

## Re: Intel policy wrt OSS [was: Re: cvs.openbsd.org: src]

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*Source:* <http://linux.derkeiler.com/Mailing-Lists/Debian/2006-09/msg02966.html>

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- *From:* "Mumia W.." <[paduille.4058.mumia.w@xxxxxxxxxxxxxx](mailto:paduille.4058.mumia.w@xxxxxxxxxxxxxx)>
  - *Date:* Sat, 30 Sep 2006 08:46:32 -0500
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On 09/30/2006 05:43 AM, Maxim Bourmistrov wrote:

On Saturday 30 September 2006 12:28, Jonathan Gray wrote:

On Sat, Sep 30, 2006 at 03:03:57AM -0600, Theo de Raadt wrote:

Regarding Intel wireless chips and distribution rights...

From: "Damien Bergamini"  
<[damien.bergamini@xxxxxxx](mailto:damien.bergamini@xxxxxxx)>  
[...]

Intel's policy with respect to open-source software[1] which has been presented at OSDL (I wasn't there unfortunately) is clear and can be summarized as follow:

- make us look like we're open-source friendly by opening a project on sourceforge.
- give the open-source community the bare minimum so that they can serve as our beta-testers.

Even, they're far less opened that what they pretend to be in their slides:

"If you need to keep IP closed source (for example some whiz-bang algorithm), document the hardware sufficiently that the community can provide their own."

So Intel please tell me where I can find the documentation

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of your Intel PRO/Wireless products so that  
I can improve  
the drivers myself?

Damien

[1] "Balancing Open Source and Corporate  
Objectives"

James Ketrenos, Intel SGG Core Software  
Division,  
ipw2100/2200/3945 project manager, July  
25, 2006

[http://developer.osdl.org/dev/opendrivers/summit2006/james\\_ketrenos.pdf](http://developer.osdl.org/dev/opendrivers/summit2006/james_ketrenos.pdf)

[http://developer.osdl.org/dev/opendrivers/summit2006/james\\_ketrenos.mp3](http://developer.osdl.org/dev/opendrivers/summit2006/james_ketrenos.mp3)

And yes, it was in the "Open Drivers"  
summit!

```
| CVSROOT: /cvs
| Module name: src
| Changes by: jsg@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx
2006/09/29 21:02:45
|| Modified files:
| share/man/man4 : wpi.4 iwi.4 ipw.4 || Log
message:
| We have again tried to talk to Intel about
being able
| to redistribute firmware and they are being
totally
| unhelpful.
|| If you'd like to tell Intel how screwed up
this
| situation is, you should mail
majid.awad@xxxxxxxxxxx
```

In the past, our users have shown that they can help us  
convince  
vendors to do the right thing. They have shown vendors the  
path  
towards freeing up many pieces of documentation or  
granting firmware  
distribution rights. This has helped with many vendors, most  
of them  
quite large.

Before we ask a vendor, we have already lost (ie. the device  
does not  
work). When a vendor says no, we have lost nothing further  
— there  
is no way we can lose further than having the device not  
work. We can

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only win, and then the device works. So there is no point in giving up until we win back the rights to write software for the hardware that we have purchased.

These vendors often want a quiet private discussion, because in a quiet private discussion they can continue to dismiss the requests and in the end do absolutely nothing. They do not want a noisy public discussion, because then they look bad. But they **DESERVE TO LOOK BAD**, because they are being bad to those who bought their hardware!

In this particular case, we would like more documentation for the Intel wireless chips. Damien has already written drivers that make the devices work quite well... but there are still bugs, since all of this is based on reverse engineering efforts. The drivers could be better. Intel stands in the way of your devices working as well as they should.

Wireless devices from most other vendors now work significantly better in the \*BSD projects than the Intel drivers. That is because almost all the other vendors have been far more open than Intel, and because Damien (and friends) have worked very hard to do their best. Quite frankly, Intel has been a royal pain in the ass. Not to us, but to people who bought their devices.

We would also like Intel to GRANT us distribution rights for the binary firmwares of their 3 wireless chipsets. Quite frankly we don't care what their reasons are, because their reasons must be lies according to the slides Intel presented at a conference.

Intel also must grant these rights freely (we will not sign away our

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users rights, and we will not sign away our own rights --  
that is what  
some of the Linux vendors do when they ship Intel  
firmwares). Intel  
must do this firmware grant in the same way that Adaptec,  
Atmel,  
Broadcom, Cirrus Logic, Cyclades, QLogic, Ralink, and LSI  
and lots of  
other companies have granted distribution firmware to be  
used by  
others. We do not believe that Intel is not special enough that  
they  
can take people's money and their rights.

(By the way, Intel already provides some other firmwares for  
other  
chips, with the correct distribution terms... those firmwares  
being  
CRITICAL BUG FIXES for very broken 100mbit ethernet  
chips that they  
shipped in the millions. That is why we know that Intel's  
legal  
department already knows how to release firmware images  
with a BSD  
license, thus permitting distribution).

Until Intel releases these things, even their conference  
presentations  
make them total liars -- and that specifically means James  
Ketrenos.  
He has no right to tell such lies at an Open Source  
conference.  
People who release full code are open source -- Intel is not,  
and  
since James does not release \*all the pieces that people  
need\* into  
the Open Source Community, James is not Open Source, and  
therefore  
James is a big fat liar. James and Intel only release the partial  
fragments that they feel will make them look "Open".

(To quote a friend,  
Some asshole said he was "open",  
but he was only open for business.

By withholding, Intel is being an Open Source fraud.

Majid Awad at Intel has stated to developers that he is the  
current  
person who is responsible for this particular area. So go  
ahead, let

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him know how you feel about this.

Again, his email address is majid.awad@xxxxxxxxxx

So let's win back the rights to run the hardware we purchased.

Please feel free to let other open source communities know about this matter. Thank you.

We have been trying to make this happen for YEARS, and the situation is rapidly getting worse not better.

<http://marc.theaimsgroup.com/?l=openbsd-misc&m=109994542424009&w=2>

These issues affects ALL open operating systems, tell Intel you want them to change their policies, tell them you aren't happy. It's your money why should they get to screw you around by not supporting their products?

Why don't ignore them and don't buy their products?

I have already a list of vendors I'm not buying products from anymore, like Adaptec.

I'm also encouraging people to buy products from OpenSource-friendly vendors, like RaLink.

//Maxim

But what do you do when there are no such vendors? What happens when the one OS-friendly vendor for the hardware you need makes only hardware that's incompatible with your system?

I'm beginning to think that the long-term survivability of OSS depends upon the OSS movement spawning an Open Hardware Organization (OHO). The OHO would /create/ hardware that conforms to open standards. It would provide options for OSS users that are not serviced at all by the commercial hardware vendors.

As Microsoft's influence with hardware vendors goes from strength to strength, an OHO may become the only option for OSS's survival. IOW, we've got to start creating our own hardware.

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