

Re: Problem with MPL

Source:

<http://coding.derkeiler.com/Archive/Delphi/borland.public.delphi.non-technical/2007-11/msg02009.html>

- *From:* Marco van de Voort <marcov@xxxxxxxx>
 - *Date:* 11 Nov 2007 06:26:37 -0700
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On 2007-11-11, Peter Morris <support@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx> wrote:

Does the LGPL allow developers to compile the source directly into their app without having to distribute their app source?

The answer is somewhat gray, and advocatists arguments and real world practice differ. If you are really interested in that read the part between parenthesis. If not, assume NO, and GOTO after brackets

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All from being in Open Source circles for years, and own interpretations. I'm not a lawyer. It hopefully does give an impression of what to look for if interested

GNU view: library must be exchangeable. So this means relinking with newer version must be possible. Besides dynamic linking there is the pretty useless in practice method of distributing everything in object code (for relinking) and linkeditors like on old IBM systems.

Practical view: no, but this rule is dodged or flat-out ignored on an immense scale. Specially on Windows.

Gray area: afaik there is a clause that says the relinking clause is only active when it is reasonably possible. The opinion of what is reasonable wildly differs, and there is afaik no case law yet.

So in short this is a same kind of minefield as the GPL-MPL incompatibility we are also not interested in, but we simply want to defuse it, and stop the incessant discussions, like this one. Luckily, in this case we had a bit more foresight, and were able to defuse it before it really started.

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Which is why Free Pascal/Lazarus avoids it all together by using (L)GPL-with-exception. For that it is definitely allowed. Note that the (L) is between parenthesis, since the "exception" grants much more freedom (in the usable for commercial development sense) than the (L), which makes the L-or-not issue moot. Sometimes it is also named "(FPC) modified GPL". (which

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strictly was an older wording of the same thing, later updated to official GNU legalese)

The exception is quoted earlier, but is roughly an allowing of linking the library without further ado if the licenses of the other components are met.

The original wording was something like "The FPC team gives you the permission to link this library to other libraries regardless of their license".

So I iterate again, FPC/Lazarus are no vigilante GNU license freaks. We are simply stuck with it, and try to find a route to co-exist with the other Open Source (Object) Pascal codebases. Unfortunately this particular case requires some help from the other side from time to time.

All Free Pascal library source comes under this license (or is dual licensed to it with MPL, like several Jedi projects), exactly because the same reasons you name for choosing the MPL. Just keep in mind there was no MPL when this all was started. 1993–1994 pretty much was the Antique as far as Open Source goes.

Luckily the MPL problem is pretty much limited to shipping Lazarus versions with these components preinstalled. (it is no GPL violation to let the user do it themselves). So this whole discussion is not to get our hands on the sourcecode, but simply to avoid some stupid minefields in licensing.

(parenthesis again, not interesting for you,

The only major problem could be the JVCL. Afaik JVCL is also a patchwork of many contributors without explicit signing over the rights to some foundation(which would allow the foundation to relicense), thus both Lazarus and JVCL can't relicense. Which is a pity, since that seems to exclude easy windows installers with JVCL components preinstalled.

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