



Public Money

Public Code

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What it is all about and why it just makes sense.

The world we are living in

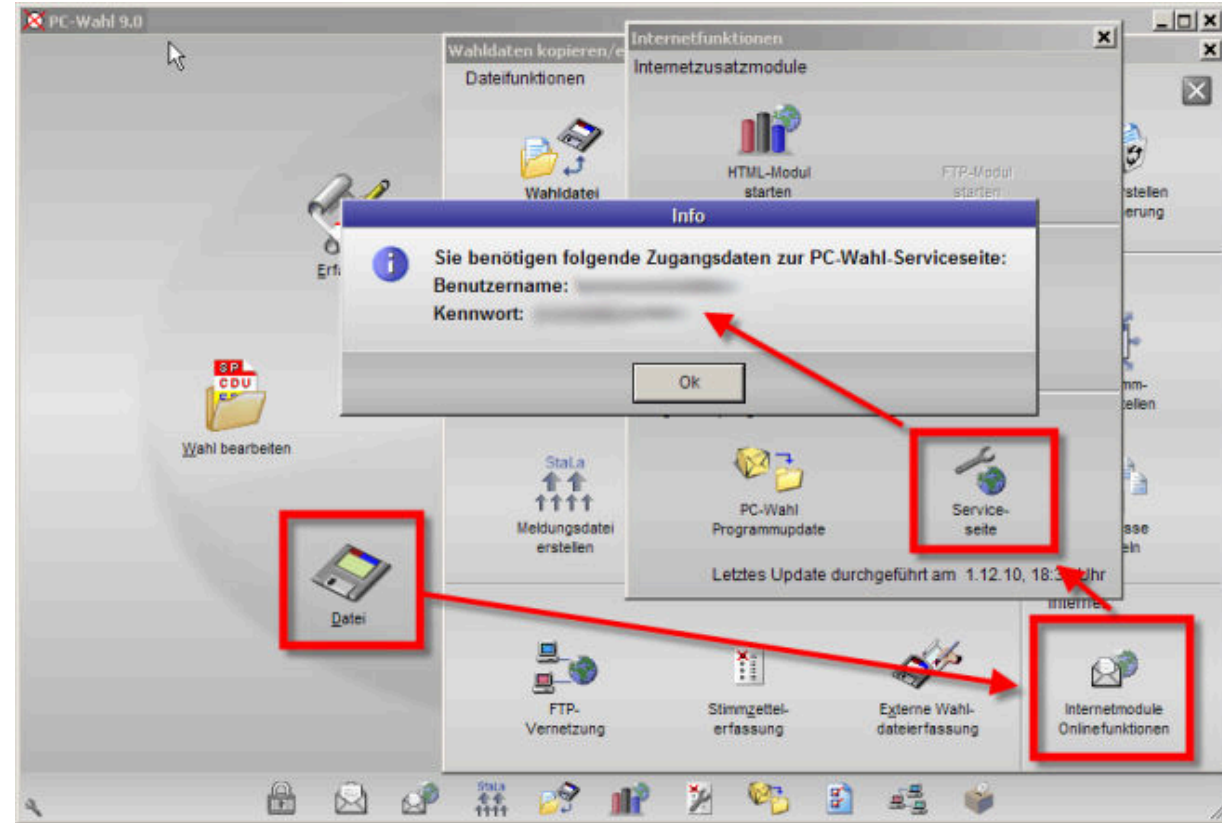
- is getting more digital every day
- software is everywhere
- governments and public institutions use mostly proprietary software or manual processes
- effort is duplicated all over the world
- we pay all of those with our taxes

Why is that an issue?

- its not always transparent what money is spent on (e.g. licenses)
- much of the used software used is neither secure nor reliable
- every institution has to solve the same problems over and over again
- security by obscurity is not a good idea

Real world examples

PC-Wahl



PC-Wahl - German election software

- used in many german states
- proprietary software
- security issues until this day
- no transparency

PC-Wahl - German election software

Timeline

- 2017
 - CCC finds security issues that allow tampering with election results
 - updates are provided, but don't fix the issues
 - CCC provides a open source version of the software which is secure, but will never be used
- 2024
 - is used for election in Saxony
 - calculates wrong results
 - only corrected due to manual recount by independent experts

PC-Wahl - German election software

- still used in many states
- no transparency about the software and its security
- patches have been provided - payed, with our taxes
- still not secure

Corona Warn App



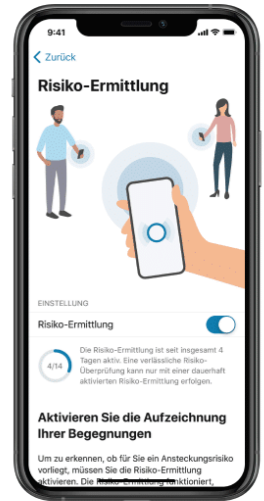
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Real world examples | Corona Warn App

- started in April 2020, during the pandemic
- development led by SAP and Deutsche Telekom
- widely used in Germany (over 45 million downloads)
- open source from the beginning
- privacy by default
- 50 days until the first release

Real world examples | Corona Warn App

Timeline

- April 2020
 - planning starts
- May 2020
 - development starts, fully on GitHub
- June 2020
 - first release

Real world examples | Corona Warn App

Timeline

- 2021
 - features are added, bugs are fixed - lot of community contributions
 - used as blueprint for other countries
- 2023
 - still in use, still maintained
 - possibly used for other purposes in the future

Comparison

PC-Wahl	Corona Warn App
proprietary	open source
security issues	privacy by default, secure and audited by thousands
no transparency	full transparency
slow updates	fast updates
unknown price	~ 214 million € (development and maintenance)
exclusive for germany	used as blueprint for other countries

Conclusion

- public code works
- open source is more secure, not less
- cost and effort is reduced
- fosters collaboration and engagement with the people

We are not alone

Public Money - Public Code is a initiative by the Free Software Foundation

We want legislation requiring that publicly financed software developed for the public sector be made publicly available under a Free and Open Source Software licence. If it is public money, it should be public code as well.



publiccode.eu

What can you do?

- check programs for political parties
- ask your local government about the software they use
- ask for transparency
- support the initiative
- spread the word

The End

Digitalization, also for public institutions is a chance, not a threat. Let us use it wisely and most importantly, let us do it together and transparent.

