

FREE SOFTWARE, A NON- TECHNICAL APPROACH

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What is free software?

- Free as in “freedom”
- This usually implies “free as in free beer”

The guts of the program

- Imagine a program as a dish
- There's a recipe and a final product
 - The same for software
- When you go to a restaurant, you get the final product, but at home you prepare your own meal
- What if you ask for the recipe to prepare the same meal at home?
- The recipe is called the code of the software

So why is it better?

- You can use it and modify it freely, for any purpose
- You are not tied to any company. The software belongs to the whole humanity
 - What if Beethoven had forbid the freely distribution of his music?
- Even though you might not be able to modify it, somebody can do it for you
- It adapts to the actual needs of the users, not to some marketing strategies

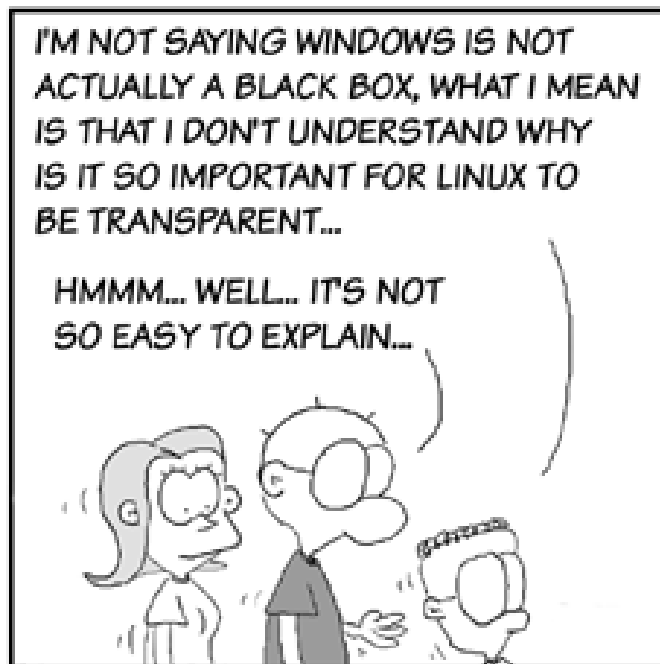
Implications for end-users

- 99% of free software has zero cost
- Millions of developers watch the code, so
 - It is usually more resistant to hangs and crashes
 - It doesn't get infected by virus because security is implemented by using good code, not just obscurity
- It gives you freedom!
 - Commercial software restricts it. Did you read the “End user license agreement”?

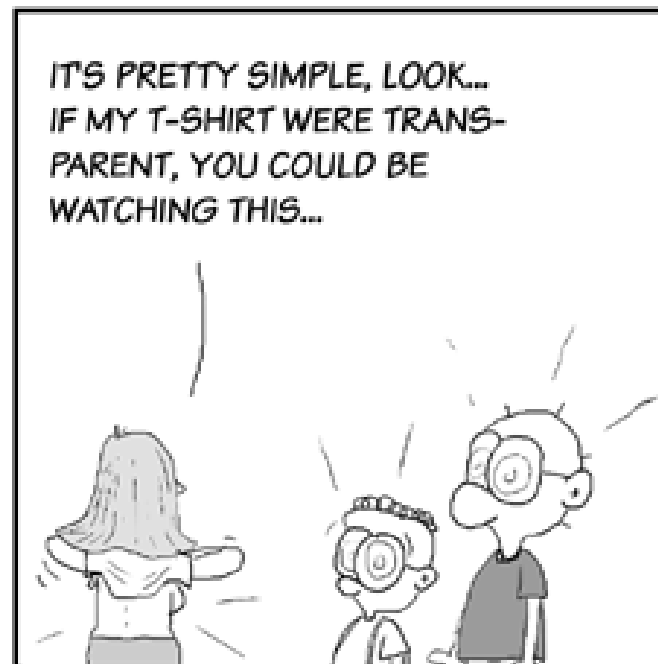
I don't need modifications

- Case of study: Lotus with Netscape
 - Lotus discontinued, now what?
 - Netscape freed, continued as Mozilla
- Transparency is important
 - It guarantees future compatibility
 - Would you like that your banking data were processed by some program which you don't really know how it works?

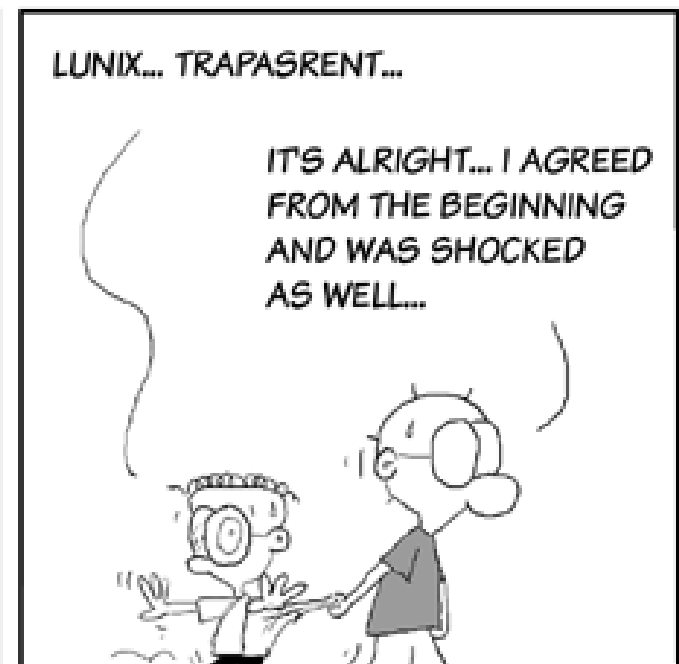
The importance of transparency



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[Version Original] <http://tira.escomposlinux.org>



[English Version] <http://comic.escomposlinux.org>

Why is everybody using commercial software, then?

- Why do you drink Font Vella instead of Caprabo water?
 - Advertising
 - Traditional way of thinking “if it's more expensive, it's better”
- Which software was preinstalled in your computer when you bought it?
 - Commercial companies threaten computer resellers
- The actual question is: why do you use it?
 - This presentation aims to unveil an alternative

The fear to changes

- You need to learn if you want to...
 - Drive a car
 - Cook your food
 - Speak another language
- So why do it?
 - Driving is more comfortable than walking
 - Cooked food is more healthy than raw food
 - Another language gives you more knowledge
- You are investing your time to get benefits

Did you know?

- You are using free software even if you don't notice
 - 70% of web pages are processed by a free program
 - For example, Emule is free software
 - Was that difficult?
- Free software doesn't imply “linux”
 - Linux lets you have a 100% free computer
 - Windows free software: Firefox web browser, OpenOffice, Emule...

I don't care for freedom and transparency

- Then go for the price!
- If you get Windows “for free”...
 - Some day you will get fed up with viruses and crashes
 - Some day you won't be able to open a document that you wrote two years ago
 - Some day you will want to tell your computer what to do and not the opposite
- When this day arrives, try free software

You spoke about zero cost

- Nobody works for free!
 - Well, some work just for fun
- A “new” business model
 - Pay for a service, not for a product
 - It is common in other business areas
 - The beach is free, the hotels cost money
 - An apple is cheap, but you pay to get it delivered it to the supermarket next door
 - The paper is cheap, the novel is the actual product

I heard from free software... (1)

- Frequently Asked Questions, or Frequent Disinformation From Microsoft
- It's difficult to use
 - Not anymore
- It has lower quality
 - Google runs on linux
- Some programs don't work on linux
 - Okay, use free software on windows or install both systems

I heard from free software... (2)

- With free software, I can't...
 - Unless you need to use Autocad or a video editing program, you do can
- Linux is for commies and terrorists
 - Come on...
- Where's the trick?
 - There's no trick!
 - If you find some, please tell me. With a “trick”, the presentation might be more belivable.

I heard from free software... (3)

- There are no virus because nobody uses linux
 - More than 10 million users
 - At least 50% of web servers run linux
 - Let's suppose you are right, then change to linux as early as possible!
- How about the data compatibility?
 - Mixed networks (mail, web, file sharing) are possible
 - For documents, look at the transition table
- Preinstalled linux is okay, but installation is difficult
 - As difficult as installing Windows XP

The transition to free software

1. Install OpenOffice and Firefox (and other free software) on your Windows box
 - Cons: Import all your previous documents
 - Pros: More secure, save license price
2. Start storing data in OpenOffice (free) format
 - Cons: Adapt to the new program
 - Pros: Future compatibility 100% guaranteed
3. Swap to linux
 - Cons: Adapt to the new system
 - Pros: 100% free system, 100% compatible with older docs

Benefits for an end-user

- Your system won't crash so often
- You don't need antivirus
 - Faster system
 - Less annoyances
- You will save money
- You will be cool

Benefits for a company

- Future compatibility guaranteed with other applications and systems
- Not tied to any enterprise and/or country
 - Hire your own developers
 - Contact to any other linux company in any other country
 - Lot of support over the internet
- Save millions on licenses

Benefits for the humanity

- Avoid monopolies
- Share knowledge
- Impossible to insert “backdoors” or sensible data gathering
- No “big brothers”
- Users can get an active part in the development
 - You don't need programming knowledge
 - Just send ideas to the developers

Further references

- Ubuntu linux system: <http://ubuntulinux.org/>
 - Live mode & install mode
 - With “live mode” you can try the software without changing anything on your computer
 - Look at some screen shots
- Windows free software
 - <http://www.getfirefox.com>
 - <http://www.openoffice.org/>

Try it now

Don't believe me. Believe yourself. Give it a try.

Try linux on the laptop

Any questions?