Open-Source in an Economic Downturn

John Todd - Asterisk Community Guy
Digium, Inc.
There’s an economic downturn, you say?
So who are you?

You’re Open Source.

If you’re not part of Open Source, you need to worry.

(not open source? Well, you can freak out... a bit.)
MY PREMISE:

OSS is very often equal to or a better solution for business IT needs than commercial alternatives.
2nd PREMISE:

I believe that commercial software will suffer significantly in the next few years, and that Open Source solutions will outperform commercial platforms both in number of seats and quality of implementation in the market.
...but it’s not going to be a picnic for anyone.

Same as usual, except accelerated failure.
What will improve OSS during tough times?

MOTIVATION
FOCUS
RESOURCES
TIMING
MOTIVATION

Cheap!
Fast!
Low Friction!
High-Customization!
Scalability!

BLAH!
BLAH!
Cheap!
Low
Standards-compliant!

Sunday, February 22, 2009
FOCUS
Cost!

Yes!

No!

Water fountain or...?

Woo hoo! VC funding!
FOCUS

Rightness!

Is this the right decision? REALLY?
RESOURCES

Equipment
RESOURCES

People  Time  Equipment
TIMING

Inexpensive Cycles and Storage

“The Cloud”

Mobile Device Power

Pervasive Internet

OSS critical mass

Tools

Community

Worldwide English

Government mandates

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Why is Open Source different?
Commercial software house:
Hires on need, fires on expense.
Open Source software project: 
No hiring... no firing.
Community Stories

Jim DeVito - emergency notification system

“... some vendor supplied solution for a cost upwards of $175,000 ... I created a clandestine asterisk system [for] pagers and blackberries ... currently in the process of getting approved.”

Nitzan Kon - future-nine.com - VoIP carrier

“...we were able to build an all-in-one solution (calling cards, callback, and voip service) with a single product - companies using commercial products would typically need to combine 2-3 products to arrive at the same solution.”
I WANT YOU

FOR OSS DEV