Clam Anti Virus is a cross platform open source antivirus program made by several groups depending on its intended operating system. There are versions of Clam Antivirus for Windows, Mac OSX, Linux/Unix and BSD. This article provides an overview of clamav open-source software features and uses for those who may wish to explore the difference in open source antivirus applications. The web sites for various ClamAV operating system applications are used as reference for this article.

Clam Anti Virus is one of the most commonly used antivirus and anti malware products on the open source market. Started in 2002, it downloads updates to over one million computers from over 120 servers. It has become one of the highest rated business solutions in the open source antivirus market. This is an example of how an open source program can outclass many of its vendor-released peers. The advantages of freedom and community involvement in writing publicly available source code have given Clam AV an advantage in the market.

Sourcefire’s Clam Antivirus engine receives hundreds of thousands of threat updates and is updated many times a day. They are able to respond almost instantly to new virus and malware threats through their very extensive open source community. The open source community is much more fluid in its response to software en-users’ needs. This creates an atmosphere of trust within the community, which software issues can be taken care of effectively. The flipside is the vendor software, having a more extensive budget and a centralized position for implementing updates and controlling software issues.

Originally, Clam AV was not written with a graphic user interface. As a result, it would have been difficult for the digitally challenged to use. Several third party experts developed the user interface later, so that those familiar with the graphic interface could take advantage of this program. Sourcefire added to the ability of this program’s developers to respond to end-user feedback. Clamav open-source software features and uses include an extensive feedback network and development teams that have been working on this software for many years.

Among the features are a command line scanner, automatic database updates, and a shared library for antivirus engines. The program runs in the background, scanning for viruses, worms key loggers, and many types of threats as its database defines them. The feature that makes ClamAV most attractive is its speed and effectiveness. No one wants to be bogged down by an antivirus system that works inefficiently, especially if it does not even capture all of the existing threats. Some antivirus programs can even be compromised by the viruses themselves, making them a rather unhealthy option at best. The extensive information on source fire about this software and its effectiveness makes it a safe bet to install on any computer.