Software licenses

… users do not buy, and consequently own software. They pay for a license to use. …

The purpose of software license

- A software license is a legal document granting the user the use of the software subject to some conditions

- AKA end user license agreement (EULA)

- Used to restrict the user (e.g. can't reverse engineer)

- Used to free the publisher of liability (you can't sue us, but we can sue you)

- Used to grant the user freedom

Free license criteria

- A free license allows the user
  - 0: to use the software
  - 1: to analyze and modify it
  - 2: to share it
  - 3: to publish derivative work
- Freedoms 1 and 3 require the availability of source code
- Microsoft calls such a license as an "IPR Impairing License"
  - e.g. GPL, BSD License, Apache Software License
- Alternative: relinquish copyright and release the source code to the public domain

Open Source License Criteria (inspired by Debian)

- Allow royalty-free redistribution
- Include transparent source code
- Allow distribution of derivative work using the same license
- May restrict modifications to patches (not recommended)
- Must not discriminate against any person or group
- Must not discriminate against any field
- Must stand alone e.g. cannot require a separate contract
- Must not be specific to a product
- Must not contaminate other software
- Must be technology-neutral

Activity 5

Read up Open Source License at

www.opensource.org/docs/osd

Copyleft License

- A copyleft license is a free license that requires redistributions and modifications to have the same license
  - Copyleft provides an incentive for additions to free software e.g. GNU C++ (developed by an industry consortium), GNU Objective C (developed by NeXT)
  - Copyleft helps friendly programmers to improve free software
  - Copyleft guarantees the user's freedom
- Some free software licenses are copyleft, however many are not
  - Non-copyleft free software licenses maximize the freedom of the initial recipient (*freedom to* create proprietary software)
  - Copylefted software cannot be hijacked into propriety software
- Example of copyleft licenses: GPL, LGPL, FDL

GNU License

- All GNU licenses are copyleft
- GPL software
  - can be bundled with non-GPL software
  - cannot be incorporated into non-GPL software
  - must be royalty-free
- LGPL is like GPL, but allow linking with non-GPL software
- LGPL is used for free replacements to proprietary libraries
- GFDL is used for software documentation

Activity 6

Gray area: can GPL software be used by non-GPL software through communication (e.g. pipe, shared memory, HTTP)?

Read up "Linking and derived works" section at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/GNU_General_Public_License

Other free licenses

- ## GPL compatible
  - Revised BSD license
  - W3C license
  - Ruby license
- ## GPL-incompatible free licenses
  - Original BSD license (advertising clause)
  - Apache Software License (patent clause)
  - IBM Public License (patent clause)
  - Sun Public License
  - Apple Public Source License Version 2

Non-free licenses (despite the names)

- Open Public License
(must notify initial developer of any modifications)

- University of Utah Public License
(cannot be used commercially)

- Sun Community Source License
(cannot publish modified version)

- SGI Free Software License B
(patent restriction of modified version)

- Microsoft's Shared Source License

Licenses for documentation

- Free:
  - GPL
  - GNU Free Documentation License
  - FreeBSD Documentation License (FDL-compatible)
  - Apple's Common Documentation License (FDL-incompatible)
- Non-free:
  - Open Content License (cannot distribute commercially)
  - Open Directory License
    (re-distribution right is revocable, need to check dmoz.org)

GNU Free Documentation License

- Allows invariant sections in front matter and back matter intended for non-technical contents (e.g. acknowledgement, foreword)

- Requires transparent copy (e.g. XML source, ODF, but not doc)

- Must not be copy restricted (using DRM technology)

- Voted by Debian as non-free
  except those without unremovable invariant sections

Creative Commons: some rights reserved

- Creative Commons Licenses are a set of licenses for works of art all grant the "baseline rights":
  - Attribution (by): give the author or licensor the credits
  - Noncommercial or NonCommercial (nc): only for noncommercial purposes.
  - No Derivative Works or NoDerivs (nd): only verbatim copies of the work, not derivative works based on it.
  - ShareAlike (sa): distribute derivative works only under a license identical to the license that governs the original work.

- Mixing and matching these conditions produces sixteen possible combinations. There are six regularly used.

Free font licenses

- Designer concerns: protection of artistic integrity
  - Derivative works shouldn't be easily misattributed to the original designer
  - Competitors shouldn't be allowed to commoditized the font
- Free community concerns:
  - Embedding of fonts within documents should be allowed
  - Embedding fonts shouldn't contaminate embedding documents
- Free font licenses: Bitstream Vera License (used in GNOME), SIL Open Font License, GPL with font exception

Activity 7

- Read up about font license:
  - http://scripts.sil.org/cms/scripts/page.php?site_id=nrsi&item_id=UNESCO_Font_Lic
  - http://scripts.sil.org/OFL
  - http://unifont.org/fontguide/
  - http://www.typophile.com/node/44344

GPL vs BSD

- GPL is copyleft. BSD is non-copyleft.

- BSD gives more freedom to developers.
  GPL doesn't give power to compromise freedom.

- BSD is convenient for proprietary software developer.
  GPL means improvements are returned to the community.

- BSD is an act of humility.
  GPL is a fight; not fighting for freedom is a weakness.

- GPL is the most popular license in sourceforge

Microsoft EULA: giving up your rights

- You agree not to reverse engineer the product to discover how it works, how it saves data and how It communicates data

- You agree to allow Microsoft and its affiliates to collect and use technical information gathered in any manner

- You agree to accept automatically downloaded patches (upgrades and fixes)

- Patches have no warranty

- You agree to be restricted by DRM

Activity 8

How do we apply license on our software?

Read up:

- http://producingoss.com/en/license-quickstart.html
- http://www.gnu.org/licenses/gpl-howto.html

May be useful reference:

- http://producingoss.com/en/index.html

Activity 9

Do Open Source Software Licenses Have a Purpose?

Do we need licensing for open source software? Do we need the GPL, LGPL, APL and all the other licenses? If your software is free and open source, why bother with a license at all? The software writer owns the copyright so why put users or potential users through the paces of licensing? What exactly is to be gained by creating and enforcing a license for this kind of software?

Currently, there are 64 active licenses listed on the Open Source Initiative's (OSI) website and more are pending approval. 64 licenses is more than just a little ridiculous.

Think around the issue and express your thoughts before you read up the full blog at: http://www.daniweb.com/blogs/entry4629.html