Free Software Melbourne

19th of August 2021
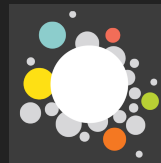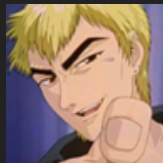

Audacity & Elastic Search

Recent controversies in the Free Software community

Sponsors:

Linux Australia

Elastic Search - History

- Elasticsearch started in 2010 and was Apache 2.0 licensed
- Based on the Lucene library
- Distributed, scalable and used a common interface
- Elastic NV was founded in 2012
- Litigations with AWS that started in 2015

Elastic Search - New Licencing Model

- Elastic Search (and Kibana)
- Adopted the SSPL
- Motivation: AWS
- January 2021 starting with version 7.11
- Legally within their rights

Elastic Search - SSPL and FLOSS

- Based on the GPLv3
- Not approved by the OSI
- Not even acknowledged by the FSF

Elastic Search - Impact

- "No impact on the overwhelming majority of our user community"
- A cloud provider would need to agree to open-source your hosting infrastructure

Elastic Search - Alternatives

- Amazon previously announced their plan to fork Elasticsearch and feed this into OpenDistro
- Amazon reacted with a plan to fork Elasticsearch and Kibana
- Amazon Rebranded OpenSearch
- Use Lucene library directly
- Would AGPL have been a viable alternative for Amazon

Elastic Search - References

- FAQ: https://www.elastic.co/pricing/faq/licensing
- Video: https://archive.org/details/copyleftconf2020-allison
- Blog: https://www.elastic.co/blog/elastic-license-v2
- Article: https://www.infoq.com/news/2021/01/elastic-aws-open-source/
- Article: https://www.leanix.net/en/blog/changes-to-elasticsearch-and-kibana-licenses-what-engineering-managers-need-to-know
- Article: https://www.instaclustr.com/changes-to-elasticsearch-licensing/#
- Article: https://www.zdnet.com/article/elastic-changes-open-source-license-to-monetize-cloud-service-use/
- Article: https://coralogix.com/blog/elasticsearch-sspl-license-threat-to-business/
- Article: https://www.protocol.com/enterprise/about/aws-targeted-by-elastic

Audacity - History

- Digital audio editor and recording application software
- GPL Version 2 & CC BY 3.0
- In excess of 200 million downloads
- The Muse Group would be acquiring Audacity
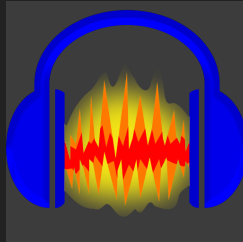
Audacity - Who are The Muse Group?

The Muse Group

- Ultimate Guitar community and guitar tab catalog
- music notation software and online catalog MuseScore (2017)
- assignment management platform MuseClass (2020/1)
- song learning and effects app Tonebridge

Audacity - Contributor License Agreement

- Introduced a new CLA after acquiring Audacity
- Not well received
- In line with similar CLAs
- Still in place

Audacity - Telemetry, Analytics and Update Checks

- Early GitHub Pull Request to enable analytics and error reporting
- PR was released before a planned announcement
- Dropped telemetry ideas
- In house analytics and update checking
- GDPR + Analytics + Poor Communications = ...

Audacity - Privacy Policy Updates

- Audacity updates the privacy policy
- Sharing personal data with 3rd parties
- Sharing data for legal enforcement
- Suggests that people under 13 should not use Audacity
- Reworded privacy policy to remove restrictions and most of the data collection

Audacity - Reactions

- Self hosting analytics & anonymized data
- No telemetry
- Revised privacy policy
- Intending to use the CLAs for good

Audacity - Alternatives and Forks

- Honorary mention: "Aefkaa"
- Audacium - https://github.com/SartoxOnlyGNU/audacium
- DarkAudacity - https://github.com/JamesCrook/audacity/tree/darkaudacity
- Sneedacity - https://github.com/Sneeds-Feed-and-Seed/sneedacity
- Tenacity - https://github.com/tenacityteam/tenacity

Audacity - References

- Article: https://www.musictech.net/news/industry/audacity-acquired-muse-group-ultimate-guitar-musescore/
- Article: https://appleinsider.com/articles/21/07/04/open-source-audacity-deemed-spyware-over-data-collection-changes
- Article: https://librearts.org/2021/07/audacity-privacy/
- Article: https://fosspost.org/audacity-is-now-a-spyware/
- Article: https://www.theregister.com/2021/05/27/audacity_cla/
- Article: https://www.theregister.com/2021/07/05/audacity/
- Podcast: https://www.scoringnotes.com/news/muse-group-formed-to-support-musescore-ultimate-guitar-acquires-audacity/
- Video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RMWNvwLiXIQ
- CLA: https://github.com/audacity/audacity/discussions/932
- PP: https://github.com/audacity/audacity/discussions/1225
- PP: https://github.com/audacity/audacity/issues/1213
- PP retraction: https://github.com/audacity/audacity/discussions/1353
- New PP: https://www.audacityteam.org/about/desktop-privacy-notice/
- Telemitry: https://github.com/audacity/audacity/pull/835
- Telemetry backdown: https://www.theregister.com/2021/05/14/audacity_telemetry/
- Telemetry retraction: https://github.com/audacity/audacity/discussions/889
- Audacity mark: https://assignments.uspto.gov/assignments/q?db=tm&sno=78352743
- 4Chan: https://www.theregister.com/2021/07/07/tenacity_maintainer_quits_4chan_harassment/