

Open Source in a closed environment

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Source open, distribution closed

- Number of OSS projects for Apple iPhone keeps rising
 - Many sites like <http://opensourceiphone.com>,
<http://open.iphonedev.com>
- But Apple controls distribution through iTunes App Store
 - Ad-hoc distribution and jail-breaking are very limited alternatives
- So why do it?

Reasons to open source

- Ideology
 - “Software wants to be free”
- Adoption of your APIs
 - SaaS, leverage efforts of other developers
- Undercut the competition
 - Lower price point, ease customization, decrease vendor lock-in, decrease R&D, access to new markets, etc
- Attention getter
 - Open source as a marketing tool

Inherent aspects

- Open source enables your competition
 - Managed by license choice and project governance
 - Find balance between developer adoption and curtailing competitive opportunity
- But, much less risk with Software as a Service (SaaS) if the service is difficult to duplicate
 - Adoption-led business model

Armed guard at the gate?

- But what if a 3rd party controls distribution to customers (eg Apple and iTunes Store)?
 - Only original contributor can make submissions
 - This changes competitive concerns
- Still many open source benefits
 - The API is open
 - More eyes looking at the code
 - Knowledge exchange
 - Marketing opportunities
 - A dialog with developers and customers

Thought Exercise

- Eventual outcome of the armed guard:
 - Different licensing for same app on Android, Blackberry etc?
 - Open source the iPhone version but not the Android version?
 - Higher percentage of BSD-style licensing than on Android, desktop, server environments?
 - Can't be GPL-compliant?
 - <http://arstechnica.com/apple/news/2010/05/fsf-apples-itunes-store-terms-of-service-at-odds-with-gpl.ars>

Questions, comments?



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geek (gik, n) n.
Obsessive Computer User: somebody who enjoys or takes delight using computers or other technology, often to what others consider an excessive degree.