Open source 101

Open Source Business Basics

National Open Source Innovation Summit

Malcolm Bain, Across Legal
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7 February 2025

Open source “business” press clippings - 2024

DBeaver

How to choose the right business model for your Open Source project

Medium

The Secrets of Successful Open Source Business Models

Finding the right model for your open-source startup

The Commercial Open Source Report, 2024

Insights on how tech companies are building value with open-source software

Datamation

34 Top Open Source Software Companies Shaping 2024

EQVISTA

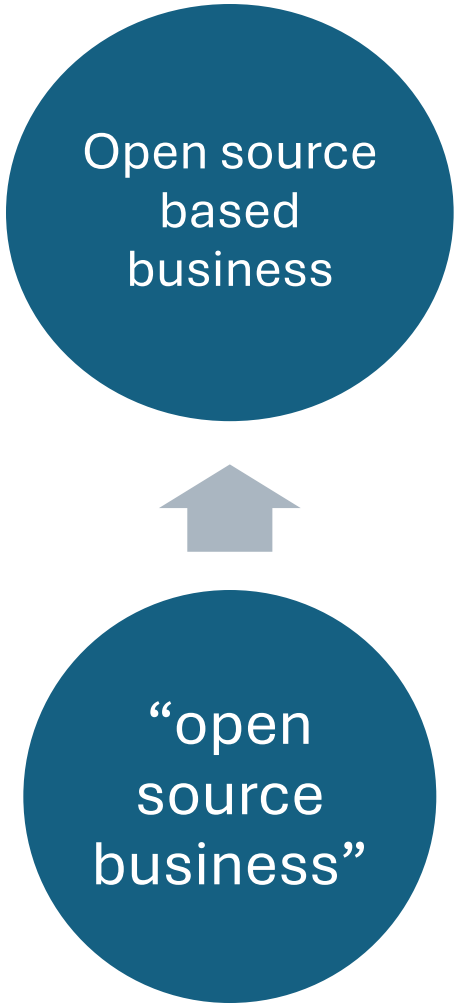
TOP FUNDED OPEN SOURCE STARTUPS IN 2024

by Sarath | October 18, 2024

“open
source
business”

First things first…

Open source is not a business model - it is a technology development model, based on transparency, collaboration and incremental innovation


Open source based business
“open source business”

1980 – 2000: professional services

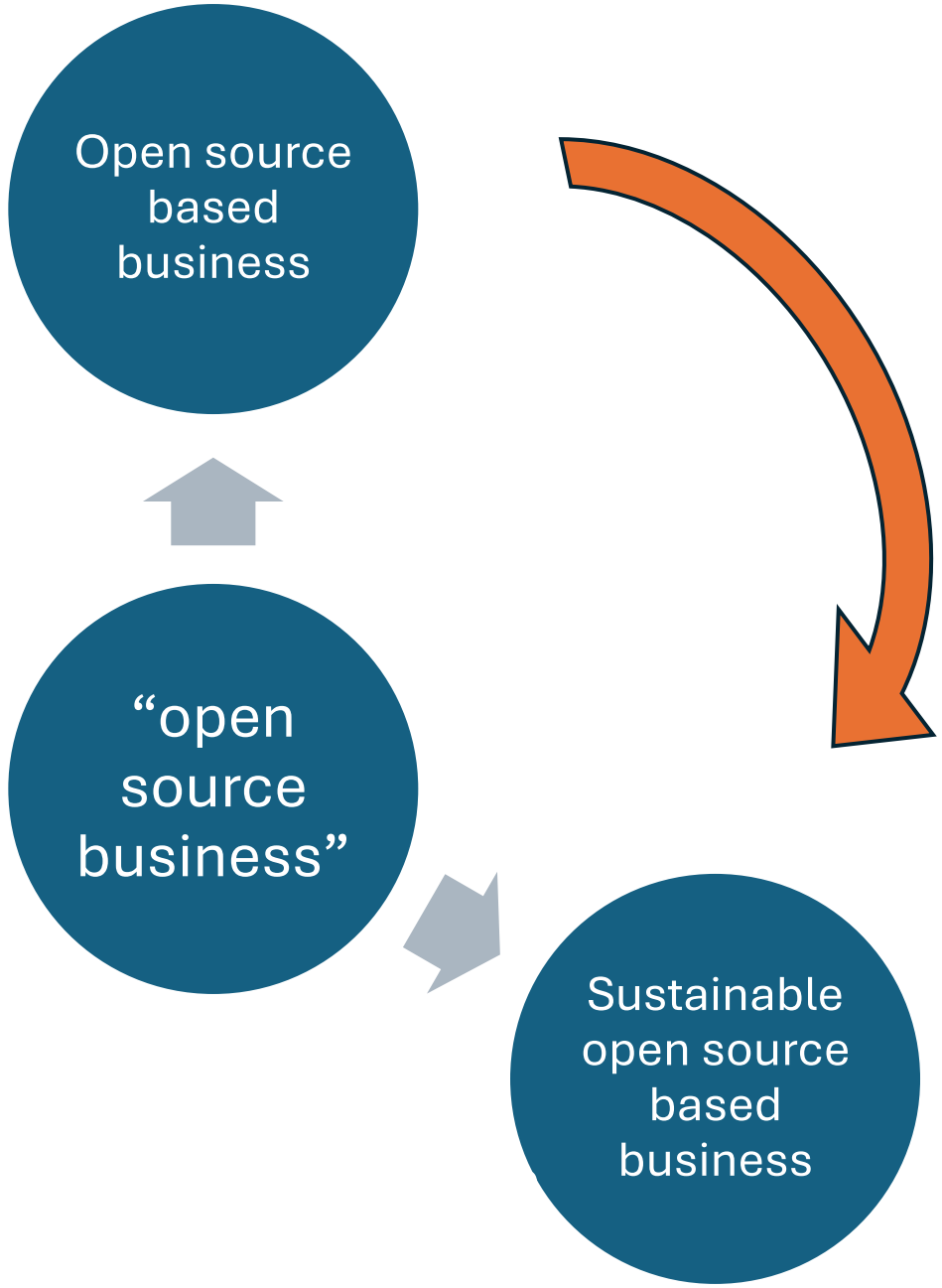
1980 – 2000: professional services

Not scalable

Low profit margins

Not sustainable (looking for “growth”)

Business means selling a product or service that provides a solution to the market on a continuous and sustainable basis...


Open source based business
“open source business”
Sustainable open source based business

1980 – 2020: professional services

2000 - 2020: searching for a product

“Productise”

- Dual licensing
- Open Core

“Hostify”

- OSS as a service
- Platforms

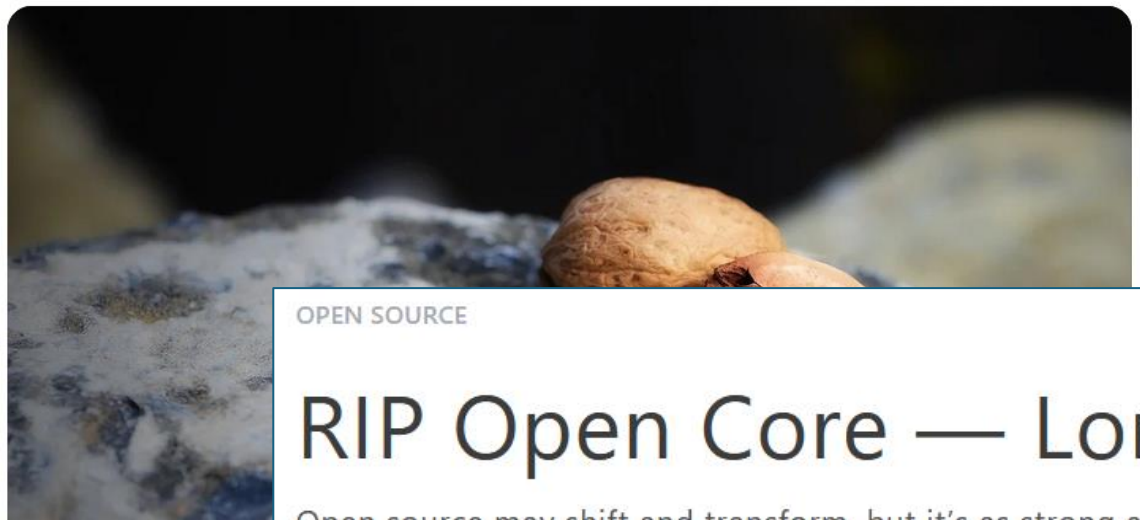
“Commercialify”

- Commercial clause
- “Fauxpen” licensing
- “open source for non commercial only”

r/opensource • 3 yr. ago
CrankyBear Top 1% Poster

...

The Future of Open Source, or Why Open Core Is Dead



OPEN SOURCE

RIP Open Core — Long Live Open Source

Open source may shift and transform, but it's as strong as ever — and likely to remain so for generations.

Nov 14th, 2024 3:00am by Or Weis

Death of an Open Source Business Model

Eulogy for a simpler time

Joe Morrison · Follow

10 min read · Dec 9, 2020

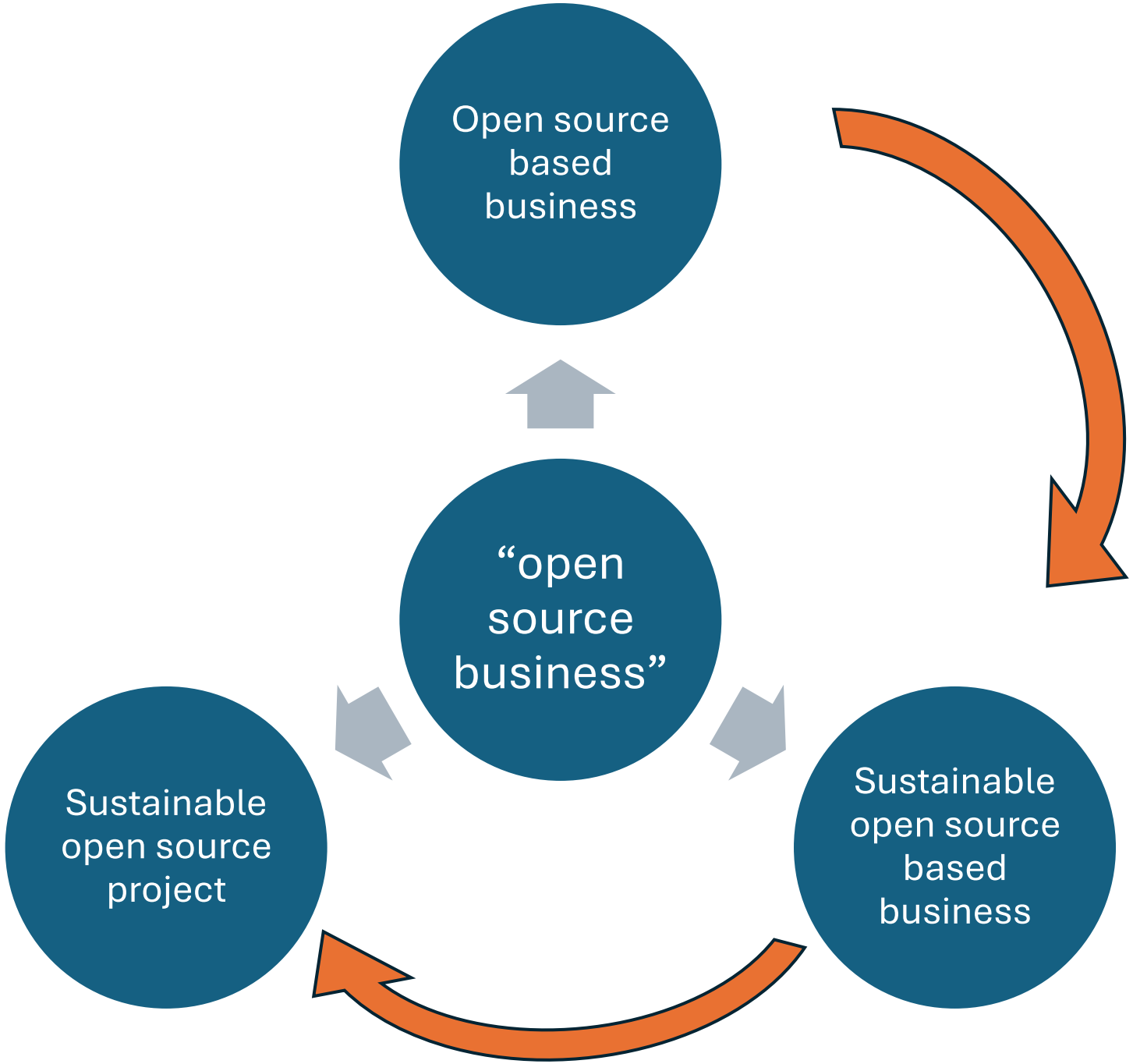
- Fixed a bug where mouse events didn't properly fire during zoom scrolling. (#10171)

2.0.0

⚠ Breaking changes

- **mapbox-gl-js is no longer under the 3-Clause BSD license. By upgrading to this release, you are agreeing to Mapbox terms of service.** Refer to LICENSE.txt for the new licensing terms and details. For questions, contact our team at https://support.mapbox.com.
- Beginning with v2.0.0, a billable map load occurs whenever a Map object is initialized. Before updating an existing implementation from v1.x.x to v2.x.x, please review the pricing documentation to estimate expected costs.

The business of open source is making sure your open source projects are sustainable… profits come afterwards


Open source based business
“open source business”
Sustainable open source project
Sustainable open source based business

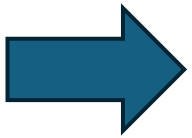
1980 – 2025: professional services

2000 - 2025: searching for a product

2020 – 2025: reinvesting in the community

Back to basics… What makes open source sustainable?

- ~~Sales~~
- Skills
- Efficiency
- Scalability
- Investment for growth
- Low costs
- Network effects
- ~~More sales~~



Strengthen your community!

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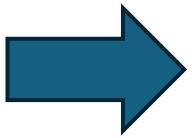


(financially) Strengthen your community!

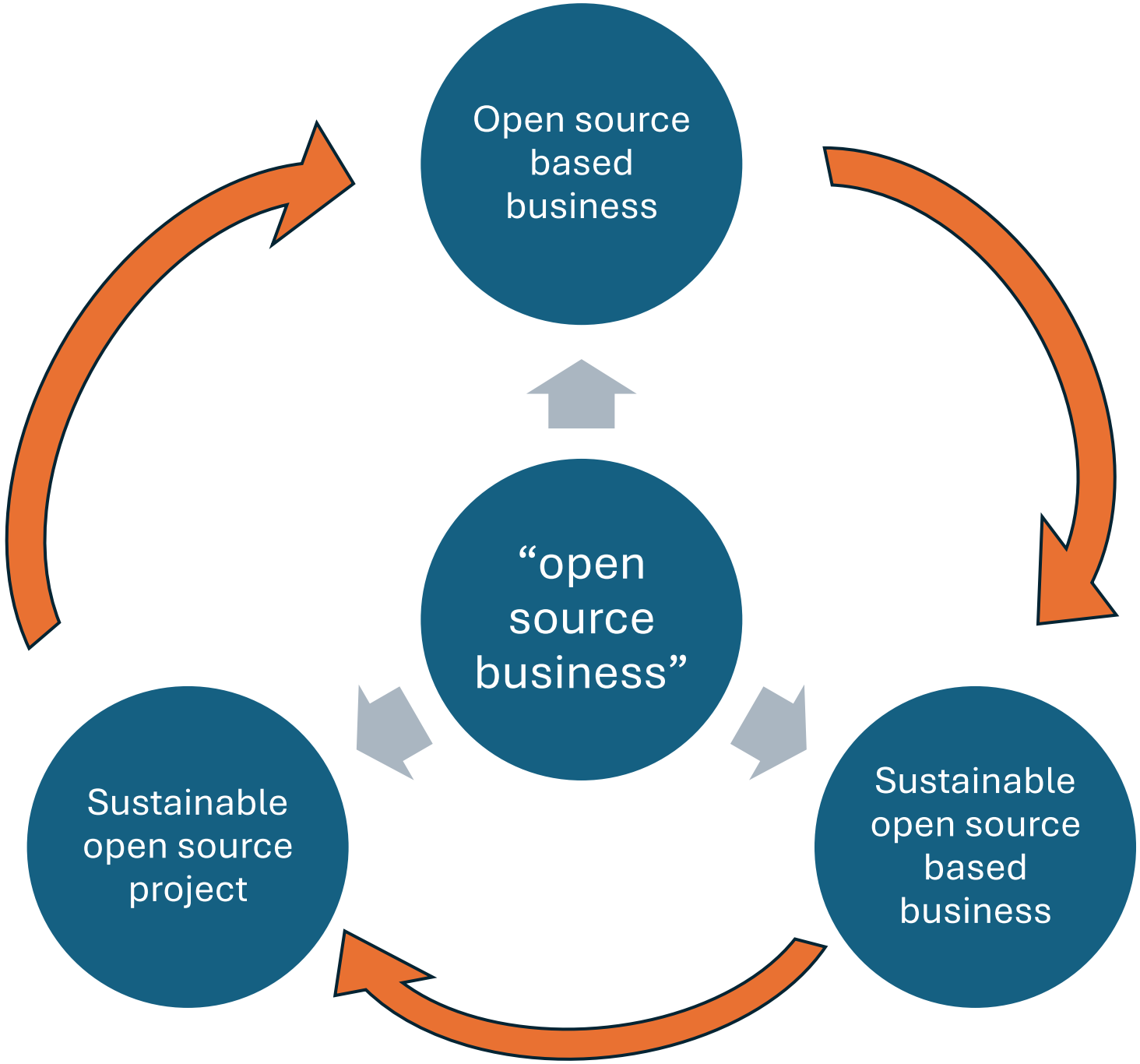
T_HQ technology and business

CLOUD COMPUTING

Elasticsearch returns to the open-source fold

Elasticsearch cloud now available under open-source terms.

3 September 2024


Open source based business
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Sustainable open source based business
Sustainable open source project

So…

Open source is not a business model - it is a technology development model, based on transparency, collaboration and incremental innovation

Business means selling a product or service that provides a solution to the market on a continuous and sustainable basis

The business of open source is making sure your open source projects are sustainable… profits come afterwards

Thanks!

Malcolm Bain

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