

Free software development in the open

A 10,000 foot view

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GSyC



Universidad
Rey Juan Carlos

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LibreSoft

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we study libre software

There is a new guy in town

Something is happening:
GNU/Linux, Apache, OpenStack, LibreOffice, Firefox, gvSIG...

The really new thing is the libre software model:

- Unprecedented combination of collaboration and competition.
- Shift in emphasis from marketing to support & quality.
- Classical assumptions about intellectual propriety are questioned.
- End-users recover the control (instead of big software providers)
- A new model for a new (global, networked) world?

Feasibility & sustainability of the model is clear

What is libre software?

Free software guarantees (if you get it, you can...)

- Freedom to use
- Freedom to study, and to adapt
- Freedom to redistribute
- Freedom to improve and release improvements

<http://www.gnu.org/philosophy/free-sw.html>

- The definition is from Free Software Foundation, for free software (“Free Software Definition”)
- But same applies to open source software (“Open Source Definition”)
- To avoid discussion and missinterpretations, we will use “libre software”
- Important consequence:
To be able of modifying source code, it must be available.
- Lots of licenses: GPL, LGPL, BSD, Apache, MPL, etc.

<http://opensource.org/docs/osd>

Why this definition?

- Ethical concerns: the world should work this way
- Practical concerns: some actors benefit this way

Long discussions, some level of consensus reached:

- Free Software Definition (FSF)
- Debian Free Software Guidelines (Debian)
- Open Source Definition (OSI)

Not all free software is developed in the open...
...but when it is, some stuff is available:

- Source code for all releases
- All design & supporting documents
- All changes to code (source code management system)
- All bugs and fixes (issue tracking system)
- All technical discussions

Important: developing in the open does not require a community

Why developing in the open?

- Transparency leads to trust
anyone can inspect the project
- Transparency leads to quality
developers know anyone can see their work
- Transparency leads to feedback
anyone can study & suggest improvements
- Transparency leads to prestige
good work can be recognized by peers

Usually, developing in the open plus:

- Reasonable acceptance of external contributions (based on technical reasons)
- Reasonable acceptance of new developers (based on meritocracy)
- Lack of control by external organizations (such as companies)

If successful, it leads to a development community

Why open development?

- Open innovation:
get outside help, you will benefit from it
- Attract talent:
get engaged people by letting them join
- Attract resources:
maybe there are people out there willing to help
- Stay neutral:
easier to get corporate involvement

Specially when the community grows:

- Have formal or informal policies on joining, getting privileges
- Ensure there are no hidden channels communication always in the open
- Ensure all kinds of opportunities use support tools as much as possible
- Monitor progress (or lack of) and facts casual, anecdotal knowledge is not enough

Example: Analysis by third parties



gvSIG Analysis (Mar 2013)

Navigation

- [Summary](#)
- [Source Code](#)
- [Tickets](#)
- [MLS \(old\)](#)
- [Top](#)
- [Radar](#)
- [Reports](#)
- Repos: [SCM](#)|[MLS](#)

Reference Card

Project name: [gvSIG](#)

Changes to source code: [svn](#)

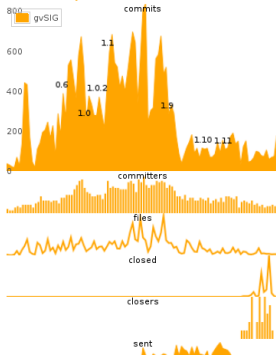
- Time period: 2004-05-11 2013-03-04
- Commits: 27828
- Commits Reviewed:
- Committers: 102
- Authors: 0
- Reviewers:

Tickets [redmine](#)

- Time period: 2011-12-13 2013-03-06
- Issues: 1228
- Openers: 91

Marcos (1) | ML (undefined)

General activity



Top committers

	commits
vcaballero	2980
jmviso	2858
cordinyana	1839
nbrodin	1504
caballero	1384
jpiera	1372
bsanchez	1207
fjp	1047
jaume	1039
nacho	1022

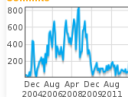
Top closers

	closed
socorro_abe	62
jjdelcerro	33
maluenda_mar	11
mmadrid	10
caballero	8
jjdelcerro	7
socorro_abe	7
domenech_vicmat	7
jaume	1
domenech_vicmat	1

Top senders

	sent
jldominguez	1215
carrera_marrod	1060
nachouve	706
fpenaru	666
wolfgang.qual	577
fpuga	516
benjamin.ducke	470
jhonatan.cano.f	433
sergio.clark	423
jtortresfabra	388

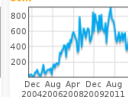
Commits



Closed



Sent



Committers



Closers



Senders



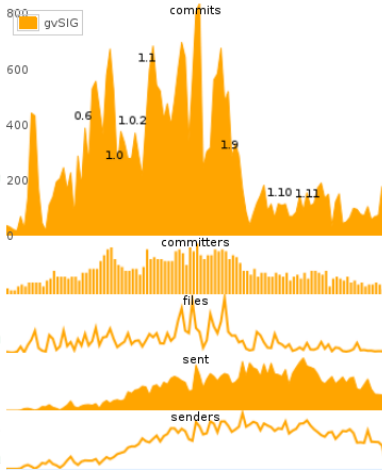
Analysis of gvSIG by Bitergia, <http://bitergia.com>

<http://wp.me/p2cQGW-7T>

<http://blog.bitergia.com>

Example: Analysis by third parties (2)

General activity



<http://wp.me/p2cQGw-7T>

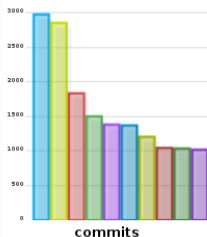
Example: Analysis by third parties (3)



<http://wp.me/p2cQGw-7T>

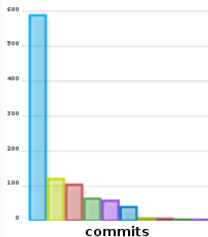
Example: Analysis by third parties (4)

Top committers



vcaballero	2980
jmvivo	2858
cordinyana	1839
nbrodin	1504
caballero	1384
jpiera	1372
bsanchez	1207
fjp	1047
jaume	1039
nacho	1022

Top committers last year



jldominguez	588
jjdelcerro	119
cordinyana	103
fpuga	63
nbrodin	57
fpenarrubia	39
vacevedo	6
psanxiao	5
amaneiro	3
jmvivo	2

<http://wp.me/p2cQGw-7T>

Have you learned something?

Something useful?

[I would love to discuss all these issues
with you all...]
[...or one by one]