



Free Culture

OSM2011
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A quote

- Why are programmers so fussy about their employers' morals? Partly because they can afford to be. The best programmers can work wherever they want. They don't have to work for a company they have qualms about.

But the other reason programmers are fussy, I think, is that evil begets stupidity. An organization that wins by exercising power starts to lose the ability to win by doing better work. And it's not fun for a smart person to work in a place where the best ideas aren't the ones that win.

/ *Hackers and Painters* by Paul Graham /

Changing times

- Information as a new kind of resource
- “Switzerland is a cool place – they got so much information!” (*The Road Ahead* by Bill Gates)
- Everybody's media
- Digital world vs legislation
- E-stuff
- “open source software is set to have a similar impact on the marketplace as the internet did in the 1990s” (iTWire, <http://www.itwire.com.au/content/view/3625/0/>)

The problems with traditional copyright

- *droit d'auteur* vs copyright
- separation of monetary and moral rights
- gradual extension from the original 14 years to 70-95 after the death of the author
- too rigid for the globalising world
 - authors lose audience – the poor will not care (cannot afford)
 - economically, leaves resources unused
 - socially and ethically, it is a major problem which will worsen when untreated

Historical roots

- Academic freedom - “to pursue knowledge wherever it may lead”
- The original hacker culture of the 60s at MIT and Stanford
 - *computer science* sounded roughly like *rocket science*
 - limited technological resources
 - incompatible software
 - no stimulus (and sometimes obstacles) to business
 - sign of the times (hippies etc)

FLOSS as the starting point

- 1983 – start of the GNU project (R. Stallman)
- 1989/91 – GPL
- 1991 – Linux
- 1992-93 – three free BSD Unixes
- 1995 – LAMP
- 1997-98 – first free desktops (GNOME & KDE)
- 2001 – OpenOffice.org, free office suite

Creative Commons

- Larry Lessig 2001
- some rights reserved - the radical ideas of FLOSS used in the framework of traditional copyright
- human-readable license
- web-based, a-couple-of-clicks choice
- creates
 - the Commons Deed
 - legally binding full license text
 - metadata following the RDF/XML standard

CC: the main choices

- Allow commercial use? a) yes, b) no
- Allow derived works (e.g. mixing the music)? a) yes, b) allow when the derived works would have the same license, c) no
- Jurisdiction – if the country has harmonised CC with its legislation, can use localised version, otherwise use Unported (generic version)
- May add additional data (included to metadata):
 - type of work: a) audio, b) video, c) image, d) text, e) interactive media, f) other
 - information about author etc

CC: the main licenses

- CC Attribution (BY)
- CC Attribution-ShareAlike (BY-SA)
- CC Attribution-NoDerivs (BY-ND)
- CC Attribution-NonCommercial (BY-NC)
- CC Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike (BY-NC-SA)
- CC Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivs (BY-NC-ND)

CC Sampling

- Sampling – allowed using **a part** of the work in other purpose than advertisement, cannot use the **entire** work; discontinued in version 3!
- Sampling Plus – like Sampling, but allows non-commercial distribution of the entire work
- NonCommercial Sampling Plus – distribution of both parts and entire work is only allowed in non-commercial settings

More CC

- CC0 (CC Zero) \leq public domain
- CC Music Sharing \leq BY-NC-ND
- CC Wiki \leq BY-SA
- CC GNU GPL
- CC GNU LGPL

Specials

- CC Founders' Copyright – return to the original U.S. 14+14 years copyright
- CC DevNations - CC BY for the members of the World Bank official list of developing countries, full copyright for others. Discontinued in CC 3.0 due to being in odds with Open Access movement (more about that later)

Other free content licenses

- Free Art License – a GPL-like copyleft license meant for works of art
- Design Science License – a simple copyleft license for scientific data
- Arphic Public License – a copyleft license for fonts
- GNU Verbatim Copying License – a simple license which requires preservation of a copying notice at documents

Other positions

- Erik Moller's Definition of Free Cultural Works - <http://freedomdefined.org/Definition> (considers CC licenses other than BY and BY-SA restrictive)
- Ram Samudrala's Free Music Philosophy – <http://www.ram.org/ramblings/philosophy/fmp.html>
- Open Knowledge Foundation – <http://okfn.org>

A couple of words on motivation

- See Benkler:
http://www.benkler.org/Benkler_Wealth_Of_Net_works.pdf
- networking used in all fields of society:
 - radical influx of different content creators
 - at the same time, the numbers of 'professional' content creators (writers, composers, movie and recording industry)
- Result: the majority of useful information found on the Net is provided by people not doing it as their main job

As said before

- Eric S. Raymond:
<http://www.catb.org/~esr/writings/cathedral-bazaar/magic-cauldron/>
- ESR: 95% of the programmers do not work into the box
- The Linus' Law:
 - survival
 - social position
 - fun

Open Access

- Research has to be based on previous knowledge
- Last decades of the 20th century – a weird system:
 - Scientists wrote articles and gave them freely to publishers (as their job prescribes publication)
 - Publishers compiled them into journals and sold them for big money (typically @ 30-50 USD) back to the scientists
- A major problem for developing countries
- A resonance of skewed business model and evenmore skewed IP system => big mess
- 2001 – <http://www.soros.org/openaccess>

Two ways

- “Gold” - publishers will release a free digital version parallelly with the publication. Implies the publication costs covered either by author, his/her institution or from other sources
- “Green” - self-archiving by authors (often using specialised software and network repositories)

Various examples

- technical documentation: the Linux Documentation Project, <http://www.tldp.org>
- general multi-language encyclopedia: Wikipedia, <http://www.wikipedia.org>
- scientific publisher: PLoS, <http://www.plos.org>
- university lectures: the MIT OpenCourseWare, <http://ocw.mit.edu>
- secondary education: Free High School Science Texts, <http://www.nongnu.org/fhsst/>
- record label: Magnatune, <http://www.magnatune.com/>
- photographs: Flickr, <http://www.flickr.com>



- publisher: Lulu.com, <http://www.lulu.com>
- classical library: Project Gutenberg, <http://www.gutenberg.org>
- travel guide: WikiTravel, <http://wikitravel.org>
- cliparts: Open Clip Art Library, <http://www.openclipart.org>
- **Estonia:**
- AS Regio outline maps for schools:
<http://www.regio.ee/kontuurkaart/>
- encyclopedia: Estonica, <http://estonica.org>
- culture calendar: kultuur.info <http://kultuur.info>
- Tehnokratt.net <http://tehnokratt.net>
- Learning content funded by Tiger Leap Foundation

Open models in education

- natural outcome of academic freedom
- maximised access to new knowledge
- constructivism, connectivism and communities
- economic model: may either
 - use the product model: try to sell “canned knowledge”, protect the “IP” at all costs – and get run over by the companies with more resources and less hindrances (e.g. obligation to teach)
- OR
 - use the service model: maximise the scientific production and its free distribution (only reserving authorship, e.g. CC BY or BY-SA) – what is sold is image and know-how enhanced by the free distribution of knowledge (e.g. MIT OCW)

Conclusion

- Times change, so do ways of doing things
- Global economy needs a more flexible approach
- Science has to become science again
- When used properly, free licenses allow motivation of authors without setting pointless obstacles to others

Additional reading

- *Free Culture* by Larry Lessig
- *Future of Ideas* by Larry Lessig
- *Two Bits* by Christopher Kelty
- *The Access Principle: The Case for Open Access to Research and Scholarship* by John Willinsky
- *How Open is the Future? Economic, Social and Cultural Scenarios inspired by Free & Open-Source Software* by Marleen Wynants and Jan Cornelis

Homework

- Study the Wesnoth community and write a blog analysis of its strong points as well as weaknesses
- Study the case of Cory Doctorow (also see the links at the course home page) and analyse the validity of his business model as a writer

Due: Monday, November 28