Open source software technologies

The enormous widespread and adoption of the Internet played a vital role in connecting people together and created a platform for collaboration and innovation, where people from different background and knowledge can collaboratively work together toward accomplishing certain projects and tasks. Open Source Software (OSS) development is one of these positive outcomes that have been flourishing over the past two decades and producing plethora of free software for people to use and benefit from.
Open source software in government

In order to encourage the open software adoption among the society, several governments in different countries have implemented many open software solutions into their organizations, thus leading others by example and sending a very clear message to other organizations and companies that we should all use and encourage open software development and adoption in various fields and majors. One prime example of OSS adoption by government is the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). VA is the second largest agency of the U.S. federal government, which operates the nation’s largest health care system with more than 1,700 hospitals, clinics, community living centers, and other facilities. VA is one of the largest users in the federal government adopting Open Source Software (OSS) [1]. VA consulted the Intelligent Software Solutions (ISS) Company, which is specialized in providing open source solutions and applications, which provides a viable alternative solution to these inflexible programs that lead to huge cost overruns.

Benefits from OSS

The benefits of implementing OSS are numerous and can summarized as follows:

1. Due to its license free policy and cost effectiveness, deploying an OSS will expedite services’ launching and make it easier solution when compared to non-free closed software solutions.
2. OSS will take advantage of the large number of OSS developers distributed around the globe, which will help in further developing the software and fix any bugs.
3. OSS can be easily customized to the government requirements and specifications.

Open source applications/examples

There are many open source solutions and applications that can be used in the governmental level, some examples of these applications are listed below:

1. Project management software.
   • ProjectLibre, LibrePlan, OpenProject.
2. Webservers and database engine.
   • MySQL database system, Apache webserver.
3. Integrated Library Management Software.
   • Evergreen, Koha, NewGenLib, OpenBiblio.
4. Institution management software such as:
   • LibreOffice office productivity suite.
   • Mifos — Microfinance Institution management software.
5. Anti-virus.
   - ClamAV, ClamWin, Gateway Anti-Virus, Lynis.

   - Multimedia players: VLC, Media Player Classic.
   - Video editing: Avidemux, AviSynth, Blender, Cinelerra, DScaler.
   - Audio editing: Audacity.

References


By: Dr. Ala’ Khalifeh
February 1, 2015 - Amman, Jordan - A group of the Open Source Software Community (OSSCOM) project have conducted a meeting with members of Jordan Open Source Association (JOSA).

Dr. Salem Al Agtash – The General Coordinator of the project, started the meeting by giving an introduction about the idea and the objectives of the EU-funded project (OSSCOM) and its goals in spreading awareness, capacity building, creating new job opportunities and earning resources for young people.

Mr. Ramez Quneibi – The Director of Publication and Communication in the project, emphasized the benefits of using open source software in the business sector and spoke about the role of TAGITI (Talal Abu-Ghazaleh Information Technology International) in educating young people and guiding them on how to use this type of software.

Mr. Issa Mahasneh also spoke about Jordan Open Source Association and its role in promoting for open source software in the Jordanian society, through the establishment of courses and technical awareness lectures.

The attendees agreed on the importance of the community in raising awareness for open source software by focusing on the open source software conference which will be held in September.
10-13-2015 of this year under the patronage of HRH Prince El Hassan Bin Talal of Jordan at the German Jordanian University in Madaba / Jordan.

The conference will be a forum for different experiences and competencies in various areas of software and will hold workshops and meetings on the sidelines of the conference throughout four days.

At the end, everyone was called to participate in the conference by visiting the conference website and filling the registration form to attend the conference.

Project website: http://www.osscom.org
Conference website: http://osscom2015.osscom.org
March 4, 2015 --- Under the patronage of His Royal Highness Prince El Hassan Bin Talal, the international conference on open source software computing (OSSCOM 2015) will be held at the German Jordanian University in Madaba/Jordan from 10-13 September 2015.

The international conference (OSSCOM 2015) is funded by the European Union and supported by IEEE. OSSCOM 2015 is meant to be an international forum for experts, professionals, researchers, and students to promote, share, and discuss Open Source Software (OSS) services, resources, applications, products, and tools.

Researchers and professionals from all over the world are invited to submit proposals for tutorials and workshops as well as papers in areas related to open source software.

Speakers and delegates will represent many different categories and stakeholders from the private and public organizations, universities, and enterprises.

OSSCOM 2015 will focus on the perspective of open source software adoption as alternative solutions to proprietary software and will point out how specialized OSS enterprises can be developed from within universities to integrate creativity, entrepreneurship, and competitiveness and build sustainable OSS industry.

Conference website: http://osscom2015.osscom.org/
4 tips for how to migrate to Drupal

If you have a content-heavy website, then you most definitely have heard of Drupal, an open source content management system (CMS). Maybe you’ve heard also that Drupal is free, secure, and has a wonderful developer network, which means lots of talent to choose from. So, what are you waiting for?

Well, to jump from your current CMS (or lack thereof) and make the transition to Drupal, you want to know much it costs and exacting what that migration entails. First, there are several factors that have to be taken into an account before any Drupal development company can give you a quote. But, while there isn’t an exact price range for migrating to Drupal, you can do some in-house work to keep your migration costs down and prepare your team for the migration, keeping headaches down too.

Here are 4 tips for how to migrate to Drupal on a budget:

1. Have a migratory plan

Cost is the first thing that hits any organization’s migration agenda. Migrating to any CMS will have its own complexities, but the cost of migration largely depends upon the process that’s being undertaken. That’s why you need a plan. Here are some questions to ask to start creating that plan:

- What is the timeline for migration?
- Who will be the individual from your company leading the migration?
- Will the migratory investments be justified?
• How soon do you need to see ROI on the migration?
• What does the minimal viable product look like?
• How necessary is it that all data, metadata, tags, and users are migrated?
• What are migration hiccups that cannot happen?

Answer the above questions before you move forward. When you start working with a Drupal development firm, give them the answers to these questions. They’ll thank you and you’ll save a lot of project management/developer time, which equals money.

2. Audit your site from an organizational perspective

Knowing how your organization works and then communicating that to the development company will save a lot of back and forth questions. Here are items that you need to have ready before you talk to a company about a Drupal migration:

• Identify what assets constitute the source site.
• Identify which parts are to be migrated from source site.
• During the migration, do you require enhancements on the site’s design/functionality, or will you retain the current design?
• Does the target site require integrating with legacy systems that are difficult to work with (such as the third-party sources and customer databases)?
• How will this migration streamline your organization’s workflow?

3. Audit your site from a technical perspective

The sooner you engage IT and your e-commerce team, the better. You’ll also want to include your marketing team on the conversations, because they’re the group that will actually use the product. Here are some key areas to identify from the tech perspective:

• Identify the type of repository the source site uses for storing data.
• Evaluate how the source site structures non-content data.
• Research what tools other companies like yours have used to migrate their data.
• Talk to other companies to identify the best practices for minimal downtime and maximum data access.
• Identify hourly time commitment for IT and marketing to work directly with the migration company.
• Identify if there will be any customer relationship management (CRM) integrations for automation rules.
4. Migrating Drupal versions still takes time

If you’re already on Drupal, great! You will probably still need to work with a migration company, but being on Drupal will save you time and money. However, here are a few things to consider to keep your budget intact:

- Ensure all the modules used are available in an updated version so you can add them to your Drupal installation prior to data migration. If unavailable, you must disable them (from your source site) and redesign (this costs money).
- It’s not possible to skip a Drupal version. For example, if you are currently on Drupal 5 and you are looking to migrate to Drupal 7, you’ll have to first upgrade to Drupal 6 and then to Drupal 7.

And there you have it. You can work with any Drupal migration company on these questions to help your team transition to an open source CMS, within scope and without a headache.

By: Jeffrey Wisard