Open source software is software with source code that anyone who wants to can make changes to it and inspect it. There are both many benefits to open source software as well as some disadvantages to open source software.

The advantages are:

1. Customizable: Any company can take a piece of open source software and customize it to what they exactly need.
2. Freedom: Companies will not be locked into vendor contracts and restrictions of features.
3. Cost: The cost to have the software is free, and if you want to customize it you can hire someone to make changes to this.

The disadvantages are:

1. Support Options: There may not be as many support options as proprietary software, but most open source software does have forms where you can post and research support topics.
2. Warranties and Liability: If your company could take a hit for liability, having software that has warranty and liability policies if something goes wrong could be very important.
3. Sticking Around: There is a chance that the person or people behind the open source project could lose interest in it, if so this would have a negative impact on a user or company. Yes, many proprietary software companies could close down, but you have way less of a chance of this happening.

There are many companies that use open source software both big and small. Three examples are: LMAX Exchange, Bloomberg, Southwest Airlines, CME Group, and BMW Group. In addition to these imagine how many small local businesses that use open source software along with school districts and colleges. My favorite open source software is Mozilla, both FireFox and Thunderbird. I like both products and use them regularly. I really like their add ons that they both offer.