Examples of Open Source Software

TYPE OF APPLICATION	OSS EXAMPLES	DESCRIPTION
Office Automation (word processing, spreadsheet and presentation software) *(Sources: Effing Technology, Carol's Vault, Soft32.com)*	**AbiWord**	• Word-processing program • Similar to predominant proprietary word-processing programs • Suitable for a wide variety of word processing tasks
	OpenOffice	• Office suite • Suitable for individuals and businesses • Includes a word processor (compatible with predominant proprietary word-processing programs), spreadsheet (compatible with predominant proprietary spreadsheet programs) and presentation system (compatible with predominant proprietary presentation systems)
	KOffice	• Integrated office suite • Intended for the KDesktop Environment • Includes a word processor, spreadsheet application, and presentation program
Web Design *(Sources: Zyxware Technologies, Carol's Vault)*	**Nvu**	• Intended for those with no technical or programming expertise • Enables creation of web pages and management of websites
	GIMPShop	• Image editor similar to Adobe Photoshop
	Bluefish	• Editor targeted towards programmers and web designers • Supports many programming and mark-up languages • Focused on editing dynamic and interactive websites

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TYPE OF APPLICATION	**OSS EXAMPLES**	**DESCRIPTION**
Communications (Sources: Open Source Windows, Lifehacker, Zyxware Technologies)	**Pidgin**	• Free Instant Messaging (IM) client • Allows use of all IM accounts at once.
	Thunderbird	• Cross-platform e-mail and news client
	PhpBB	• Internet forum package written in computer scripting language PHP
E-Commerce (Sources: Zyxware Technologies, Blogger)	**OsCommerce**	• E-commerce and online store-management application • Offers a wide range of features that allows online stores • Can be used on any web server that has PHP web scripting language and the MySQL database
	VirtueMart	• E-commerce solution intended for use with the content-management system Joomla or Mambo • Written in PHP • Made for easy use in a PHP/MySQL environment
	Zen Cart	• Free, shopping-cart system • Features multiple customer modes, unlimited category depth, multiple sales and discounts, multiple display modes, multiple ad banner controller, multiple payment options, etc.
Content Management Systems (Sources: Zyxware Technologies, Lifehacker)	**Drupal**	• Free, modular, content-management framework, content-management system and blogging engine • Written in PHP • Allows an individual or a community of users to easily publish, manage and organize a wide variety of content on a website
	Joomla	• Free open source content-management system meant for publishing content on the Web and intranets using the MySQL database • Written in PHP • Includes features such as page caching to improve performance, RSS feeds, printable versions of pages, news flashes, blogs, polls, website searching, and language internationalization
	PHP-Nuke	• Free, web-based automated news publishing and content-management system • Based on PHP and MySQL • Fully controlled using a web-based user interface

Examples of Open Source Software

TYPE OF APPLICATION	OSS EXAMPLES	DESCRIPTION
Operating Systems (all Linux distributions) (Sources: Softpedia, Fulgura Software, Wikipedia, Information Week, user forums)	**Ubuntu**	• Largest community maintained Linux OS – enables users to draw upon a wide network for support
	Fedora	• Open source Fedora is a general purpose Linux operating system, developed by the community-supported Fedora Project and sponsored by Red Hat (a company committed to open source software, and a major Linux distribution vendor).

How Do I Know if a Particular OSS Application Is Right for My Business?

The following series of questions can help you decide if a particular OSS application is right for your business:

Determining Whether a Particular OSS Application Is Right for You	Comments
1. How long has the software been around? Is the software well established? As a general rule, open source software that has been around longer is more reliable and of good quality. Each open source software application has a version number. The software may represent the first version or ninth-or more. Mature OSS software examples - Linux, OpenOffice, and Thunderbird.	
2. Are there regular updates, patches and new features? Open source software that receives regular updates, patches and new features will likely be less bug-ridden, more secure, and more feature-rich than that which does not.	
3. Does your company have the skills to install and maintain the software? If your company does not have the expertise, there are service providers out there that do. You should also consider whether staff need training to help use and maintain the software. (this consideration applies to any type of software).	
4. Is there commercial support available to help you install and manage the software? Are service providers available to provide you with installation and management support for your software? Two well known specialist OSS organizations that provide support are - www.redhat.com and www.mysql.com.	
5. Are the costs reasonable for the service and support that you might require? The less technical expertise your business has, the more likely it is that you will need professional support for your open source software.	

cont'd

Determining Whether a Particular OSS Application Is Right for You	Comments
6. Is there good (active) free support from the online OSS community (e.g. online forums, blogs)? Can you go online and post a question about the product? Be prepared to participate in these forums and answer questions yourself.	
7. What are the conditions of use for the software? Take the time to read the conditions for use. Many open source packages use GNU General Public License.	
8. Is there documentation available? Is the documentation complete and coherent? Open source software should have documentation available with respect to its development history. Are the bug fixes and feature changes well documented?	

What Is an OSS Web Design Template?

An OSS website design template is a free template that can be used to help you quickly set up a website. Sites that offer design templates typically give you a broad range of styles to choose from, so that you have plenty of options when it comes to finding the design that will work best for you. You can even customize the template to meet your individual needs, so it will reflect your requirements. You can find several websites that offer OSS web templates, including.

- ✓ www.freewebtemplates.com.
- ✓ http://www.opensourcetemplates.org.
- ✓ http://www.oswd.org.

Freeware vs. Free Software vs. Shareware Freeware.

Free software, freeware, and shareware are three alternatives to OSS. Each of these options is described below:

Freeware.

Freeware is software that is made available for use by the author at no cost for an unlimited time. However, the author may retain the copyright. This means that users are not allowed to do anything with the software that is not permitted by the author. Your use of the software may be restricted to personal use, individual use, non-profit use, non-commercial use, academic use, commercial use, or any combination of these.

Free software.

Free software is software that can be used, modified, copied, and redistributed without restriction and for no cost. For software to be distributed as free software, the source code (a human-readable form of the program) must be made available to the recipient (along with the free software license releasing the source code to the public) to allow for modification. Free software is distinct from freeware in that it is not proprietary software and can be distributed freely. It should be noted that some proprietary software is not compatible with free software, such as those that depend on a user paying for a license to lawfully use a software product.

Shareware.

Shareware is both a type of software and a way to distribute the software. Authors of shareware give users a license to try out the software for a specific period of time, usually for 30 days. If a user wishes to

continue using the software after this trial period, he is required to register with the author by paying the author a small fee. (Likewise, users may copy shareware and pass it along to others, but they too are expected to pay a fee if they use the product beyond the 30-day trial period.) If, however, a user does not wish to continue using the software after the evaluation period lapses, he or she is expected to discontinue the use of the product and erase the product files. Thus, shareware is distributed based on an honor system. In many cases, however, once the trial period ends shareware will have updates and will require the user to pay a small fee for additional functionality. Shareware is inexpensive because it is usually produced by a single programmer and is offered directly to customers.

- ✓ Pitfalls to Using Freeware and Shareware The three primary pitfalls to using freeware and shareware are as follows: Both may contain viruses, spyware (i.e., software that secretly sends information about your Web surfing habits to its website).
- ✓ Some shareware and freeware programs do not have an uninstall feature, making them difficult to get rid of.
- ✓ There may be a lack of technical support if you have questions about a particular shareware or freeware program.

FREEWARE	FREE SOFTWARE	SHAREWARE
No cost (or optional fee)	No cost	Pay after trial period or for additional functionality