

Re: Open Source vs. Commercial

Source:

<http://coding.derkeiler.com/Archive/Delphi/borland.public.delphi.non-technical/2005-06/msg01597.html>

- *From:* "Wayne Niddery [TeamB]" <wniddery@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx>
 - *Date:* Sun, 5 Jun 2005 17:28:08 -0400
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Captain Jake wrote:

>>

> You are confusing politics and economics.

No, I'm **assuming** the politics – free choice in the work we do – and dealing with the economics within that.

- > I'm not interested in
- > denying anybody their right to do what they want with their time. In
- > fact, I'm not addressing rights at all. I'm pointing out that "free"
- > software is not free, it does come at a cost. The time used to
- > produce FOSS is time that is not available for those individuals to
- > use for something else.

Which means you are divorcing theory from reality – which is exactly the same error as the "perfect competition" theory – an attempt to get the results of a system that **cannot** exist in reality. You cannot count as a loss something that does not exist – the time that people **theoretically could** give to the most productive uses (as though they were drone bees) but choose not to in reality. One of the most widely accepted measures of a rising standard of living (which has to be a result of more extensive and efficient allocation of resources) is precisely the amount of leisure time we are able to take for ourselves. It cannot be counted both ways – a measure of both progress **and** inefficiency.

- > Furthermore, the impact of free software on
- > long-term innovation and salaries IS a negative externality that
- > makes this my business, your business, and the business of everyone
- > interested in making a living from writing software. That externality
- > is a cost that demonstrates that resources are NOT being optimally
- > allocated.

Again only assuming the above impractical theory. If such people were not creating FOSS, they would be doing something else, in virtually all cases, that was also not contributing to the economy in a productive way – so again there is nothing that can be considered a loss here. The difference is that, in writing such software, they are **in fact being productive**. That they choose not to be paid in monetary form is irrelevant to whether their work

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has *value* to others. Another measure of progress is in the lowering of costs of production – this is considered a good thing in all normal cases, but yet you claim a cost of \$0 for some component of production magically becomes bad and makes things more *inefficient* – that is a contradiction that cannot stand in reality.

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Wayne Niddery – Logic Fundamentals, Inc. (www.logicfundamentals.com)
RADBooks: <http://www.logicfundamentals.com/RADBooks.html>
"The moment the idea is admitted into society that property is not as sacred as the laws of God and there is not a force of law and public justice to protect it, anarchy and tyranny commence." – John Adams

- **Follow-Ups:**

- ◆ **Re: Open Source vs. Commercial**
 - ◇ From: Nick Hodges [TeamB]

- **References:**

- ◆ **Open Source vs. Commercial**
 - ◇ From: Eyal
- ◆ **Re: Open Source vs. Commercial**
 - ◇ From: Captain Jake
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