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Open Source Software and eGovernment

Graham Taylor
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“Potential to be the single biggest discontinuity to the (ICT) market since the Internet itself”

GMT 2002

Openforum europe

open, competitive choice for IT users



“... the Open Source movement is no longer the anti-software industry establishmentOpen Source is the software establishment!”

Standish Group

• Open Source – the Global Market Opportunity

- “By 2012 more than 90% of enterprises will use open source in direct or embedded form” *Gartner*
- “Proprietary vendors lose \$60 billion to Open Source” *Standish Group*
- “11% of all new commercial software requirements are satisfied by open source” *Standish Group*
- “Related services should increase” *IDC*

Open Source – the Market Opportunity in Europe

- Some 50% of organisations already are using OSS in some way
- Firms have already invested €1.2 billion in developing FLOSS software.
- Existing base of quality applications would have cost €12 billion to reproduce internally
- Could reach 35% market share of all IT services by 2010.....and 5% of European GDP
- Potentially saves industry over 36% in software R+D
- Specifically suited to European SME based IT industry

“The Impact of Free/Libre/Open Source Software on Innovation and Competitiveness of the European Union – UN University MERIT on behalf of the European Commission” 2007

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OPEN SOURCE IS AN ENTERPRISE STACK

Portal/
End User
Application

Siebel Plumtree MS-Office IE



Content
Management

Documentum FileNet SharePoint Interwoven Vignette



App
Server

BEA IBM
WebLogic WebSphere



RDBMS

Oracle DB2 SQLServer



Operating
System

Windows Unix Mac



What is Openness

Openness?

- Open, Competitive Choice
- Avoidance of Lock-In

Open Source/Free Software

- Definition of a Licence
- A Development methodology
- A Business Model
- A Culture of Collaboration
- Value back in hands of the customer

Open Standards for Interoperability

- Definition?
- Enabler of true interoperability

• So what conclusions can we make?

- Free/Open Source Software is here to stay
- But it will co-exist with proprietary software
- An integration strategy is essential – but how?
- OSS offers full commercial capability, both to users and developers
- With market entry barriers being lower, the local, services led opportunity is encouraging?
- But suppliers need not just think about licensing, but also how they 'join' the community

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“The MIOS [Minimum Information Interoperability Standards] defines the essential prerequisite for joined-up and web enabled Government. Next to security, it is an essential component in the overall e-Government strategy”

Ms Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi, Minister for Public Services and Administration, South Africa



“ I know a smart business decision when I see one
– choosing open standards is a very smart
business decision indeed”

Neelie Kroes

European Commissioner for Competitive Advantage

10th June 2008, OFE Briefing, Brussels



An Exemplar - Internet

“It was the standardisation around HTML that allowed the web to take off. It was not only the fact that it is *standard*, but the fact that it is *open and royalty-free*. If HTML had not been free, if it had been proprietary technology, then there would have been the business of actually selling HTML and the competing JHTML, LHTML, MHTML products. Because we would not have had the open platform, we would have had competition for these various different browser platforms but we *would not have had the web*. We would not have had everything growing on top of it. So I think it very important that as we move on to new spaces [...] we must keep the same openness we had before. We must keep an open internet platform, keep the standards for the presentation languages common and royalty-free. So that means, yes, we need standards, because the money, the excitement is not competing over the technology at that level. *The excitement is in the businesses and the applications that you built on top of the web platform*”

Tim Berners-Lee

• The Basis of an Open Standard for Interoperability

- Open and independent decision-making procedure
- Specification is available freely or at a nominal charge
- No constraints on the reuse of that standard
- Any IPR released without bias to business model
 - Implies Royalty free



European Interoperability Framework Version 2

- CAMSS

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What is Openness?

It's all about freedom but it isn't necessarily free



Principles

Freedom to Innovate

Freedom to Integrate

Freedom to Participate

Freedom to Leave




Tools

Open Source

Open Standards

Collaboration



“ As purchasers, we need to be smart when we buy technology. We need to be aware of the long term costs of lock-in; you are often locked-in to subsequent generations of that technology. There can also be spill-over effects where you get locked in to other products and services provided by that supplier”

“ That is just bad purchasing”

“ No citizen or company should be forced or encouraged to choose a closed technology over an open one, through a government having made that choice first”

*Neelie Kroes
European Commissioner for Competitive Advantage*

So what's the opportunity and issues for eGovernment?

- Lower costs
- Encouraging a sharing culture
- Faster development timescales?
- Increased accessibility for citizens, by removing dependence on specific software
- Improve the 'local' opportunity for SMEs/ start ups



• Governments

- Denmark
- Netherlands
- European Commission
- South Africa

• Governments

- Denmark
 - Open standards to be made mandatory
 - Implementation gradual
 - “Adhere or explain”
 - softwareborsen.dk – software exchange platform
- Netherlands
- European Commission
- South Africa

• Governments

- Netherlands

- “The Netherlands in Open Connection” action plan
- 1. *increase in interoperability between and with the different building blocks and forms of service provision of eGovernment by accelerating the use of open standards;*
- 2. *reduction in dependence on suppliers in the use of ICT through faster introduction of open standards and open source software;*
- 3. *promotion of a level playing field in the software market and promotion of innovation and the economy by forceful stimulation of the use of open source software and by giving preference in contracts to open source software if equally suitable.*

• Governments

- European Commission
 - “for all future IT developments and procurement procedures, the Commission shall promote the use of products that support open, well documented standards. Interoperability is a critical issue for the Commission, and usage of well-established open standards is a key factor to achieve and endorse it”
 - “.....The Commission must do its part. It must not rely on one vendor, it must not accept closed standards, and it must refuse to become locked into a particular technology – jeopardising maintenance of full control over the information in its possession”
- South Africa

• Governments

- Denmark
- Netherlands
- European Commission
- South Africa
 - Minimum Interoperability Standards Version 4.1
 - Clear definition of an open standard (similar to EIF)
 - “There are standards which we are obliged to adopt for pragmatic reasons.....the degree of openness will be taken into account when selecting.....”
 - “In developing open information systems, open source based solutions are to be considered before proprietary ones”

• Lessons learnt

- Need for strategies that recognise the continuing existence of both proprietary **and** F/OSS models
- But need to ensure that protection of the 'status quo' does not restrict opportunity for the future
- Adoption of Open Standards in a strong but pragmatic fashion is essential – exactly as South Africa is doing
- The 'preferential' use of Open Source is realistic, sensible, and cost effective for eGovernment

• Conclusions and Questions?

- Very strong support for the statements and thinking behind MIOS – the task obviously now is to get behind it as a strategy and turn it into action
- No country can grow in the global economy without realism on its strengths and opportunity.
- Can Southern Africa build on its local skills and developments in a way which utilises the OSS model?
- Finally, are there ways in which Europe and Africa can share knowledge and interests in this area?

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Thank You

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