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Assignment 01

Chapter 1

Compare free and non-free software. Research this topic on the WWW. You might want to start here:

http://www.gnu.org/

Free software or open-source software is defined as software that has been developed to address specific user needs but is free to: modify, copy, study, distribute and even run the software (Sacks, 2015). The freedom of running the software means that the user will not face any consequences when they acquire and install the software. As far as the copying freedom is concerned, open source systems are free to copy and distribute.

Users also have the freedom of studying the software. For example, the source code files for Linux systems are readily available. This means, users can download the source code files and study them. The free software also have community platforms that have a lot of materials about the free software that could enable the users of that program to have the ability to contribute to that project (Sacks, 2015). For example, the Ubuntu Linux community has a community of developers that contribute to the improvement of the software. This ensures that software updates and upgrades are available to users.

On the other hand, non-free software are those programs that have to be purchased first before being installed and used by the end user. Apart from purchasing licenses, proprietary

systems also deny the users the ability to freely: copy, distribute, modify or even study them. The purpose of denying users these permissions is to ensure that the software makers earn some revenue from the sale of the software products. Apart from that, the software owners are the ones that are responsible for making software modifications and releasing software updates.

Therefore, the main difference between open source and proprietary software is the fact that free software is readily accessible to users and can be copied and used in any manner that the user wishes to. Software updates and modifications are performed by the developer community. On the other hand, proprietary applications are not free as users have to purchase software licenses. Apart from that, software releases and modifications are done by the software owners.

Analyze software monopolies. Give your personal opinion.

Software monopolies are caused by several factors. To start with, users prefer software products that have been standardized. This means, users may tend to purchase software products from a single vendor as long as the software in standard and familiar to use. For instance, given the fact that Windows is one of the earliest in the operating system field, users may tend to prefer using the same products as they are of the same standard.

It's also caused by the fact that users may tend to distrust software from one vendor increasing their reliance on one vendor creating a monopoly. In my own opinion, software monopolies are not good as they may affect competitiveness in the software market and puts the interests of the customers in the mercy of specific vendors.

Consider car radar. Give your personal opinion.

Car radar systems are essential as they prevent against collisions (Brookner, 2015). Apart from preventing against collisions, some have detectors to warn the driver against radar detectors such as police speed guns. In my own opinion, I think this is a good technology as it could play a

big role in reducing road carnage and could also help drivers while driving in poor visibility conditions.

Chapter 2

Choose an ethical theory

I have chosen the Justice ethical theory. This theory explains that one knows how to choose between right and wrong by selecting the action that are fair to the parties involved.

Consider copying a copyrighted CD. Make each argument independent; don't mix them. In each argument, be sure to specify which theory you are using.

Copying a copyrighted CD is an infringement of intellectual property. In one argument, considering the fact that the copyrighted CD is not free to copy or distribute, the best action to take is not to copy the CD as it is unfair to the owner of the CD according to the Justice theory that emphasizes on fairness to all.

Is wiretapping moral? Explain your personal opinion, according to one or more ethical theories.

In my own personal opinion, wiretapping is immoral because of the following reasons. To start with, it undermines the privacy of the people who are involved (Melden, 2013). Therefore, this is supported by the ethical principle that supports autonomy. Apart from that, wiretapping is an unfair act on the people whose privacy is being undermined according to the justice theory.

Do you agree with Plato's Glaucon? Either way, explain why.

I agree with Plato's Glaucon as it explains that justice is like an agreement of some sort between two parties not to engage in unfair acts as the cost of being unjust would surpass the

benefits that would be brought by the injustice. I also agree with the fact that people in power tend to misuse that authority and commit acts of injustice against the weak.

Do all of them, not just one of them. Are these positive rights? Explain your personal opinion, according to one or more ethical theories.

In my own opinion, I think they are positive rights. According to the utilitarianism ethical principle, the actions that have the least consequences and most benefits are the most ideal and therefore, if one does just a single positive act, the person should contribute to the greater good by doing all of the acts that are possible and not just one.

What is included in the right to life? Explain your personal opinion, according to one or more ethical theories.

In my own personal opinion, I think the right to life includes protecting the lives of the people that are innocent in the society. For example, I consider an unborn baby to be innocent and have the right to life. In other scenarios such as death row convictions, I think that the right to life may not be included as it's unfair to the victims of that criminal according to the justice and utilitarian ethical principles.

References

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Sacks, M. (2015). Competition between open source and proprietary software: Strategies for

survival. *Journal of Management Information Systems*, *32*(3), 268-295.

Brookner, E. (2015). Radar and phased array breakthroughs. *Microwave Journal*, *58*(11).