Corporate Open Sourcing

Prof. Dr. Dirk Riehle
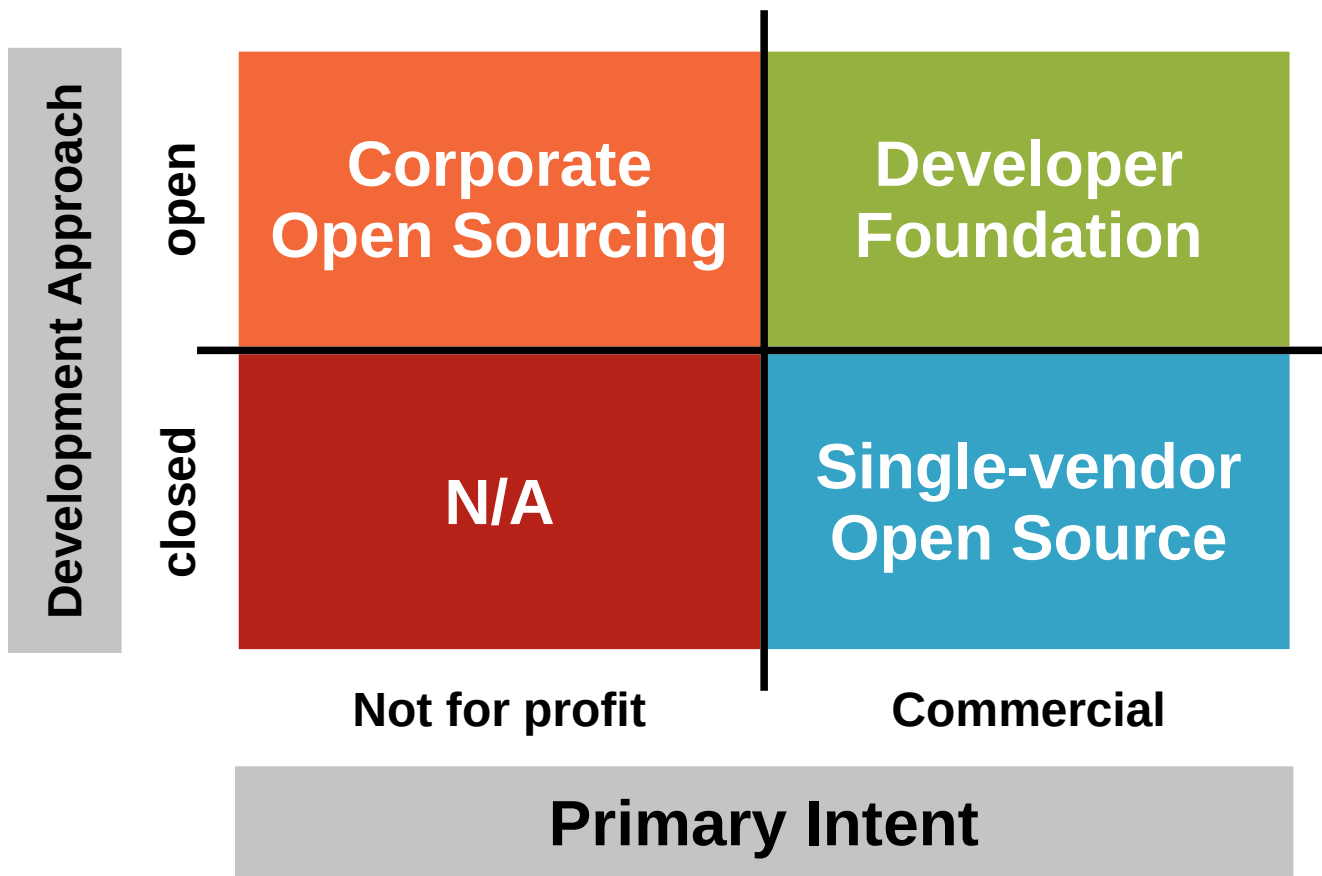
Friedrich-Alexander University Erlangen-Nürnberg

FLOSS B08

1. **Use**

2. **Contribute**

3. **Create and lead**

The Primary Intent of Creating and Leading

Development Approach

open

Corporate Open Sourcing

Developer Foundation

closed

N/A

Single-vendor Open Source

Not for profit

Commercial

Primary Intent

3

Benefits of Not-for-profit Intent

- Corporate open sourcing
  - Product
    - Mature software faster cheaper → Improve product
    - Harvest outside innovation → Improve product

  - Recruiting
    - Improve company reputation → Recruit developers more easily
    - Collaborate with developers → Recruit better developers

  - Employees
    - Broaden employee perspective → Make employees more effective
    - Make work more meaningful → Improve employee loyalty

Benefits of Commercial Intent

- Developer foundations
  - Take money out of a layer in the solution stack
    → Increase share of wallet
    → Sell to more price-sensitive customers
    → Grow addressable market

- Consulting firms
  - Build ecosystem (that you can't build alone)
    → Grow addressable market

- Single-vendor open source
  - Go-to-market
    → Market and sell more easily

- See later lectures on business models

Vision: *We strongly believe that open source software benefits the tech community, and that providing broadly useful code to the world is a virtue. We strive to work in an open source way to the betterment of Zalando and the world.*

- **Do "Open Source First"**: If your Zalando project can also be useful to non-Zalandos, release it as open source from the start.

- **Take Ownership**: Your team is responsible for ensuring that it's possible to open source your project. Your delivery lead is available for guidance.

- **Share Your Code**: All code shared between teams must be open source.

- **Be Safe**: To ensure the broadest possible use of your project, use the MIT License only.

- **Deliver Quality**: Provide a great out-of-the-box experience.

- **Provide Documentation**: Include a clear README and default working configuration.

- **Stay Secure**: Make sure your project doesn't include Zalando specifics, such as credentials and private identifiers.

- **Ask for Help**: Find colleagues to brainstorm ideas for your project and to review your work.

- **Promote**: Tell the world about your project via blog posts, social media and conference talks.

- Mature software faster cheaper → Improve product
  - Better product quality
    - Widely used open source components mature faster
  - Faster product development
    - With many hands helping, components evolve faster
  - Cheaper product development
    - With many hands helping, one's own costs go down

2. Harness Outside Innovation

- Harness outside innovation → Improve product
  - Better, faster and cheaper innovation
    - More and more diverse parties speed up innovation

3. Improve Company Reputation

- Improve company reputation → Recruit developers more easily

  - Company demonstrates to developer public that …
    - It is a thought leader
    - It is doing interesting work
    - Can engage with a community

  - Makes a company more attractive as an employer

- Collaborate with developers → Recruit better developers
  - By collaborating with outside developers in project, the company …
    - More easily finds developers interested in its technologies
    - **Can observe outside developers for their competence**
    - Has an effective way of reaching out (using developer peers)

  - Makes recruitment easier and more safe

5. Foster Personal Development [1]

- Foster personal development → Make employees more effective

  - By collaborating with the outside world, employees ...
    - Learn about new practices and technologies faster
    - Improve their skills and competencies
    - Gain a broader perspective

  - Makes employees more effective

- Also see lecture on inner source

6. Make Work More Meaningful

- Make work more meaningful → Increase employee loyalty

  - By collaborating with the outside world, employees ...
    - Receive additional recognition and validation of work
    - Feel they perform more meaningful work

  - Increases employee loyalty

- Guava [1] is a successful Java (utilities) library. Why did Google open source this library and what were the benefits?
  - Improve product quality
  - Recruit developers more easily
  - Recruit better developers
  - Make employees more effective
  - Improve employee loyalty

- React [1] is a successful Javascript framework for one-page web applications. Why did Facebook open source this library and what were the benefits?
  - Improve product quality
  - Recruit developers more easily
  - Recruit better developers
  - Make employees more effective
  - Improve employee loyalty

Best Practices of Corporate Open Sourcing

- All the best practices of
  - Project communities
  - Engineering processes
  - Software tools use

- New best practices for
  - Internal communication
  - Governance processes
  - Public appearance

Role and Responsibility of Program Office

- Open source program office

  - Should manage corporate open sourcing

- Program office responsibilities include

  - Internal communication
  - Governance processes
  - Public appearance

- The principle of "open source first"
    - Leads developers to
        - Reflect on business value of software component
        - Having to find reasons for not open sourcing

    - Sharpens business focus
        - Due to clear understanding of what is competitively differentiating
        - Also helps avoid not-invented-here syndrome

Governance Processes (Practices)

- Clearance process
  - Needs internal checklist for developers
    - Will it create value (the intended effects)?
    - Does it expose the company to risks?

- IP management
  - Needs to inspire trust in using component
    - Requires clear intellectual property rights rules

- Most will use a permissive license

Public Appearance (Practices)

- Single primary project location

  - A place for quality projects under company's name
  - A single place in a public location e.g. on Github

- Project incubator

  - A place for incubating a company's open source projects
  - Protects company reputation (from poor projects)

Review / Summary of Session

- Benefits of corporate open sourcing
  - Better product
  - Easier recruiting
  - Better employees

- Best practices of corporate open sourcing
  - Internal communication
  - Governance processes
  - Public appearance

Thank you! Questions?

dirk.riehle@fau.de – **http://osr.cs.fau.de**

dirk@riehle.org – http://dirkriehle.com – @dirkriehle

DR

Credits and License

- Original version

  - © 2012-2019 Dirk Riehle, all rights reserved

- Contributions

  - Lauri Apple by email of 2016-08-01