Widening the picture of the GNU Project's goals

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GNU40
Biel/Bienne, 2023-09-27

About me

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A very short talk

The GNU Project's goals

- Create a completely free operating system
- Promote the ideals of free software

So what is the situation today?

The good

- Free software exists for virtually every purpose, including computationally heavy tasks.

- Unjust treatment of users coming from proprietary software continues to push people towards free software.

- Libre social networks exist and are rapidly growing (Fediverse).

- Objectively great quality of software with the support of a community full of passionate people.

The bad

- Bleeding edge technology usually comes from/to proprietary software first.

- Modern, 100% freedom-respecting hardware is non-existent.

- No regulatory ban in sight for software patents, DRM, etc.

- Free software still misunderstood and unknown to the general public.

Limits of high-level programming

- High-level programming should continue to be the core activity of the GNU Project.

- However, high-level programming alone will not lead to the goal of a free technological society.

We are nowhere near making free software the default: where the user only uses free software in their everyday life

What is default today

- Automatically restrictive copyright terms
- Devices full of proprietary software
- Proprietary social networks

There are two approaches

- Try to convince people to switch to free software

- Make free software the default

Various levels of default

- Install a free operating system for grandparents
- Achieve industry-standard status for free software applications
- Require software funded by the public to be free (FSFE's *Public Money, Public Code!*)
- Ban proprietary software

What the default does

- Imposes the ideology of the people in power who determine the default

- Does not guarantee that the user understands the ideology behind the default

The difference is that free software by default empowers users to be active

Current status of the free software community

- Intentional community: still seen as an alternative lifestyle, not the default (default ≠ intentional)

- (Temporary) Autonomous Zone: a space which eludes established structures of control

- Still depending on structures that are antithetical to free software (e.g., processor chip oligopoly)

Thanks and let's discuss!