

FOSS Tales

COMP8440: FOSSD Lecture 14

Tivoisation

- Tivo Series 1
 - ok to have proprietary kernel modules?
 - ok to reverse engineer those modules?
- Tivo Series 2
 - ok to lock down the kernel?
 - Does the GPL guarantee the ability to use the source on the box it was written for?
- GPLv3 and Tivoisation
 - Different rules for consumer products?

gcc and egcs

- gcc early days
 - key component of GNU system
 - amazingly high quality compiler developed quickly
- gcc2 problems
 - development bogged down
 - frustration among many gcc developers
- egcs fork (August 1997)
 - used a more open development style
 - broadened the scope of the project
- egcs adopted as new gcc (April 1999)
 - fork was resolved
 - established steering committee

Qt/KDE and Gnome

- Qt 1.x
 - Used by KDE desktop
 - Concerns fueled Gnome work
 - FreeQT license - what if Trolltech withdrew it?
- Qt 2.0
 - QPL license
 - Not GPL compatible
 - Is KDE legal?
- Qt 2.2 (September 2000)
 - GPL license
 - All ok now?
- Qt 4.5 (March 2009)
 - LGPL option added

Ubuntu

- Debian fork
 - started in 2004
 - aimed for greater usability
 - widespread adoption
 - strong financial backing
- Criticisms
 - support for proprietary drivers – is this good for Linux?
 - giving back – does Ubuntu do enough?

Novell and Microsoft

- SuSE Linux
 - popular distro – especially in Europe
 - bought by Novell in 2003
- Novell/MS deal
 - announced suddenly in November 2006
 - no consultation with community (suppliers)
 - contained patent covenant. Is it a GPLv2 violation?
 - Led to defensive clauses in GPLv3

Other Controversies

- Some key controversies that shaped FOSS
 - GNU/Linux vs Linux
 - The SCO lawsuit
 - The bitkeeper debate
 - Nvidia drivers
 - Sistina and GFS
 - ssh and OpenSSH
 - Mozilla trademark and IceWeasel
 - Cloud computing and FOSS