

# Free Software in Government

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# 0. Roadmap

## Approaching the issues

1. Free Software Basics
2. Regulatory perspective
3. Economic perspective
4. Interoperability
5. Open Standards
6. History of an Open Standard
7. Government
8. Principles for Interoperability
9. Summary

# 1. Free Software



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First publication: January 1989

From Copyright to Freedom:

Copyright allows licensing  
licensing grants Freedom

GNU GPL, X11 License, BSD, MIT, ...



# 1. Clarity matters

**1983:** Free Software

January 1989: "four Freedoms"; DFSG (1997)

**1992:** Libre Software

European Context

**1998:** Open Source

Proposed marketing term for Free Software

**200X:** FOSS ("Free / Open Source Software")

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# 1. Essential

Free Software = freedom to

use

study

modify

distribute

## 2. Regulatory perspective

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**Software is not policy neutral!**

# 3. Economic perspective

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Fraunhofer ISST study:

- > 50% of German industry
- > 80% of German exports

depend on ICT!

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- European Interoperability Framework (EIF)

<http://europa.eu.int/idabc/en/document/3761>

- Interoperable Delivery of European eGovernment Services to public Administrations, Businesses and Citizens (IDABC)

- <http://europa.eu.int/idabc/>

- Free Software observatory to encourage the spread and use of Best Practices in Europe

# 5. Open Standards

## EIF Open Standard Definition

<http://europa.eu.int/idabc/en/document/3761>

- The standard is adopted and will be maintained by a not-for-profit organisation, and its ongoing development occurs on the basis of an open decision-making procedure available to all interested parties (consensus or majority decision etc.).
- The standard has been published and the standard specification document is available either freely or at a nominal charge. It must be permissible to all to copy, distribute, and use it for no fee or at a nominal fee.
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**More standards = less competition!**

# 6. History of an Open Standard...

...from the Workgroup Server Market

Novell was the dominant player, so Microsoft

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Result: EU antitrust case

# 7. Government

Governments must be accessible to **all**, so

- Governments using proprietary technology
  - lose control over decisions and data
  - spread monopoly at cost of local economy
  - force population into similar dependency
  - transfer economic power out of country

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## Conflict:

It is the responsibility of governments  
to protect freedom of competition!

# 8. Principles for Interoperability

## Problems:

- More standards mean less competition
- Proprietary formats cause loss of data control
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## Solutions:

- Choose only the most Open Standard per function
- Mandate use of that Open Standard in government
- Necessity to quantify the lock-in, e.g. Certified Open
  - Certification of interoperability
  - <http://www.certifiedopen.com>

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Ultimately, you want both.



# Contact

## Thank you for your attention!

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