The sustainability of and metrics for success in open source projects

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OPENCOLLAB
About OPENCOLLAB

• South African Software development company; focus on education (since 1999)
• Sakai Learning management – Involved since 2006. *Community open source*
• Kuali ERP involved since mid-2010. *Community open source (some commercial, SaaS)*
• Jaspersoft reporting, since 2009. *Commercial open source*
  • …Also some proprietary products…
Only partner in SA
View on metrics

Success, stability and governance of the implementation

Success, stability and governance of the provider
Open source in nature

Commensalism is a relationship among organisms in which one organism benefits while the other organism is neither benefited nor harmed. The commensal benefits the host does not benefit.

Open Source has been working in nature for millennia: Some implementers do not contribute back to the community but they do not cause any harm.
Open source in nature

In Open Source we should always strive towards Mutualism. It makes the community stronger and benefits your cause in the long run.

Mutualism is an interaction between species in which both benefit.
Not all software is equal

An open source calculator tool vs. Libre Office vs. Moodle vs. DSpace vs. ERP solutions vs. JasperSoft

Different metrics may apply, but the end result stays the same: a satisfactory user experience that justifies the cost and effort of the adoption and maintenance over the lifetime of the use of the product.
Key concerns on sustainability

- Governance
- Reliability
- Support

PC World, April 17, 2013, “Open Source software is taking over the world, says survey”
Decisions @ implementer

- Total cost of ownership
- Features
- Skills
- Appetite for risk - sometimes
- Change management
Metrics @ provider

• Funding
  – Partners and members
  – Enterprise and professional products have price tags

• Reliability
  – Releases and release schedules
  – Quality assurance standards

• Adoptions/Implementations

• Governance

• Innovation

• Architecture
  – Modular
  – Industry standards

• Support & Collaboration
In summary

- Implementing ERP open source takes longer than LMS
- Institutional strategy will determine intent - *Mutualism* vs. *Commensalism*
- First adopters may bear more risk
- Contracts
- You
  - can get a head start at potentially lower cost
  - can contribute and share
  - can help make the rules
  - You and IP?
Kuali OLE

- Designed by and for academic and research libraries
- Major milestones and releases since 2011
- Andrew W. Mellon Foundation grant and partner institution funding
- 10 unique global partners
- Adopter, partner, commercial support
OLE – community governance
Last bit about OC

- BBBEE level 2 compliant
- Offices in Cape Town and Pretoria
- Footprint in Kenya
- Team of 35-40
Questions

Thank You

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Reference and more reading:
http://libres.uncg.edu/ir/uncg/f/P_Palvia_Factors_.pdf