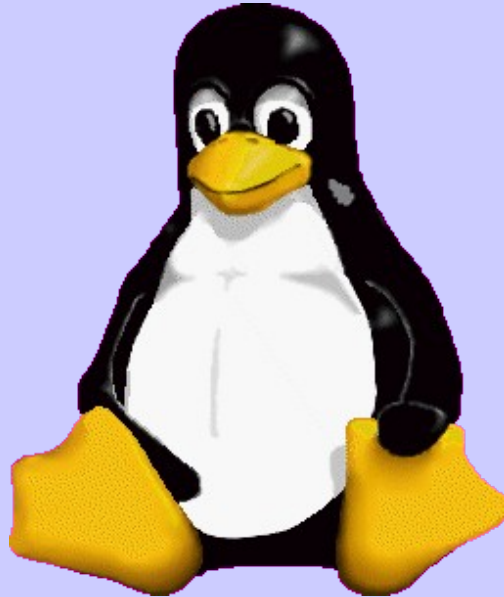


Linux: An Introduction

License Issues



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On the web

- ◆ Open Source Licenses and philosophy:
(<http://www.opensource.org>)
- ◆ Know more about (L)GPL license and Free Software Foundation @ <http://www.fsf.org>

Commercial Licenses

- ◆ Normally licensed for \$\$, sometimes may be trialware or even free (zero dollars)

However:

- ◆ Licensee (you, buyer) owns nothing
- ◆ You can *only* use the software as dictated by the licensor
- ◆ You are not allowed to study, reverse engineer, decompile, enhance, distribute, benchmark, break anti-circumvention methods etc
- ◆ Licensor owns all rights. End of story.

Public Domain

- ◆ Owner loses all control immediately upon release of software or content as Public Domain.
- ◆ Any one else, can (ab-)use the software in any way.
- ◆ Not desirable.

FLOSS Licenses

- ◆ FLOSS licenses fill a need between these two extremes.
- ◆ Some of the most popular software published with OSS license (Java, Linux kernel, GCC, Eclipse, MySQL, PHP, Python, Firefox, MySQL etc)
- ◆ About 73 licenses! (2009-Jan)

FLOSS = Free Libre' Open Source Software

Why OSS license?

- ◆ Build a community around the software
- ◆ Reduce product support cost (community support)
- ◆ Encourage third party market place (eclipse, firefox)
- ◆ Retain control (esp. Dual License eg: MySQL), while benefiting from innovations
- ◆ Challenge entrenched incumbents, competitors etc
- ◆ Code escrow – automatic
- ◆ Ignite innovation – users are effectively contributors and developers

Why OSS Licenses?

- ◆ No restrictions on code analysis, security checks benchmarking etc by anyone.
- ◆ You are free to use, incorporate & distribute the software as you wish with some restrictions, of course

Common Attributes

- ◆ Free Redistribution
- ◆ Source Code Available
- ◆ Derived Works allowed
- ◆ Integrity of Author's code
- ◆ No Discrimination
- ◆ Distribution of the License
- ◆ No Specific Technology
- ◆ Cannot Restrict Other Software
- ◆ Technology-Neutral

License Types

Give me credits (Apache, BSD, MIT)

- ◆ Mention that you are using code derived from the project (eg: Apache)
- ◆ You have no other obligation.
- ◆ Commercial use – OK
- ◆ Distribute modifications – Not required, but recommended
- ◆ Sublicensing OK
- ◆ Universal donor

License Types

Give me Fixes (MPL, EPL, LGPL)

- ◆ Any fixes or changes to the code from the project needs to be shared.
- ◆ You have no other obligation.
- ◆ Commercial use – OK
- ◆ Code developed by you, linking to the project code – need not be distributed, can be secret
- ◆ Normally used for libraries, platforms

License Types

Give me All (GPL)

- ◆ Commercial use – OK
- ◆ Distribute modifications – Required
- ◆ Software written by you, linking to the GPL code must be release as GPL too (viral clause)
- ◆ Software distributed as collection of works along with GPL software need not be GPL'd

License Types

- ◆ Give me All (GPL), contd...
- ◆ Derivatives and linked software also must become GPL
- ◆ Modifications to GPL sw, if used internally to your org, need not be disclosed outside
- ◆ If you sell or distribute such modified software, you need to provide the fixes to your customers, under GPL license.
- ◆ Your customers CAN distribute the GPL code (publish on internet too)

GPL

- ◆ All downstream have equal rights and access
- ◆ Use GPL / Proprietary dual license strategy to use GPL in commercial software
- ◆ Copyright holder retains much control

Knowing GPL

- ◆ GPL is designed to protect end users & programmers rights.
- ◆ Assures 4 rights:
 - ◆ Freedom to run the program
 - ◆ Freedom to study and adapt the program
 - ◆ Freedom to redistribute
 - ◆ Freedom to improve

uses the term Copy**Left** (vs Copy**Rights**)

GPL

- ◆ Imposes conditions too:
 - ◆ Do not steal code.
 - ◆ Share and Share Alike
 - ◆ Do not discriminate

Licensing & Rights

- ◆ Entire OS source code is free (Gratis) – free as in zero dollars
- ◆ Also Free - Full freedom to study, modify, redistribute. No payments or restrictions. (Libre') – Free as in Freedom
- ◆ Kernel and many packages follow GNU GPL, LGPL or BSD style license.
- ◆ Copyrighted to the author, NOT public domain

Remember...

MS EULA: Sharing is theft,

BSD: Sharing is not theft,

GPL: Not sharing is theft.

Thanks!

- ◆ Some slides and content adapted from “Making sense of OpenSource Licenses” by J Aaron Farr, ApacheCon 2008
- ◆ Some content adapted from www.fsf.org

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Thanks!

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Thanks for your time. If you have any feedback, corrections or questions please contact me: Anand Vaidya, vaidya.anand@gmail.com

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