Are large software companies bound to adopt the free software model?

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What is free software?

- Distributed with its source code

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What is free software?

- Distributed with its source code
- Modifiable

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What is free software?

- Distributed with its source code
- Modifiable
- Redistributable

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Free software $\neq$ open source

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What is free software?

- Distributed with its source code
- Modifiable
- Redistributable

Free software $\neq$ open source

Free software $\neq$ free of charge

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Historically speaking...

1950s

Softwares are academic, sharing is the norm.

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Historically speaking...

1950s

Softwares are academic, sharing is the norm.

↓

1970s - Today

Softwares are commercial products.

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Historically speaking...

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Softwares are academic, sharing is the norm.

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1970s - Today

Softwares are commercial products.

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Near future

?

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- Reputation

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- Reputation
- Trust

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- Reputation
- Trust
- Less patenting fees

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- Reputation
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- Less patenting fees
- Less legal fees

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- User contribution

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Disadvantages

- Intimidating to the user

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Disadvantages

- Intimidating to the user
- "Potentially free = not as good"

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Disadvantages

-
- Intimidating to the user
- "Potentially free = not as good"
- No secret

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Free software seems to be a solid option

Many advantages

- Less costs
- User contribution
- Good image

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Free software seems to be a solid option

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But...

Is it economically viable?

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Different business models

Canonical - Ubuntu

Their product

A Linux-based operating system

- $\approx$ 20M users
- $\approx$ 400 employees

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Canonical - Ubuntu

Their product

A Linux-based operating system

- $\approx$ 20M users
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They sell support:

- Deployment
- Maintenance
- Training

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Mozilla - Firefox

Their product

An internet browser

- $\approx$ 300M users
- $\approx$ 600 employees

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Mozilla - Firefox

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- Donations

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Mozilla - Firefox

Their product

An internet browser
- $\approx$ 300M users
- $\approx$ 600 employees

- Donations
- Google partnership ($\approx$ 84%)

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Google - Chromium

Their product

An internet browser

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- Reputed for its speed

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- Zero revenue
- The real product is advertising

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Google - Chromium

Their product

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- $\approx$ 200M users
- Reputed for its speed

- Zero revenue
- The real product is advertising
- Chromium lets people access Google more easily

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Present state

In theory

- Many advantages
- Economically viable

In practice

Present state

In theory

- Many advantages
- Economically viable

In practice

- Every company publicly endorses FS

Present state

In theory

- Many advantages
- Economically viable

In practice

- Every company publicly endorses FS
- But definitions differ...

The reluctant ones

Who?

Microsoft

- Proprietary with closed licences
- At best, partial openness for interoperability
- Do not share the innovation

The conflicted ones

Who?

Apple, Oracle

- Mostly based on FSs
- Actively participate to FS projects
- Aggressively protect their core products

The adopters

Who?
Red Hat, Canonical, Google, Intel

- Sell or offer free software
- Sell support
- Offer free tools related to their main products

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> Are large software companies bound to adopt the free software
> model?

- FS will never totally overthrow PS
- More and more open-source initiatives, some free
- Globally, growing user implication