OSCOMM 2009

The 1st International Workshop on Building Sustainable Open Source Communities

Co-located with OSS 2009, 5th International Conference on Open Source Systems

http://tutopen.cs.tut.fi/oscomm09

June 6, 2009, Skövde, Sweden

CALL FOR PAPERS

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IMPORTANT DATES

Intent to submit: Feb 15, 2009
Papers due: Feb 22, 2009
Acceptance: March 9, 2009
Final papers due: April 6, 2009
Workshop: June 6, 2009

SCOPE

Open source software is gaining momentum in several forms. In addition to the huge increase in the number of open source projects started and the remarkable rise of FLOSS adoption by companies, new models of participation in the movement are emerging rapidly. For instance, companies are increasingly releasing some of their proprietary software systems as open source on one hand and acquiring open source software on the other hand. Taking the example of two big companies like Sun Microsystems and Nokia, in the former setting Sun has released the Java Platform Standard Edition for Business to their customers while Nokia has acquired Symbian and is giving it away as open source. In the latter setting, Sun has acquired MySQL and Nokia has gone QT. For all these forms of involvement, a central question is how to build and maintain a sustainable community of users and developers around the open source projects.

Research findings show that developing and maintaining online communities in general is a complex activity. In the case of open source communities, the situation is worsened as the problem is multi-facet bringing own kinds of challenges. First, this can be viewed as a marketing challenge: certain marketing strategies are needed to market the software to potential users and customers. The problem is also social: FLOSS communities typically come with own kinds of social structures that should be tolerated by existing organizational patterns in companies. From a legality viewpoint, the selected licensing type and scheme, for example, can affect the way the open source project is perceived by the community. On the technological/technical side, influential factors include the quality of the software and the availability of support infrastructure. From a business perspective, company motives, needed resources and cost-benefit models should be studied. Other viewpoints should be considered too.

We think that it is the right time for the research community and the industry to discuss the community building problem from its various perspectives by exchanging related experiences, sharing relevant concerns, and proposing guidelines to manage the challenges highlighted earlier. This is vital as more and more companies are moving towards community-driven development models.

The goal of the workshop is to bring together interested academics, practitioners, and enthusiasts to discuss topics related to the area of open source communities. The workshop will offer an opportunity for the participants to share experiences and discuss challenges involved in building and maintaining open source communities. The workshop will also identify key research issues and challenges that lie ahead.

We solicit two kinds of contributions: short position papers describing particular challenges, experiences, or visions relevant to the scope of the workshop (not to exceed 4 pages) and full research papers describing original work in any aspect of open source communities (not to exceed 8 pages). Articles should be novel, have not been published elsewhere, and are not under review by another publication. Papers must conform, at time of submission, to the OSS 2009 Format and Submission Guidelines available at: http://oss2009.org.

TOPICS OF INTEREST

Workshop topics include (but are not limited to):
- challenges of building and maintaining open source communities covering concerns related to legal, socio-cultural, business, technical, etc. dimensions;
- organization and interaction schemes in open source communities;
- models and classification schemes of communities: participation (e.g. volunteer, mixed, company-based), origin (e.g. individual, company), host (e.g. academy, company), scope (e.g. public, corporate);
- practical approaches, best practices, frameworks, methodologies, technologies, tools, and environments to support community building and management;
- industrial involvement in building, managing and interfacing with communities: opening up software platforms and acquiring open source software, motives and cost-benefit models;
- building open source communities: the role of companies, academy, governments, NGOs, and individuals;
- open source communities versus other kinds of communities such as firm-hosted communities, corporate communities, social networks, global software teams;
- experience reports and lessons on building and maintaining open source communities.