

Open-Source or Proprietary Software – What is Best for Users?

So, you are unable to decide on the kind of software you should use to develop your next application on? Proprietary software or Open source software?? Here, we are going to help you with your decision on this very query. 4 minutes read.



The alterations between Open and Closed source/proprietary software are straightforward, and there are equally clear pros and cons for each. There is no right or wrong answer to the question either. Your best option will largely depend on your business and its goals.

Proprietary (Closed) Software

Let's see what a proprietary software is—Software that can be used only by obtaining a license after paying a fee for a software can be called a proprietary software.

Some software's are free of cost, however not all software's are free of cost—Why? Because organizations who develop a software customized for a specific use, feel that they should not share it with the community, they make it a mode of revenue for themselves as they sell the license to use the software for a fee. This sort of software is called a proprietary software. Its source code is not available for free, its not available anywhere, in fact.

Proprietary software is usually a closely guarded secret by the developer, be it an organization or an individual.

An example—Most popular example of this sort of software would be Microsoft windows OS that we, rather 88% of people all over the world use on their computers is a proprietary software, where one must pay to use the software.

Here are the major restrictions on a proprietary software:

- If the software's license has been bought by a user once, it cannot can be distributed further. In any case, if the user purchases a multi-user license, then the software can be further distributed accordingly to the limitations mentioned before-hand.
- The number of users that can use the software depends on the price a user is willing to pay for the software. For an instance, if the license states that the software can be installed on five systems, then the protective software cannot be installed on a sixth system.

Open Source Software

Now for its counterpart—The open source software, is a software whose source code is freely distributed with a license to study change or further distribute to anyone, for any purpose can be called an open source software.

Why is open source software made available? Because not everybody can pay for a software. Dedicated programmers improve the source code and share the updated code with the community. In which case, a member of the community will be made accessible to the new changes made to that software.

- Open source software provides these advantages to the users because its community only, in other words, if you are someone who wants to develop a software but you cannot afford to do it from scratch, you do not have the time, you don't have the expertise or capital to invest, then the open source software is the best bet for you.
- Using the features of open source software related to your end goal, you can just develop or customize the source code according to your own needs, making the application that much more flexible and use it further for your specific needs. This is exactly what an open source software is.

Now, for further clarifications, there are two types of open source software-

- **Freeware:** It is available free of cost for use and distribution, but it cannot be modified, reason being the freeware's source code is not made available.
Example- Google chrome, skype.,
This software is yet called open software/open source software because the user doesn't have to pay for it.
- **Shareware:** Its initially free and can be distributed, but it needs to be payed after a stipulated period, why? Because the source code is not available, for an instance--a 45-day trail period of Win RAR asks for payment after the trail has expired.

Now, let's discuss the key differences between open and closed source software:

The Key factors that help you realize when it's appropriate to use open source and when to use a closed source software can be generalized as follows:

1. Cost: As discussed above, a proprietary software, depending on the complexity of the system, the cost can vary. But on the brighter side, you get a customized, highly secured software that requires low level of technical expertise.

On the other hand, if you have access to in-house capabilities and technical expertise to maintain the software, and resources to implement, train and provide support, then open source may be most cost-effective for your organization.

2. Service: Open source software depend on on a devoted and engaged online community of users to deliver support via forums and blogs, but this support often fails to deliver the highest level of response that many consumers expect. Now, before use Open Source Software such as WordPress for your business's needs, there are a few things you need to consider like the ongoing maintenance, security, content migration, hosting etc.

After sales service and support are perhaps the greatest advantages of using proprietary software (closed). Ongoing support is a crucial selling point for users and is one of the main reasons people choose closed source over open source software.

3. Security: Safety of an open source solution is often a concern because its not always developed in a measured environment and is at a disadvantage to the proprietary or closed software as closed software is widely recognized for its ability to being more secure as the source code is not shared and is kept a secret.

4. Usability & Innovation: While open source technologies are considered to more on the innovative side of the deal, the long-term usability of open source lacks the credibility as compared to proprietary software as in the case of latter, a dedicated team is set to improve the usability for the proprietary software's.

Conclusion

Overall, both open source and closed source software's have each their own methodology, philosophy, pros & cons. The entire decision depends on your business needs. We hope that this information will come in handy for you to make the right business decision.

In case you are interested in using either of the them for your next business venture and don't have the necessary resources, tell us what business solution you are looking to develop, and we will put our heart and soul into your business needs and develop a seamless business solution-- just for you.

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