BULMA

Bisoños Usuarios de GNU/Linux de Mallorca y Alrededores | Bergantells Usuaris de GNU/Linux de Mallorca i Afegitons

Everybody has heard about GPL license but actually most people are afraid when we ask them to free their code under GPL license for all the community.

If we don't agree to license your programmes under GPL, please tell me your reasons because I hope, if you read this you wouldn't have any.

Version Française[1] - _Versión en Castellano_[2] - _Versió en Català_[3]

Why GPL?

GPL(GNU General Public License) is a kind of license about the intellectual property in which we require that all the developments made under GPL license must be GPL. The way is to protect the unhidden code. Is it only that? I'll try to answer to this question right now.

Computer science and more specially programming is a science too, as chemistry, physics and mathematics. Even if we don't want to admit it, we don't have done too much from the beginning. **It is hard to admit** but the most important part of the computer science, **the software, has not evoluated so much**.

From the first PC, twenty years ago, users always ask for the same thing. They want the software that substitutes the writting machine, the software that substitutes the cash register. Twenty years ago people used to solve problems for the small and medium bussiness with machines that print tickets, with TSP (terminal selling points), Netware in DOS, with accountancy programmes and it didn't matter what king of programming nor your objects technollogy nor the way you worked but twenty years later we have the same problems with the same customers. Those problems have been resolved by our ancestors.

For instance, it is the same as a doctor who finds a medecine against the cancer and uses it only on his patients but wouldn't share it amongst the others. It is to say that if medecine evoluated as the same way as programming we would find us looking for curing leprosy, plague, malaria or goiter. Wouldn't we!

But **medecine** evoluate **physics** and **genetic** too, they **evoluate because they share their advances of course**. People know that it is a lose of time to find a solution and then to let the others ones spending ten more years looking for the same solution at the same problem.

Could you imagine a world in which penicillin had died the same day as Fleming died ? Could you imagine **a world in which only British people could be saved from the death** because Fleming who was British, has discovered the penicillin in 1928 ? **It seems ridiculous isn't it? How could anybody want to hide a such discovery only for money?** Could you even imagine if he dies without sharing his discovery. **Could we wait ten more years until somebody else rediscovered it?**

Well _it seems all right when we are speaking about medecine but why don't't we think the same way when we are speaking about programing? What's the matter?_ **Why doesn't exist an accountancy available for all the humanity?Why doesn't exist a free disclosure invoiced management ?** _Perhaps we are condemned to write the same code as our parents and grand-parents?_

While we keep behaving like that, with those building ideals of closed, secret, hidden and protected applications, that nobody can read them or learn from our achievements we will be condemned to court failure. Software evolution is impossible if we don't understand that we have to share our global solutions with the others.

GPL license tries to show us the way to follow to go up to the evolution. Evolution means to share the solutions we find. In fact, license is like a moral trap. If you adopt a programme under GPL license, well you have unterstood the right way to follow but please don't forget and always remenber that what you do, you must share it with the others. That is the **GPL real meaning.**

Now, we have constituted a small team of programmers to show with facts in spite of words to the others which is the way to follow. **BulmaGes** is born to be the **first managing application under GPL license**. Most of our members work in managing software marketing in according with customers wishes. That is why some people are afraid of this kind of license because they think it is self-defeating.

The unsafety of gift not returned

We wonder **if it is right that we spend a whole year in our life to create a product and somebody who only wastes ten minutes could make a product and sell it to our potential customers.**

Of course this person hasn't invested so he could sell it cheaper or even give it free. In fact this person has got all the sources, he can give support to the product, what would happen if he changes it or if he improves it. So he would create a product better than mine in only one month, only because he stole my one year work... No! remember the GPL condition! **" If you take advantage of my work I will take advantage of your work."** I prefer reading this in a fair way : " **grateful to the progress I could reach, I wish my progress could help you to make a better software."**

We all know that people are self-centered, we go on with the theme "if you bleed me, I will bleed you" At the end it is the universal doubt: **What will happen if the laws are not respected ?** It is to say what would happen if someone takes a far-reaching GPL product and he uses it to make an inaccessible, illegible, propietary software.

A few days ago somebody asks **how to protect us from people who don't respect the GPL license.**

The answer is easy, **we don't have to protect us because these people are the victims.**

We use the word **victim** to speak about a person or a society that hasn't spent five minutes to obtain a software application. **That application would cost 100.000$ a few months ago. We save 100.000$ to our competence, they don't say thank you to us and we dare to call them: victims.**

It seems we are looking for beatification, aren't we? Could you unterstand us? couldn't you!

*First we had the case in which people take and respect the GPL license. In this case if **our managing application is adapted for a wood society, we have got a product for wood society without spending time nor money studying the market**.* But we have increased our posible customers with adapted managing that haven't been resolved by ourselves but resolved.

Second we had the case in which people don't take and don't respect the GPL license. It is the case of people who take a GPL product and distribuate it as a propietary code. In this case they dig their own grave because the software is alive and they take the software but they don't they don't give it again to the community, so these people won't benefit from the help of the community. **After a time these people had to forget the product and they had to sell the GPL product only because they wouldn't improve it like any GPL product would be by programmers all over the world.** But this people would have an propietary product sold but they couldn't improve it copying again the GPL product because a GPL release gets better and better everyday. **These people would get unsatisfied customers with obsolate software that didn't answer the market demand. In the other way, the licensed GPL software is up to day and it is obvious to say that the people who share their knowledge have a place in the market by their own deserts.**

What would happen if everybody sells the same GPL product? Would it be the end of the market?

All the bars sell the same snacks, hasn't this ended with the competence against snackbars? The same happens with the universal products. The penicellin is universal, every society, every country distribuates it and sells it as well as they want and this doesn't end with chemistry business.What about the Coke formula, it is known by everybody, have a look in google open cola. The same must happen with the software. **The Bulmages could be the same everywhere, but the service would be different. We don't have to worry because our neighbors sell the same product as us, we have to worry that our neighbors don't sell it better, that they don't treat the customers better than us, that they don't offer more added values than us.**

Free: Free or Gratis ?

We have to focus on two points. One will stay and the other will die. The one that will die is the one of Microsoft, the **shared-source**. It is to say that the codes of MS applications will not be secret, you could read them but only if we pay for it. And of course the one who pays to read the codes cannot let the others read them if they don't have paid for the codes. This point of view is the one we call the segmentation of the market. In MS they know that they will knuckle under the OpenSource because in five years time Linux has improved much more than Windows in twenty years and they are afraid. But in MS they know how to make money, so while they wait for the day, they have to free their code, MS is going on selling the product to make money to those gullible people who go on with an operating system that "freeze" on their desk a long time ago.

The other point of view is the **open-source,** it is to say that people who want to read the code, to compile it or to execute the code just have to do it. But people can't charge the customer for something given free for all the humanity. So we **can't speak about a sale of Bulmages** as we can't speak about a sale of Linux. **We only sell the added value, books, support, attention to the custumer, personification....**

Ideas and programmes that give a solution to universal themes must belong to humanity property, it is the only way to treat better our customers, the only way not to spend time resolving the same problem years after years, the only way no to take money to resolve the same problem but take money to resolve every time a different problem . That the way to make our job better and our life more pleasant.

The one who hasn't unterstood that GPL license and Open Source are the only ways to improve the software programing world it would be too late to become aware of it.

To adopt GPL license and to distribuate applications based on OpenSource wouldn't be an alternative to become soon, the only way to stay alive in the market.

License your code under GPL or don't do it and carry on with the consequences of your decision.

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