

# FOSS Tales

COMP8440: FOSSD  
Lecture 13



# Tivoisation

- Tivo Series 1
  - ok to have proprietary kernel modules?
  - ok to reverse engineer those modules?
- Tivo Series 2
  - ok to lock down the kernel?
  - Does the GPL guarantee the ability to use the source on the box it was written for?
- GPLv3 and Tivoisation
  - Different rules for consumer products?

# gcc and egcs

- gcc early days
  - key component of GNU system
  - amazingly high quality compiler developed quickly
- gcc2 problems
  - development bogged down
  - frustration among many gcc developers
- egcs fork (August 1997)
  - used a more open development style
  - broadened the scope of the project
- egcs adopted as new gcc (April 1999)
  - fork was resolved
  - established steering committee

# Qt/KDE and Gnome

- Qt 1.x
  - Used by KDE desktop
  - Concerns fueled Gnome work
  - FreeQT license - what if Trolltech withdrew it?
- Qt 2.0
  - QPL license
  - Not GPL compatible
  - Is KDE legal?
- Qt 2.2 (September 2000)
  - GPL license
  - All ok now?
- Qt 4.5 (March 2009)
  - LGPL option added

# Ubuntu

- Debian fork
  - started in 2004
  - aimed for greater usability
  - widespread adoption
  - strong financial backing
- Criticisms
  - support for proprietary drivers – is this good for Linux?
  - giving back – does Ubuntu do enough?

# Novell and Microsoft

- SuSE Linux
  - popular distro – especially in Europe
  - bought by Novell in 2003
- Novell/MS deal
  - announced suddenly in November 2006
  - no consultation with community (suppliers)
  - contained patent covenant. Is it a GPLv2 violation?
  - Led to defensive clauses in GPLv3

# SCO vs. IBM

- In 2003, The SCO Group sued IBM for \$1B
  - Alleged misappropriation of trade secrets, breach of contract, unfair competition, tortious interference with The SCO Group's business
  - Claimed IBM took technology from UNIX and added it to Linux to make it suitable for enterprise use
  - Claimed Linux was a derivative of UNIX
  - Claimed they owned UNIX
  - Claimed the open-source community could not possibly have made Linux as good as it was without stealing technology from UNIX
    - IBM countersued alleging copyright infringement et al.
- Also threatened to sue commercial Linux users and asked for licensing fees

# SCO vs. IBM

- **SCO also sued Novell**
  - Novell had bought the UNIX source code in 1993
  - Novell sold the UNIX business to the Santa Cruz Operation (SCO) in 1995
  - Caldera, a Linux distribution company, bought SCO's Unix business in 2001
  - Caldera got a new CEO, Darl McBride, and changed its name to The SCO Group in 2002
  - Court case determined that Novell had not sold the copyright to UNIX, only the right to collect royalties
- **SCO went bankrupt in 2007**
- **SCO v IBM has still not been finalized...**
  - Most of SCO's claims against IBM have been thrown out...



# Other Controversies

- Some key controversies that shaped FOSS
  - GNU/Linux vs Linux
  - The bitkeeper debate
  - Nvidia drivers
  - Sistina and GFS
  - ssh and OpenSSH
  - Mozilla trademark and IceWeasel
  - Cloud computing and FOSS

# Reactions #1

To: tridge@samba.org  
Subject: help installing Samba

Hello, I am having trouble with installing Samba. Can you tell me what I need to do to install it on Solaris?

Regards, xxxxx

# Reactions #2

Dear Andrew,

I just want to say "thanks" to you and the samba-team for the great work you're doing on samba: THANK YOU!

Bye,  
Tom

# Reactions #3

To Andrew Tridgell,

Good day to you, sir. I have a question to ask in regards to the licensing agreement on your rzip compression algorithm.

I've been developing a specialist, open-source archiving format that supports multiple compression algorithm, and I wish to include support for the rzip algorithm. The problem is that my own API that reads the archive is being released under the GNU Lesser General Public License due to a compromise with a fellow programmer on a related project. Do I have permission to include the rzip algorithm under GNU LGPL conditions, and if not, does the use of a standalone rzip decompressor (licensed under the GNU GPL) and temporary files as input, created by the archive's extraction process, fall under the category of "shared data"?

If you could find a moment to answer my query I will be extremely grateful - thank you for your time.

Yours sincerely,

XXXXXXXXXX

# Reactions #4

From: xxxxx  
Date: Fri, 9 Feb 2001 21:07:09 +0900  
To: rusty@rustcorp.com.au  
Subject: Dear Sir,

I have always wanted to flame you, however I never really had any good reason to do so. While your software creations were always egoistical and underdocumented, nothing really pushed the mark, yet. Until today, when I downloaded your "Linux 2.4" call graph utility. So, when is your next absolute-next-to-worthless but oh-so-cool-because-it's-from-rusty-russell piece of software coming out? Why the f\*\*\* don't you focus on documenting things instead of writing useless shit that "takes about 8 hours to run on my mobile pII laptop" or "generates about 180mb of vector postscript". How about another example. I heard you were involved with that atrocity called "netfilter". Sure, it might have nice features and I am still considering using it, but WRITE SOME F\*\*\*ING DOCS before you release complex shit like this for people to use! When I goto that netfilter site, I don't give a flying raging f\*\*\* who submitted 31337 lines of code to whatever f\*\*\*ing netfilter module. That's your egoistical shit, and I could care less about it.

..... (more rants deleted)

... Uhm, that's all I can think of right now.

xxx (name deleted)