



Packaging for Fedora

MARK HARFOUCHE | JAN 22, 2013 01:43AM GMT

[Home](#) [Archived questions](#) [Packaging for Fedora](#)

I was wondering if there were any objections to creating and distributing an rpm package (free of charge) for Mendeley Desktop.

I noticed a post about someone doing a similar thing for Gentoo
<http://support.mendeley.com/customer/portal/questions/199131-on-distribution-policy-and-download-link>

and wanted a more direct confirmation of this.

I was wondering if I could:

1. Bypass the user downloading the mendeley tar ball from mendeley.com
2. Remove some of the bundled libraries (in favour of system libraries)
3. Write a custom Python mendeley that would initiate the program.
4. Put it all together in an rpm so that users could install the rpm instead of extracting and running the program from the tar ball.

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Robert Knight
JAN 22, 2013 06:37PM GMT

Hello,

My answer is the same as the one on <http://support.mendeley.com/customer/portal/questions/199131-on-distribution-policy-and-download-link> - you can do this if you wish and thank-you for the offer, but I would think carefully about whether this is actually a good thing for Mendeley users.

> 1. Bypass the user downloading the mendeley tar ball from mendeley.com

You can do this, but if a user gets Mendeley from us, they know they are getting the current, supported version. It also gives us a chance to explain what Mendeley is (a service, not just a piece of software). Also, the version we provide on mendeley.com will keep itself up to date as we release new versions.

> 2. Remove some of the bundled libraries (in favour of system libraries)

Mendeley Desktop already picks up the system Qt libraries at runtime if they are new enough and only uses the bundled ones otherwise. This allows us to keep Mendeley running on older systems but still pick up system integration improvements (eg. integration with the Unity global menus on Ubuntu) that come with using system libraries where appropriate.

- > 4. Put it all together in an rpm so that users could install
- > the rpm instead of extracting and running the program from the tar ball.

For Ubuntu, what we do is take the "generic Linux build", then run it through a script which re-arranges it into a .deb package and verifies the output with Lintian. It might be useful to write a similar script that does the same thing but generates an RPM package instead.

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Mark Harfouche
JAN 22, 2013 07:04PM GMT

Thank you for your reply.

Just as a counter argument:

1. I believe the model of having each software maintain it's own updates is rather deprecated. Linux distros have used package managers for a while now and now we see a similar movement to a single location to install programs from iOS, Android, OS-X, and Windows.

Installing it as a rpm/deb makes sure that all users have the most up to date version of the program.

It also ensures that the user is not forced to clutter his directory structure.

Have you guys considered making a deb (and maybe in the future an rpm) repository to allow users to have the most up to date version of the software?

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Robert K.
JAN 31, 2013 03:20PM GMT
Mendeley Agent

Hello Mark – We do have a deb repository already and this is what we recommend to Ubuntu/Debian users. Instructions are at <http://www.mendeley.com/download-mendeley-desktop/ubuntu/instructions/> . We don't have a Fedora repository at the moment I'm afraid.

The concerns I had are not about having a single place to install programs – hence we do have .debs for Ubuntu, but rather who is responsible for building, testing & supporting these versions – the app developer vs. a volunteer packager.

This question is closed to new answers.

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