Free Software and eGovernment

all things open

Speaker

- All-Things-Open Projektgruppe
  - REGIO-Messe 2006: MiniBit
  - Linux Neighbours
    - Workshops for beginners
    - Radio program (www.kanalrattefm.de)
  - ISP workshop

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Topics

- Why Free Software?
- Situation in Germany
- Possible Ways to Migrate
- Legal Considerations
- Where do you get support?

Why Free Software?

Progess and Flexibility

- evolution instead of generations
- adaption to your needs
- fast development due to a worldwide community
- proprietary software is often not available for certain languages

Why Free Software?

Independancy from Vendors

- restrictions to certain hardware platforms
- arbitrary pricing
- monopoly positions

Why Free Software?

Costs

- no license fees
- free choice to use unexpensive hardware
- higher costs for UNIX specialists?
- supporting local industry -> local economy
- using and expanding software on your own whatever happens -> open source

Situation in Germany

Why do we change anything at all?

- the IT infrastructure has to be renewed from time to time
- the IT infrastructure has to be adapted:
  - new security policies
  - initiative BundOnline 2005 / DeutschlandOnline
  - to implement eGovernment

Situation in Germany

open source strategy of the Federal Government

- open source competence center of KBSt

- KBSt letter No. 2/2000
  „Open Source Software in the Federal administration“

- migration guide of the Ministry of Interior, v1.0 - Juli/2003

- contract for co-operation with IBM

Situation in Germany

Projects of the Ministry of Interior

Bundesministerium des Innern

- MEDIA@komm Transfer
- Standards for eGovernment
- open source competence center
- xml infopoint

Situation in Germany

European Union

- IDABC: Interoperable Delivery of European eGovernment Services to public Administrations, Business and Citizens
- open source Observatory
- eEurope
- other countries:
  the Netherlands, Great Britain, Scandinavia, Finland, Sweden, Austria, Slovenia

Possible Ways to Migrate

Free Software under Windows

- existent infrastructure can be kept
- exchange of desktop applications
- reusable at later total migration

Possible Ways to Migrate

Free Software on the server backend

- the users keep their system

- best for servers and consolidation of different network standards due to it's compatability and stability

- special applications on the desktop are not affected

samba

OpenLDAP™ http://www.OpenLDAP.org

netatalk

Sun microsystems

Novell Netware

Possible Ways to Migrate

Free Software on Clients and Servers

- maximum flexibility and control
- much effort in training and adaption of the users
- easier in a step-by-step migration
- should be default for new installations

Legal Considerations

Software Patents

- a big lobby tries to push Software Patents in the EU forward

- countries are forced to adapt patent policies -> TRIPS

- Hope: India adopted patent policies, but not Software Patents!

- developers, distributors and users could be charged for Software Patents

Legal Considerations

Legal Considerations

Software Patents

- international vendors are supporting Free Software

- several vendors are offering legal protection

Legal Considerations

Public Procurement Laws

- anything has to have a price

- even self-made installtions have to be charged

- Solutions:
  - municipal companies
  - external service providers

Legal Considerations

Software Distribution among other Authorities

- has to be regulated -> extension for GPL?
- problem: liabilities
- problem: unfair competition
- in Germany allowed by law:
  - distribution allowed only among authorities
  - not the same as GPL (not free for everyone)
  - lobby tries to stop that with court order
  - return of patches to the community is prohibited

Legal Considerations

Maintenance Agreements

- applications just run under the given operating system

- problem: database servers

- experiences:
  - often no operating system is mentioned in the contract
  - support of database is normally limited to data recovery

Where do you get Support?

Experiences of other Authorities

- online platforms like open-government.org
- governmental projects and competence centers
- international partnerships of Cities

Where do you get Support?

Community

- feedback to community (patches, bug reports)
- provide whitepapers of standards and procedures
- international standards would increase the interest of the community -> wider use

Where do you get Support?

Companies

Mandriva

Novell SUSE A NOVELL BUSINESS

IBM

hp invent

Sun microsystems The Network is the Computer™

The End

Thank you for your attention!