

## Re: [SLE] Closed Source on Linux?

**Source:** <http://linux.derkeiler.com/Mailing-Lists/SuSE/2005-11/2403.html>

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**From:** Steven T. Hatton ([hattons\\_at\\_globalsymmetry.com](mailto:hattons_at_globalsymmetry.com))

**Date:** 11/17/05

To: [suse-linux-e@suse.com](mailto:suse-linux-e@suse.com)

Date: Thu, 17 Nov 2005 15:04:16 -0500

On Thursday 17 November 2005 02:35 pm, Randall R Schulz wrote:

> *Steven,*

>

> *On Thursday 17 November 2005 10:53, Steven T. Hatton wrote:*

> > ...

> >

> > *Personally, I don't mind paying Wolfram Research to produce a  
> > powerful product, and feed a handful of talented Mathematicians. The  
> > value WRI returns to the world is far in excess of the money paid for  
> > their products.*

>

> *Wolfram (the man) is an egotistical*

I have that impression. I don't believe his contributions to science are quite as unique as he would like to believe. He should certainly tip his hat to Douglas R. Hofstadter. Nonetheless, Mathematica is an amazing product. I really don't know if any of the other computer algebra systems are anything like it. He has full room to be proud of his accomplishments.

> *tyrant who mistreats, abuses and exploits the programmers and mathematicians  
> he hires.*

I'm composing an email right now to one of his programmer/mathematicians. I'm not about to ask for a comment on that subject, but I believe the man is fairly happy to be working for Wolfram (both the company, and the man).

> *Switch to an alternative. Putting money in his pocket is far worse than  
> feeding Billy boy or any of his hired guns.*

Can you provide substance to this accusation? All human beings have faults. One, or even a few episodes of bad behavior do not a tyrant make. I may be knocking on his door soon.

WRI have been very generous to me in the past, and I have no reason to complain about their business practices.

> > *What do others think about the place of closed source, proprietary*

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- > > *software running on Linux?*
- >
- > *There's nothing wrong with it (not all classes of software have*
- > *economics that will support open source, though I'm not claiming that's*
- > *the case for symbolic and / or numeric mathematics packages).*

There are FOSS products in these fields. I haven't seen a "Mathematica" among them.

- > *But as*
- > *with all commercial endeavors, you should consider precisely what and*
- > *whom you're supporting by patronizing any particular business.*

I do consider such things.

- > *By the way, the same goes for Novell, of course. So far, I'm happy to*
- > *support them, but it's by no means any kind of unconditional love*
- > *thing.*

I assume you have concluded that I share your position on this. I have no reason to complain about my dealings with Novell over the years. That is, until they took a swipe at the KDE. I'm dead serious when I say that much of my reason for supporting the KDE for the past 7 years (IIRC) is a direct result of my experience with Novell products in the Windows NT environment. When I saw that Novell execs were double talking about remaining behind KDE development, well...

Steven

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