

Course Name : O Level(B3-1st sem.)

Subject : ITT&NB

Topic : Open Source & Proprietary Software

Date : 08-04-20

Open Source software

Open source software (OSS) is distributed under a licensing agreement which allows computer code to be shared, viewed and modified by other users and organizations.

Open Source is when the source code is available for anyone to use. They can change and share it. Everyone has access to open-source software and it is free to download. This means anyone can use the software, modify it and then share it among the community.

Examples of Open Source

Almost any type of software can be open source. Some of the most popular applications of the open-source software model include web browsers and operating systems.

- [WordPress](#)– A Content Management System (CMS) used for blogs and creating our websites.
- [GitHub](#) – A hosting service that has many of its features.
- [Mozilla Firefox](#) – A web browser and one of the most popular browsers available.
- [Linux](#) – One of the most commonly used operating systems, Linux is found on desktops, mobile phones and a large number of servers.
- [Android](#) – An operating system that controls the majority of the world’s smartphones, it is also based on Linux.
- [GIMP](#) – An example of a free alternative to proprietary software, GIMP is a popular alternative to Adobe Photoshop.

Proprietary Software

Proprietary Software or “Closed Source” is different to open source. Instead of being free for anyone to use, proprietary software is owned by an individual or company. The source code is usually kept secret. This means only people with access to the code, can modify and change it. Proprietary software is also, but not always, paid software.

Examples of Proprietary Software

- **Microsoft Office** – Productivity software including a text editor, powerpoint creator and more.
- **Adobe Photoshop** – An image creation and manipulation program used for digital artwork.
- **Windows** – The most widely used operating system in the world.
- **Internet Security Programs** – Designed to keep our computer safe from online threats.
- **Shopify** – An eCommerce website where we can build your online shop.
- **Big Commerce** – Like Shopify, it is an online store builder.
- **EKM** – Platform for creating an online shop.

Differences between Open Source and Closed Source Software

- **Price Policy**

Open source often referred as a free of cost software. It can, however, have costs for extras like assistance, additional services or added functionality. Thus, you may still pay for a service with OSS.

Closed source software is usually a paid software. The costs can vary depending on the complexity of the software. While the price can be higher, what you get is a better product, full support, functionality and innovation. However, most companies provide free trials to convince the purchaser that their software is the right fit.

- **Security**

The code of open source software can be viewed, shared and modified by the community, which means anyone can fix, upgrade and test the broken code. The bugs are fixed quickly, and the code is checked thoroughly after each release.

Closed source software can be fixed only by a vendor. If something goes wrong with the software, you send a request and wait for the answer from the support team. Solving the problem can take much longer than compared to OSC.

- **Quality of Support**

Comparing open source and closed source software support, it is obvious that CSS is predominant in this case. The costs for it include an option to contact support and get it in one business day in most cases. The response is well organized and documented.

For open source software, such an option is not provided. The only support options are forums, useful articles, and a hired expert. However, it is not surprising that using such kind of service you will not receive a high level of response.

- **Source Code Availability**

Open source software provides an ability to change the source code without any restrictions. Individual users can develop what they want and get benefits from innovation developed by others within the user community. As the source code is easily accessible, it enables the software developers to improve the already existing programs.

Closed source software is more restricted than open source software because the source code cannot be changed or viewed. However, such limitation is what may contribute to CSS security and reliability.

- **Usability**

Usability is a painful subject of open source software. User guides are written for developers rather than to layperson users. Also, these manuals are failing to conform to the standards and structure.

For closed source software usability is one of the merits. Documentation is usually well-written and contains detailed instructions.

Exercise:

1. Write short notes on open source software and Proprietary Software.