

Beyond



Free Software today and tomorrow

Georg Greve

greve@fsfeurope.org

Free Software Foundation Europe

640K ought to be enough

An old and honorable tradition

"I have traveled the length and breadth of this country and talked with the best people, and I can assure you that data processing is a fad that won't last out the year."

-- Editor in charge of business books for Prentice Hall, 1957

640K ought to be enough

An old and honorable tradition

"There is no reason anyone would want a computer in their home."

-- Ken Olson, president, chairman and founder of Digital Equipment Corporation (DEC), 1977

...so let me now add my own.

almost there: GPLv3

- Most changes uncontroversial
- Controversial changes:
 - **Software patents**
Main controversy in language & fine tuning
 - **Digital Restrictions Management (DRM)**
Controversy based on misunderstanding
Controversy in principle
- Status:
 - **slight delay (MS-Novell)**
 - **Next draft might be last**
- Participate @ <http://gp1v3.fsf.org>

Earthquakes? Rain of fire?

What happens when GPLv3 is out?

- Many scenarios and theories, but:

"In theory there is no difference between practice and theory. In practice there is."

-- Yogi Berra

- My personal trend theory:
 - **Adoption: constructively in several waves**
 - Developers: like to argue, but pragmatic
 - Companies: will find it reasonable & solid

Future legal focus: Structural

Legal maintainability

- Ability to relicence
- Ability to enforce licence
- Maintain clean legal status

e.g. FSFE's Freedom Task Force (FTF)

- Expert teams for law and technology
- full-time coordinator
 - Licensing education
 - Fiduciary services
 - Licence enforcement

Miyamoto Musashi (1584-1645)



The right time

Microsoft Vista is shipping

"If Vista's price, especially for Europeans, is its most eye-popping feature, its second most eye-popping feature is the Aqua Aero desktop interface. ... Indeed, Aero looks nearly as good as KDE, although it demands about three times the system resources."

-- Thomas C Greene, The Register
<http://theregister.co.uk/2007/02/14>

Microsoft under pressure

- Vista technologically weak, expensive
- "main feature" DRM increasingly unpopular

"This antitrust thing will blow over."

-- Bill Gates, 1995

- EC antitrust work gaining momentum

Free Software to the desktop!

The right action

The global push for Open Standards

"One person's RAND is another person's bankruptcy"

-- Susy Struble, Sun Microsystems

- various Open Standard Definitions
- possible convergence upon
 - publicly documented and accessible
 - freely implementable
 - maintained by independent standard org
 - Free Software reference implementation?

Open Standard Convergence

- Open Standards central for governmental use
- Struggle between ODF and OpenXML
 - Subvertive attack on definition

This can be our game

- Discussions in various fora (IGF & Co)
- Push for Open Standard legislation
- Free Software developers:

Support Open Standards!

Pick your quote – choice 1

"I don't know what you mean. Vista's had an incredible reception... The reviews have been fantastic. This is a big, big advance in the Windows platform. It's the world's most used piece of software... Overall, the reliability feedback has been well better than we expected."

-- Bill Gates to Reuters, 2007

Pick your quote – choice 2

"Sandwiched between Vista problems, antitrust issues and the global push for Open Standards, Microsoft will increasingly lose the initiative. Free Software will start to cut into the desktop monopoly from which Microsoft has previously exerted force to conquer neighboring markets. Eventually Microsoft will be forced to fundamentally rethink its business model in favor of Free Software."

-- Georg Greve, keynote@FOSDEM, 2007

Turning point 2007

We can make that choice this year!

Thank you for your attention!

- Free Software Foundation Europe:
<http://fsfeurope.org>
- Get involved, defend your freedom:
<http://www.fsfe.org>
- Contact:
<mailto:greve@fsfeurope.org>