:   FOSS - Free Open Source Software   :

Description

Not to be confused with Free software, open source software, or freeware.

Free and open-source software (F/OSS, FOSS) or free/libre/open-source software (FLOSS) is software that is both free and open source.

It is liberally licensed to grant users the right to use, copy, study, change, and improve its design through the availability of its source code (used to make programs).

Consider

The English language has two meanings for the word "free":

1. As in "free beer", referring to zero cost.
2. As in "free speech" and "free market", both referring to freedom and liberty.

Free software can be sold. There are even businesses that collect and sell it to others.

The word free in FOSS refers not to fiscal cost, but to the autonomy rights that FOSS grants its users. (A better word for zero-cost software, which lacks such rights, is "freeware.") The phrase open source emphasizes the right of users to study, change, and improve the source code—that is, the detailed design -of FOSS applications.

You can usually find FOSS and download it legally from the Internet without cost or without the usual restrictions associated with proprietary commercial software.

Advantages

– Versions are ***frequently available on multiple platforms*** such as Microsoft Windows, Apple OS-X, and Linux.

– Some FOSS software is ***technically superior*** in performance and features.

– Most FOSS software is ***ethically superior*** by not having vendor lock-in, allowing unlimited copies.

– Support often provided within **strong community-type forums** versus paid Commercial Off The Shelf packages.

– Easier review **finds** bugs and back-doors.

– Usually ***free or very low cost.***

Challenges

-- Fear, Uncertainty and Doubt (FUD) perpetuated by proprietary entities.

– Minor usability issues, documentation irregularity, unfamiliar interface placement, too many choices with minimal guidance.

– Copyright issues, DMCA, and Software patent issues.

– Source should be routinely audited.

Internet uses FOSS

a) DNS/BIND – to navigate the Internet
   http://www.isc.org/software/bind
b) Apache – serves 57.4% of web pages
   http://www.apache.org/
   Nginx - serves 24.3% of web pages
   http://nginx.org/ Both open-source and serving 81.7% of all web pages.
   http://www.w3techs.com
c) Linux – on 97% (485) of Top 500 high performance Supercomputers.
   http://top500.org/statistics/sublist/

Additional Resources

Books
The Cathedral and the Bazaar
ISBN 0596001088 Eric S. Raymond

Free As In Freedom
ISBN 0596002874 Sam Williams

Just For Fun
ISBN 1587991519 Linus Torvalds

Internet links
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/FOSS
http://www.fsf.org/
http://www.freesoftwaremagazine.com/
http://softwarefreedomday.org/
http://theOpenDisc.com/
http://hzwlug.sluug.org/cdrom.html
http://divajutta.com/doctormo/understanding-foss.pdf

Multi-platform User Applications

Audacity -- audio editing/recording
http://web.audacityteam.org/

Blender -- 3D content creation
http://www.blender.org/

Dia -- diagram creation
http://live.gnome.org/Dia

Firefox -- web browser
http://www.mozilla.org/firefox

GIMP -- image editor
http://www.gimp.org/

GnuCash -- financial accounting
http://www.gnucash.org/

Inkscape --Scalable Vector Graphics
http://inkscape.org/

KeePass – password safe
http://keepass.info/

LibreOffice -- office suite
http://www.libreoffice.org/

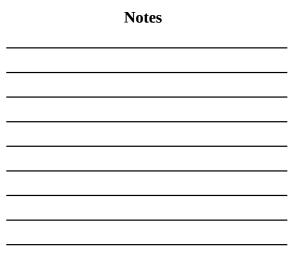Pidgin -- chat client
http://pidgin.im/

PostgreSQL -- object-relational database
http://www.postgresql.org

Thunderbird -- email client
http://www.mozilla.org/thunderbird

TightVNC -- remote control
http://www.tightvnc.com/

TrueCrypt -- disc/drive/file encryption
https://www.grc.com/misc/truecrypt/truecrypt.htm

VLC -- media player
http://www.videolan.org/

Notes

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Free Meetings

There are **scores of educational meetings** in the Saint Louis Metro Area in any given month.

Please visit the **SLUUG calendar** for specific times, locations and topics.

http://www.sluug.org/calendar/

SLUUG has a central forum, specialized forums and LUGs (Linux User Groups) each with free monthly meetings. Below are a few of the regularly scheduled groups:

St. Louis Area Computer Club -- first Thursday
SLUUG General meeting - second Wednesday
STL Linux Users Group for Seniors - second Friday
St. Louis Novell Users Group – third Wednesday
St. Louis Linux Users Group -- third Thursday
Hazelwood Linux Users Group – fourth Tuesday

We look forward to seeing you at a meeting soon!

FOSS

Free Open Source Software

Free as in Liberty

Information brought to you by the

STL!/unix/usr/group

St. Louis Unix Users Group (SLUUG)
http://www.sluug.org/

Your forum for exchanging information about open standards, open systems, open source, products, services and architectures