

Week 22: Around the digital privacy/internet freedom/free software world

October 31, 8:30 am Pacific/11:30 am Eastern

Overview

This week, we're taking a deeper dive into all things FOSS -- free and open source software. It's often said that FOSS is better for privacy than closed-source, proprietary software, but why is this the case? What should librarians know about the world of free software? What values does the FOSS community have in common with libraries? And how can we all work together?

Learning objectives

- Understand what is FOSS and become familiar with some of the environment, including major projects
- Learn about making FOSS contributions
- Learn about bringing FOSS into your library, whether on public computers or in public programming

Readings

The free software definition: <https://www.gnu.org/philosophy/free-sw.en.html>

The free software movement: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Free_software_movement

Interview with Richard Stallman connecting free software to privacy:

<http://nymag.com/intelligencer/2018/04/richard-stallman-rms-on-privacy-data-and-free-software.html>

Excerpts from Edward Snowden's 2016 LibrePlanet talk where he talks about why he uses FOSS tools like Debian (this is the operating system Alison uses), Tails, and Tor (full talk is linked too):

<https://fossbytes.com/snowden-free-open-source-software-like-debian-tor-didnt-trust-microsoft/>

Guest lecturer

VM (Vicky) Brasseur is a technical leader of software development departments and an open source business strategy freelancer. She is the Vice President of the Open Source Initiative and the proud winner of the Perl White Camel Award (2014) and the O'Reilly Open Source Award (2016). She's the author of *Forge Your Future With Open Source*, the first book about how to contribute to free and open source software projects, available from Pragmatic Bookshelf. Vicky writes about free and open source, business, and management for opensource.com, Linux Journal, and on her own blog. She is also a frequent and popular speaker at open source conferences and events.

Discussion

Talk about the value of free software in libraries and how librarians might contribute to FOSS.

Assignment

Find a free and open source project and learn about it, particularly what relationship it has to privacy. Discuss what you learned on the messageboard.

Continue work on final projects.