004),
55 licences meet the criteria of the
“Open Source Definition”.

Open source definition

<http://www.opensource.org/docs/definition.php>

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

Wait!

Isn't open source about “freedom”?

Open source is about freedom.

- The freedom to run the program, for any purpose
- The freedom to study how the program works, and adapt it to your needs
Access to the source code is a precondition for this.
- The freedom to redistribute copies so you can help your neighbour
- The freedom to improve the program, and release your improvements to the public, so that the whole community benefits
Access to the source code is a precondition for this.

The Free Software Definition

<http://www.gnu.org/philosophy/free-sw.html>

In many languages we distinguish between two very different senses of “free”.

libre

and

gratuit

In English we tend to mark this distinction by pointing out the difference between

Free Speech

and

Free Beer



Free and open source software is not about free beer!

What are the motives for choosing open source?

- Saving money
- Promoting open standards
- Wanting quality, control and security
- Protecting institutional investment
- Providing apprentice training for programmers
- A need to get specialist software written
- Worry about Microsoft in particular, and the big software vendors in general, for restrictive and monopolistic practices

Development vs Deployment

Open source as a development methodology.

Famously characterised by Eric Raymond in his monograph “The Cathedral and the Bazaar”.

<http://www.catb.org/~esr/writings/cathedral-bazaar/>

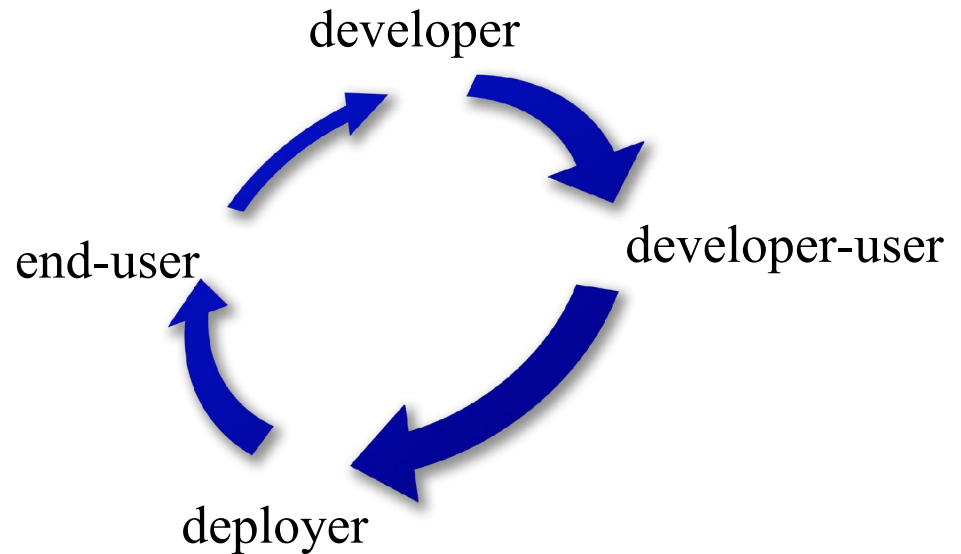
Key features of open source development

- Programmer commitment, because the programmer is also the user
- Rapid change, because programmers want to see results
- Unconstrained specifications, because there is no external client
- Collective ownership of code
- Response to change, dictated by (perhaps unexpected) users



Isn't it all about an open source community?

It can be.



But remember
those who “merely” deploy open source
software are also part of the open source community.

Does that make everyone a “developer” of open source software?

Open source in the UK

OSS Watch Scoping Study – autumn 2003

Goals of the study:

1. discover how IT managers deploy, and plan to deploy, OSS at HE/FE institutions
2. discover how software developers at HE/FE institutions use, and plan to use, OSS tools, licenses and development paradigms
3. discover how end-users at HE/FE institutions use OSS applications
4. discover interest in longer-term HE/FE development or participation in the OSS community

34 FE institutions represented in the final results

Key Relevant Findings

- 9% of FE respondents reported that their institutions have an IT strategy which explicitly considers OSS
- 88% of FE respondents reported that very few staff members had relevant skills in order to deploy OSS
- 61% of FE institutions said that very few of their organizations were more than slightly aware of open source concepts, and only 15% had made decisions on deployment of OSS
- 53% of FE respondents identified cost as the most important reason for choosing OSS over proprietary analogues

Other developments

e-Envoy/DTI consultation towards an open source policy (they mean a licence, not a development methodology). Please read, consider and send in your thoughts.

http://www.govtalk.gov.uk/policydocs/consult_subject_document.asp?docnum=861

JISC emerging policy on open source

- Some new projects must be released with an open source licence
- Workshop on open source development best practice for e-learning programme
- JCALT Guide to Investing in Proprietary, In-House or Open-source Software and Services



And most important...

days like today.