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Top 10 Open Source Software Examples Of 2021

- Category: [Technology Trends Business Growth How To](#)

Last Updated: November 18, 2020

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Open source software can be used, modified and distributed by anyone who has the knowledge to work with code.

Businesses are constantly searching for digital solutions to help them run more efficiently and turn bigger profits faster.

And one common term they may or may not have heard of that can further this agenda is open-source software.

In this article, you will find out what open source software is and get familiar with the most required types.

What's more, we will also discover the best open source software examples of 2021.

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What Is Open Source Software?

Open-source software is a program that has publicly available code which anyone with technical expertise can use, modify and distribute.

The term open source was introduced in the late 1990s by [The Open Source Initiative](#) (OSI).

These type of software solutions don't always solve the same problems. In fact, most open-source software is geared towards different niche solutions.

However, because it is accessible to the general public, it is typically very easy to obtain and incorporate into digital solutions.

Now, it is important to remember that just because open source software is free to use, it doesn't mean that just anyone can use it. Open-source software refers to lines of code (and its variations) that are available.

So, depending on the type of this software, you'll likely still need a qualified software developer to inspect that code, [customize the software](#) to your specifications, and integrate it into your current operations.

Open Source Software vs. Free Source Software

Very often free source software is used as a synonym with open source software.

Though similar, these two are different types of software.

Both of them offer similar licenses but share different ideologies.

[Richard Stallman](#) introduced the concept of free source software back in the 1980s. Its main goal was that all users have the right to operate, copy, share, study, change, and improve this software.

Open source software, on the other hand, was introduced in the late 1990s by a group of individuals as a reaction to the limitations of free source software.

The main difference they presented was that they changed the emphasis from freedom to security. And, they also brought other pragmatic benefits like transparency and cost savings.
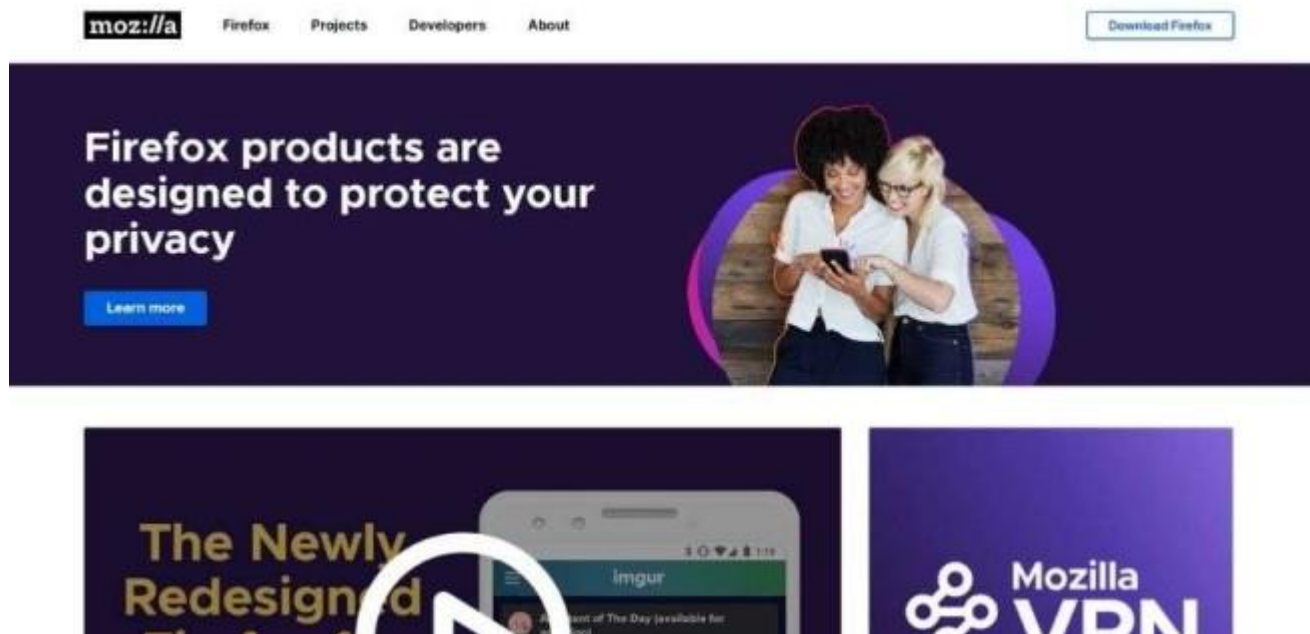
All free source software can qualify as open source software. However, not all open source software can be free.

For instance, Open Watcom is an integrated development environment whose license cannot be modified and used privately.

Conversly, Velo by Wix, a full-stack development platform that allows brands and development agencies to create advanced websites and web apps, is an open development platform, so there's zero cost involved.

Top 10 Open Source Software Examples Of 2021

1. Mozilla Firefox

[Image source: Mozilla Firefox]

Mozilla Firefox is a customizable internet browser and a free open source software. It offers thousands of plugins that are accessible with a single click of your mouse.

The platform holds 3.98% of the worldwide browser market share and it is available for Android, iOS, Windows and Linux.

According to CNET, Mozilla reshaped the technology industry and fanned the flames of open source software that changed the way social networks and operating systems function.

2. LibreOffice

[Image source: LibreOffice]

LibreOffice is a complete office suite that offers presentations, documents, spreadsheets and databases.

Unlike Microsoft Office, which is not accessible for everyone due to its pricing model, LibreOffice is totally free.

To support it, its users can make donations when they download. So, it has a huge community of contributors.

It is available for Mac, Linux and Windows and it also has a live chat and a forum where you can turn to when searching for help.

3. GIMP

[Image source: GIMP]

Another of the best open software source examples that is worth mentioning is the photo editing tool GIMP.

It offers similar features like some of the expensive tools on the market including various filters and effects, and yet it is free.

GIMP is available across different platforms including Windows and Linux and it has different 3d party plugins and customization options.

Plenty of illustrators, graphic designers and photographers use it to improve their pictures and enhance their work.

4. VLC Media Player

[Image source: VLC Media Player]

VLC Media Player is one of the most popular open source software examples that you can use for free.

This multimedia player is used for video, media and audio files and it plays discs, webcams, streams and devices. Most of the users use it for streaming podcasts as well.

It allows you to optimize your audio and video files for a particular hardware configuration and also offers a plethora of extensions and skins which allows you to create customized designs.

What's more, it runs on different platforms such as Android, Mac OS X, Linux, Windows, iOS and more.

5. Linux

[Image source: Linux]

According to a Stack Overflow survey, 83.1% of developers claimed that Linux is the most wanted platform.

Linux is one of the most user-friendly open source software on the market. It is most commonly used on Android devices and desktops.

What makes this operating system different from the others is that it costs nothing and it is incredibly customizable.

Most companies also choose it because it is highly secure and offers excellent community support.

6. Blender

[Image source: Blender]

Blender is another of the best open source software examples of 2021.

It is a 3D graphics and animation tool that supports motion tracking, simulation, animation, video editing, rendering, modeling and much more.

It also offers a set of modeling tools and features including real-time viewpoint prereview, multi-resolution and support for Planar tracking and Tripod solvers.

7. GNU Compiler Collection

[Image source: GNU Compiler Collection]

GNU Compiler Collection is a collection of compilation tools for software development in the C, C++, Ada, Fortran and other programming languages.

It provides high-quality releases regularly and works with native and cross targets.

The sources it offers are freely available via weekly snapshots as well as SVN.

8. Python

[Image source: Python]

Python is common programming and scripting language used by custom software developers.

According to IEEE, it was the most popular language in 2019. In recent years, it attracts plenty of new users because of its fast-growing field of machine learning.

It is also easy to use which is why most of the developers also choose this open source software.

9. PHP

[Image source: PHP]

When talking about the best open source software examples of 2021, we shouldn't miss PHP.

It is a software development language used for creating websites and other digital platforms.

It is fast and flexible and powers some of the most popular websites around the globe including Slack and Spotify.

10. Shotcut

[Image source: Shotcut]

Shotcut is a video editor that offers powerful features including audio and webcam capture, color, text, noise, and counter generators, support of popular image formats, EDL export and much more.

It is a great tool to edit your audio and video files with and it is available for Windows, macOS and Linux.

On its website, you can also find great resources and tutorials on how to use this free open source software.

Interested in the advantages of custom software development?
Find them here!

The Most Popular Open Source Software Licenses

Open source software licenses allow users and commercial companies to run, modify and share different sets of software code.

In other words, these licenses are legal contracts between the creator and the user. They imply that anyone with a license can use the software under specific conditions.

They are mostly available free of charge and sometimes may have restrictions.

For example, users may be confined to preserve the name of the authors. Or, it may also happen that they are not able to redistribute the licensed software under the same license only.

There are over 200 licenses of this type.

Here are the most popular:

- **MIT license (MIT):** The users who are MIT licensed can use open source software code according to their preferences and without any restrictions. This license is also GPL-compatible meaning that users can modify the original code without affecting the resultant derivative code of the original permit.
- **Apache License 2.0 (Apache-2.0)**: Those who have issued an Apache license can freely run, modify and share software code. However, they must follow the terms of the Apache license which has strict rules, especially to redistribution. Thereby, users have to provide unequivocal statements verifying that files have been modified. And, they also need to include notices in their original work.
- **3-clause BSD license (BSD-3-Clause)**: The developers who own a BSD-3-Clause license also need to include the original copyright notice, disclaimer and several other conditions that are mandatory. This license is very similar to MIT. However, the main difference is that it provides a clause that protects the original creators of the software.
- **GNU General Public License (GPL)**: Those who write software code under GPL, must release it as open source. In other words, all the users are obliged to release the full source code and all the rights to change and share the entire code.
- **Common Development and Distribution License 1.0 (CDDL-1.0)**: All the users who own a CDDL can reproduce and distribute any original and derivative work. However, they cannot make any trademark, copyright or patent changes included in the contract. When developers share a modified form of the source, they must make it available under CDDL. However, if the form does not contain the original code, they don't have to release it under CDDL.

Before you start using any open source code, understand the types of licenses and its rules to stay compliant.

The Most Popular Types Of Open Source Solutions

Here are some of the most popular types of open source software:

1. Open Source CRM

CRM (customer relationship management) software allows companies to manage customer interactions and meet their requirements easier.

In other words, it helps businesses improve customer care which is essential in boosting client satisfaction and bringing profitability.

This software makes it possible to stay organized and boost your productivity as well. There are different open source examples for CRM and they are usually free to download.

However, they do require technical ability to use and are customizable to your needs.

The best free open source CRM solutions in 2021 are:

[Freshworks](#)

[Source: Freshworks]

[Freshworks](#) software fits businesses of all sizes and it allows them to manage contacts and develop customer success strategies.

This is an open source tool helping organizations boost customer engagement and drive more sales.

Some of its key features are lead management, email marketing, integration management, phone and email support.

Get started with Freshworks today!
[Try Freshworks](#)

[Flowlu](#)

[Source: Flowly]

The [Flowly](#) CRM software is a great match for small and large businesses in different industries.

Some of its unique features include quoting, invoicing, lead management, project management, API integration and more.

Get started with Flowly today!
[Try Flowly](#)

[Hubspot CRM](#)

[Source: HubSpot]

HubSpot is most suitable for small and medium-sized businesses in [real estate](#), construction, retail and other niches.

Its key features are contact management, email scheduling, meeting management and live chat.

These top three software examples for CRM also offer paid versions that come with an extended list of features. You can visit their websites for more info.

2. Open Source Project Management

Open source project management software can be of great assistance in keeping track of assignments and tasks.

They allow you to manage different projects at the same time and stay organized.

Most of the open source project management tools on the market are free and offer paid versions as well.

Here are the top three of them:

Zoho

[Source: Zoho]

Zoho is an open source project management tool that allows companies to track their time, get customized reports and integrate with other services including Google.

It has an in-build chat which makes communication between team members easy and quick.

Monday covers a spectrum of project management tasks including email updates, personal and public boards, tagging people, visual display of progress and more.

Using this software, big teams can collaborate more effectively, customize their workflow, stay informed and analyze progress from a single dashboard.

Get started with Monday today!
Try Monday

Trello

Trello is a great tool for both individuals and small teams. It allows you to manage individual projects and ongoing workflows.

Some of key its features include adding due dates, attaching files and hyperlinks, custom dropdowns and more.

Get started with Trello today!
Try Trello

Open source project management software is important in enhancing the business' performance since it makes collaboration easier and delegating tasks simpler.

3. Open Source Video Games

Most of the open source video games are free to use and modify. Developers and game designers can freely share them across platforms.

Many of these games are also incorporated in Linux distributions by default. And, users can download and install the more popular ones on other platforms like Mac OS and Windows.

Some of the open source video games may be under restrictive licenses as well.