

News

History of Open Source Software | Open Source Procurement
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Title

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ShortDescription

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Content

Open Source Software (OSS) is not just software but a movement to collaborate, share, and enhance software. The philosophy behind it is that software shouldn't be under the ownership of a single entity but treated as a common good. The movement was started by Richard Stallman as the GNU Project in 1983 as free software. He wanted programmers to freely share code to learn, reverse engineer, modify, or improve. The term 'free' meant free as in freedom and not cost, but it still caused confusion among the community. Later on, the term 'open' was used to describe the freedom to use and modify the software by Christine Peterson, and since then the term has stuck.

Advanced Research Projects Agency Network

The Advanced Research Projects Agency Network (ARPANET), which was the forerunner of the internet as we see it today, relied on community collaboration, peer reviews, and open forums for discussion and collaboration in the early 1950s. This paved the way for the open-source software ideology, i.e., software is a common good and should be freely shared with anyone interested.

In 1990, Linus Torvalds laid the foundation for his own PC-based version of UNIX, termed Linux. It broke the monopoly of Microsoft as many companies and start-ups turned to Linux as an affordable alternative to Windows with source code readily available for modification.

One such company was Red Hat, created back in 1993, which revolutionized the operating system with their own version of Linux. Today they provide an operating system platform, storage, middleware, and everything in between.

After decades of the birth of the free and open-source movement, it can be seen everywhere; in government departments, private companies, latest start-ups, homes, and even space. According to a survey, about 97% of businesses in the UK are using some form of open-source software. Even core proprietary companies are working on their open source projects.

Type

Interview

Comments

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