

Enterprise IP Telephony: Open Source or Proprietary

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What is Open Source Software?

- There are a lot more licenses than just GPL(the license Linux is released under), there are 54 official Open Source licenses, For example:
 - BSD License
 - Apache Software License
 - Mozilla Public License
 - Open Source does not necessarily mean cost-free
 - Dual licensing the same piece of software as both Proprietary and Open Source is possible:
 - Asterisk PBX
 - MySQL Database
 - Sendmail
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Open Source Software Restrictions

- Free Redistribution
- Source Code included with distributed software
- Derivative works must be allowed
- No discrimination against any person, group or field of endeavor
- Distribution of the license without restriction
- License cannot be for only one piece of software
- License must not restrict other software it is distributed with or used with
- License must be Technology/Language neutral

Advantages of Proprietary IP Telephony Systems

- Longer on the market
 - Several companies were active in setting first VOIP standards
 - All components guaranteed to work together
 - Almost all existing VOIP hard-phones currently on the market are from Proprietary manufacturers
 - More polished administrative interfaces and documentation
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Disadvantages of Proprietary IP Telephony Systems

- Support, bug-fixes and product life tied to manufacturer
 - Product changes can be made by manufacturer and authorized partners only
 - Total software and licensing costs can be very high per seat, and some are for limited time-frames or limited functionality
 - May not support a specific protocol you need
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Advantages of Open Source IP Telephony Systems

- Anyone can alter the source code as they see fit
 - Some Open Source licenses offer free use even for commercial implementations
 - Many Open Source projects have communities of developers and users that are well-versed in the operation and administration of the software.
 - Open Source Hardware specifications allow for easy development of devices by different companies using the same drivers and protocols(such as Zaptel and PA168)
 - Choice of hundreds of different VOIP phones
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Disadvantages of Open Source IP Telephony Systems

- Documentation is not complete or does not exist
 - Often there is no thorough compatibility testing
 - Product lines not as mature
 - Some projects have very few higher-level people available for consulting
 - No official guarantee of functionality or future fixes (no corporate ownership of the code)
 - It is difficult for outside firms to support heavily customized Open Source systems
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Large Organizations Using Open Source IP Telephony

- Sam Houston State University
 - Switching from Cisco/Nortel to Asterisk
 - Wanted more control over systems and lower cost
 - 1,600 phones moved to Asterisk so far
 - Fonality – PBX system manufacturer
 - Asterisk-based
 - Over 15,000 phones deployed on their systems
 - Vonage – VOIP Phone service provider
 - Uses Asterisk for its voice-mail systems
 - Over one million voice-mail accounts on Asterisk servers
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Open Source IP Telephony might be a good fit for your company if...

- You want to control the code of your system
 - You want deep integration of your IP Telephony components with your existing IT systems
 - You have adequate staff for managing and developing the system or you have reliable outsource companies for such maintenance
 - You want to easily and cheaply add a single extra component to your existing Telephony system:
 - Voicemail
 - Conference Calling center
 - Call center functionality
 - IVR
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You might want to avoid Open Source IP Telephony if...

- Your company has strict programming or application acceptance guidelines
 - You do not have the staff to support the system or you cannot find reliable outsource companies
 - The specific Open Source project you want to use is not in wide production use
 - You are worried about a competitor being able to use the same software you are supporting
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Comparison of two products

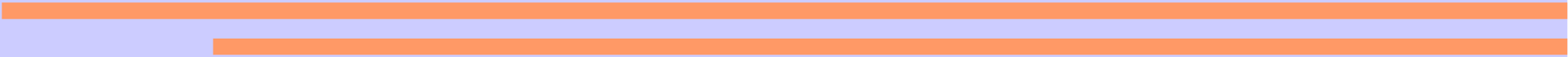
- Asterisk
 - Open Source
 - More protocols
 - Much cheaper cost
 - More control over detail points
 - No per-port licenses
 - More easily scalable
 - Cisco Call Manager
 - Proprietary
 - Much more refined GUI admin and user interface
 - Very well tested with Cisco equipment
 - Very well supported
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The Best Solution for Many Companies...

- Mixed Proprietary with Open Source
 - Ease of phased-in components (switch IVR one month, the switch Voicemail the next month, etc...)
 - Easy integration because most proprietary IP Telephony systems conform to standards such as SIP
 - Take the strengths of each for different functions
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Open Source IP Telephony: Try it, no pressure

- The best part about almost all Open Source IP Telephony components is that they almost always cost nothing to just try them out.



Thank you

This presentation will be available on eflo.net

