

# Maximizing the Reach of Innovation

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## 1 Background

Software products are ubiquitous and play an important role in most aspects of people's lives. This hyper-connected world gives incredible visibility to digital creators, and allows their works to reach a large part of the world's population. In turn, everyone has the possibility to pick up a digital work and add her personal touch on it, be it by adding new features, making it more accessible, or fixing existing flaws. All of this gives every product the potential of becoming a global phenomenon, at one condition: that the author allows it.

## 2 Goal of the Study

A good software products has a global reach, a great software product has a global reach and gives its users the possibility of contributing to its development; we call this its *innovation potential*, for anyone with a good idea is not hampered to work on it. A natural question to ask is, then:

**Research Question:** Which steps should be taken to allow a new software artifact reach the greatest number of people, and maximize its innovation potential?

The focus of this question is not marketing; a successful answer to this question would guide new entrepreneurs with innovative ideas follow the best path to make their work benefit users the most, and raise awareness on toxic business models which actively harm society in their relentless pursuit of profit.

This question will be answered by a literature study on the topic of innovation, and case studies on past innovative software products to showcase good and bad ways to approach this issue. Among possible candidates in the digital world there are the Open Source movement on one side, and patents and the Digital Rights Management (DRM) system on the other. A possible case study are the Operating System wars: Linux and Windows, or iOS and Android.