Open Source Genealogy Software

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What is Open Source Software?

Definition

- Open Source is software that allows you to view and modify the source code

Reality – More than just the code is "open"

- The complete "source" is open

  - Code

  - Developers

  - Project leaders

  - Driving requirements

- All are open to the feedback and suggestions of the user community

Why does genealogy need Open Source?

- Genealogy software is slow to adopt new technologies
- Many users are frustrated by current genealogy software
- Low return on investment for genealogy software vendors
- Many users are older and/or are apathetic towards new technology
- Proprietary software development blocks those users who are interested, limiting the new ideas that make it into current software packages
- Localization and internationalization is lacking or non-existent

Family History Technology

Open Source Solutions

- The "release early, release often" motto of Open Source means new technologies are added and released faster

- Users have a medium to express their frustrations and solutions are quickly made available

- Community and volunteer driven instead of profit driven

- Under the community driven process users can become involved with the software and feel ownership
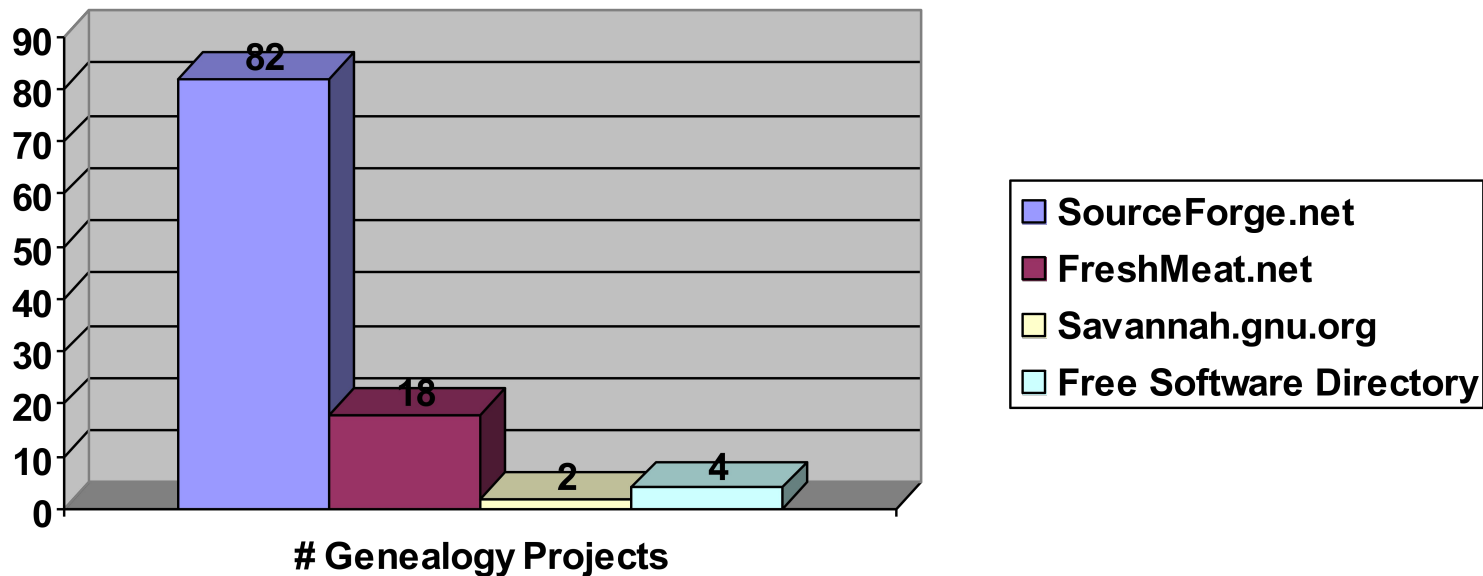
Open Source Solutions

- New ideas flow into mature products instead of spawning new immature products

- Open Source promotes localization and internationalization because people from many different languages, backgrounds, and cultures are involved and contribute.

Family History Technology

Open Source Software Resources

- http://www.sourceforge.net
- http://savannah.gnu.org
- http://www.freshmeat.net

Legend:
- SourceForge.net
- FreshMeat.net
- Savannah.gnu.org
- Free Software Directory

Bar chart values: 82, 18, 2, 4

Genealogy Projects

How to get involved

- Choose a software package that you like and begin using it

- Integrate yourself into the user community for the project. Read the forums and mailing lists

- Decide how you would make the software better and work within the community to make it happen

How to get involved

- "Scratching your itches"

- Documentation

- Localization and internationalization

Questions?