

Re: Why is Fedora not a Free GNU/Linux distributions?

Source: <http://linux.derkeiler.com/Mailing-Lists/Fedora/2008-07/msg02891.html>

- *From:* Thomas Cameron <thomas.cameron@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx>
 - *Date:* Mon, 21 Jul 2008 22:23:09 -0500
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On Mon, 2008-07-21 at 04:35 -0300, Alexandre Oliva wrote:

The OSS movement cares about popularity and convenience, so an essential part of this movement is to accept, endorse and promote the use of software that denies users their freedoms, when that is convenient and can lure in more users.

That is complete and utter CRAP.

<http://www.opensource.org/docs/osd> clearly contradicts that.

From <http://www.gnu.org/philosophy/free-sw.html>:

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Freedom 0 is the freedom to run the program, for any purpose.

Freedom 1 is the freedom to study how the program works, and adapt it to your needs. Access to the source code is a precondition for this.

Freedom 2 is the freedom to redistribute copies so you can help your neighbor.

Freedom 3 is the freedom to improve the program, and release your improvements to the public, so that the whole community benefits. Access to the source code is a precondition for this.
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Those same freedoms are protected by [opensource.org](http://www.opensource.org)'s requirements. While there is not a one-to-one mapping, FSF's freedom 0 is covered by OSI's rules 1, 5, 6, 8, 9 and 10. FSF's freedom 1 is covered by OSI's rules 2, 3 and 4. FSF's freedom 2 is covered by OSI's rules 2,3 and 4. FSF's freedom 3 is covered by at least OSI's rule 3.

Don't take my word for it, read it yourself:

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1. Free Redistribution

The license shall not restrict any party from selling or giving away the software as a component of an aggregate software distribution containing programs from several different sources. The license shall not require a royalty or other fee for such sale.

2. Source Code

The program must include source code, and must allow distribution in source code as well as compiled form. Where some form of a product is not distributed with source code, there must be a well-publicized means of obtaining the source code for no more than a reasonable reproduction cost preferably, downloading via the Internet without charge. The source code must be the preferred form in which a programmer would modify the program. Deliberately obfuscated source code is not allowed. Intermediate forms such as the output of a preprocessor or translator are not allowed.

3. Derived Works

The license must allow modifications and derived works, and must allow them to be distributed under the same terms as the license of the original software.

4. Integrity of The Author's Source Code

The license may restrict source-code from being distributed in modified form only if the license allows the distribution of "patch files" with the source code for the purpose of modifying the program at build time. The license must explicitly permit distribution of software built from modified source code. The license may require derived works to carry a different name or version number from the original software.

5. No Discrimination Against Persons or Groups

The license must not discriminate against any person or group of persons.

6. No Discrimination Against Fields of Endeavor

The license must not restrict anyone from making use of the program in a specific field of endeavor. For example, it may not restrict the program from being used in a business, or from being used for genetic research.

7. Distribution of License

The rights attached to the program must apply to all to whom the program is redistributed without the need for execution of an additional license by those parties.

8. License Must Not Be Specific to a Product

The rights attached to the program must not depend on the program's being part of a particular software distribution. If the program is extracted from that distribution and used or distributed within the terms of the program's license, all parties to whom the program is redistributed should have the same rights as those that are granted in conjunction with the original software distribution.

9. License Must Not Restrict Other Software

The license must not place restrictions on other software that is distributed along with the licensed software. For example, the license must not insist that all other programs distributed on the same medium must be open-source software.

10. License Must Be Technology-Neutral

No provision of the license may be predicated on any individual technology or style of interface.

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Open Source software as defined opensource.org clearly also meets the requirements of the four freedoms that the FSF espouses.

I swear, this reminds me of the Sunni and the Shi'a or the Catholics and the Protestants. Each pair believes in fundamentally the same thing but the extremists in each group is convinced the other is damned and should be fought. It's ludicrous. It is damaging, and it's counter-productive.

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Thomas

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