An Infographic on The Evolution of Open Source Software

University of Southampton, ECS, INFO2009 Academic Year 11-12

Abstract:

This project attempts to gather and present important information from the history of Open Source Software. The results of deep research into the topic are packed into an easy to read and understand format .
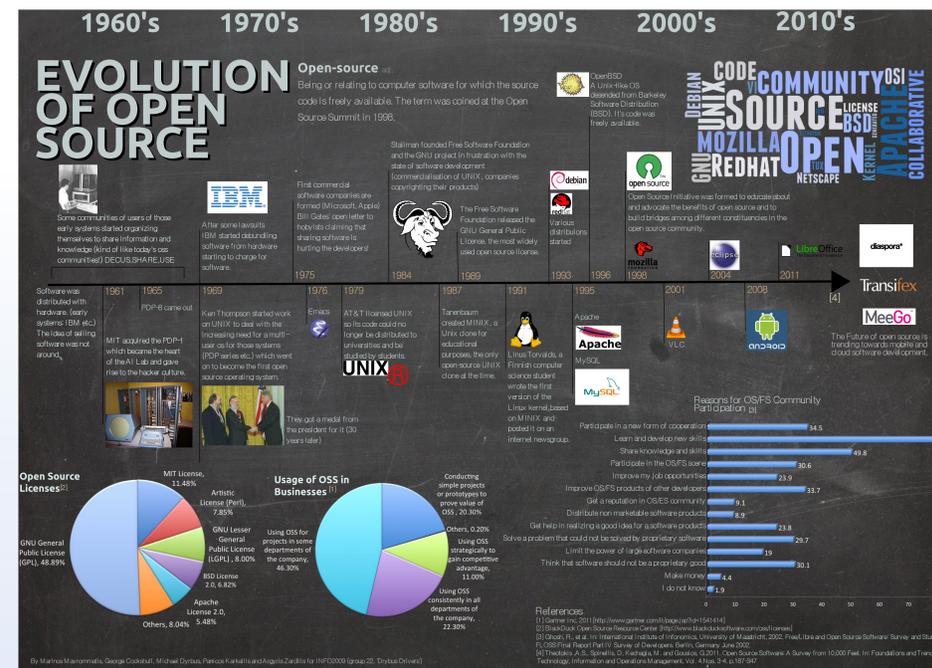
Introduction:

Our infographic describes the landmark events that took place from the 1950's onwards that shaped the future of open source development into what we know and experience today. We explore the license usage, motivations and business usage statistics behind open source software and present this information in graph form to make it easy to understand and engage with.

Background:

Open Source Software is developed both by individual hobbyist programmers and by corporations such as Canonical and Red Hat. It ranges from mission critical server software to games and user applications. There are different and motives that range from the "libre" software ideology to using OSS strategically to gain competitive advantage.

PDP-1 (Programmed Data Processor-1) was the first computer in Digital Equipment Corporation's PDP series. PDP-8 was the first successful commercial minicomputer.

Method:

To gather the information we wanted to display to the end user, we all researched the general field of Open Source Software, and also split the topic into subsections, so we could get an in depth understanding of the total evolution. We also tried to find statistics from credible sources with a relatively big sample so that it gives a representative picture of the relevant sub section.

We then thought of several different ways of portraying the information, and decided on an infographic, due to the historical nature of the topic being easy to display on a timeline, along with being able to complement it with graphical figures about statistics of OSS.

Discussion:

The infographic could be useful for people who had little or no exposure to open-source software before. The reader, with little effort, will be able to get a basic understanding of its evolution over the years, the mechanics of community participation in OSS (chart) and its usage/importance in the world today as well as some information about the most commonly used OSS licenses available (pie-chart). The infographic does not go into much detail about the events as this is not in the scope of this resource; this resource is only intended to give a basic introduction and motivate the reader to find out more.

Conclusion:

The usage and influence of OSS is increasingly growing in the world and there are still a lot of people that are not aware of the world of open-source and this alternative way of software development, so this resource can help introduce people to the 'open-source world' and its ideas.

Keywords: Open Source, Free Software, Linux, UNIX, GNU, GPL, Software Development, Community, Timeline, Licenses, Infographic.
Edshare URI: http://www.edshare.soton.ac.uk/8241/

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