FOSS4G 2008

OSGeo[1] – Open Source Geospatial

- Open Source Development
- Free Software Licensing
- FOSS Business Models
- Common Pitfalls when talking FOSS Business
- OSGeo – A Community of Communities
- The OSGeo Business Proposition

[1] ...in a nutshell. For full coverage please go to

http://wiki.osgeo.org/wiki/Category:Advocacy
http://www.opensource.org and
http://www.sfs.org

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Open Source Development

- Open Source is a development methodology that aims at making **all** processes transparent.

- One central paradigm is to "Publish Early and Release Often". This will help to "build"[1] a community of high interaction.

- Development is coordinated through roles. Roles must be managed by a clear governance model.

- Good Open Source projects are highly organized and trunk commit access is restricted to well known developers.

- Public code repositories, bug and issue trackers, mailing lists ,etc. are essential to "grow"[1] professional communities.

[1] communities cannot be "built", "managed" or "grown". They need to grow by themselves. Open Source project management can only facilitate and enable communities.

Free Software Licensing

- Free Software is a software licensing model
- Open Source is a precondition to Free Software
- Different tastes of Free and Open Source licenses can be more restrictive or relaxed
- Most Free and Open Source Software licenses specify user's rights to:

1. run any number of copies of the software
2. pass on copies of the software including the license and copyright notice
3. look into the code, understand it and modify it to suit one's needs
4. pass on modified versions of the code

FOSS

For most practical purposes Free Software and Open Source can be used synonymously in the acronym FOSS.

Free and **Open Source Software**

There is a (probably unintended) symbolism in this term conveying that Free Software licenses surround and thus protect Open Source development from becoming proprietary.

Copyright, Licenses and the Copyleft Myth

FOSS licenses protect software from becoming proprietary. The legal background of the strong protection of the GNU GPL is straight forward:

> *"To copyleft a program, we first state that it is copyrighted; then we add distribution terms, which are a legal instrument that gives everyone the rights to use, modify, and redistribute the program's code or any program derived from it but only if the distribution terms are unchanged.*
> *Thus, the code and the freedoms become legally inseparable."* [1]

Copyleft is not a virus but a vaccination.

[1] from: http://www.fsf.org/licensing/essays/copyleft.html

Atoms, Matter and Crystallized Thought

Hardware	Software
If hardware (or any physical good) is sold (given away) the supplier suffers a loss of that good that can be compensated by payment.	If a copy of a software "product" is given away, the original is still there. The supplier suffers no physical loss of the "product" because it is only a copy.
If hardware brakes, it becomes useless.	Software cannot brake in this sense. A data carrier can be scratched (for example a CD) but the original of the software is not affected [1].
Hardware cannot be duplicated. Every copy needs the same amount of raw material and energy as any other. Copies of complex hardware will always be imperfect, not digital duplicates.	Software can be duplicated. Each successful copy of a software product is an identical reproduction of the original (the "raw material" is the source code, it does not run out).
Hardware can wear, rust, or decay, and will eventually break and cease to function.	Software does not wear down, rust, decay or break. It may fall out of use, but it never loses its functionality.

from: http://wiki.osgeo.org/index.php/Software

FOSS Business Models

Using Free and Open Source Software in commercial context is perfectly legal and encouraged. Revenue comes from:

- Consultation
- Installation
- Customization
- Maintenance

- Support
- Training
- Implementation
- Generic Development

95% of IT revenue are generated by providing services around software. Only 5% of revenue is generated through proprietary software usage license fees.

Business outside and inside of FOSS

FOSS is nowadays embraced by all larger businesses and enterprises but with different focus, intensity, levels of understanding and strategies:

- IBM
- Microsoft
- Sun Microsystems
- Oracle

- Autodesk
- E.S.R.I.
- WhereGroup
- Frank Warmerdam

Business models range from blunt opposition (M$), mild ignorance (ESRI), taking away (Oracle), hybrid (IBM), to fully embracing all benefits offered by FOSS (FrankW).

Common Pitfalls when Talking about FOSS

- Free Software is not anti-business. *Instead, Free Software is a business enabler as it improves availability and dissemination of code and software.*

- Free Software is not unlicensed software. *Instead, it is a well defined licensing model.*

- Open Source does not mean that anybody can hack the release code. *Instead, it has well defined and transparent governance processes and organization.*

- Open Source is not insecure. *Instead it allows for highest security through process transparency.*

OSGeo
Your Open Source Compass

The Open Source Geospatial Foundation

- OSGeo is a non-profit organization dedicated at promoting and furthering Free and Open Source Software for Geospatial Technology and Users

- OSGeo provides for organizational, legal and financial support in a long term perspective

- OSGeo is global and transparently governed

- OSGeo is a Community of Communities:

  - ➢ Software Projects
  - ➢ Spatial Data Projects
  - ➢ Education and Research

http://wiki.osgeo.org

Ecosystem of Networks

Communication Economics

Community of Communities

![OSGeo - Your Open Source Compass]

Community of Communities

Visit: **http://www.osgeo.org**

Collaborate: **http://wiki.osgeo.org**

Discuss:
http://lists.osgeo.org/mailman/listinfo

Develop: **http://svn.osgeo.org/**

Track Issues: **http://trac.osgeo.org/**

Demo: **http://www.telsacience.org/**
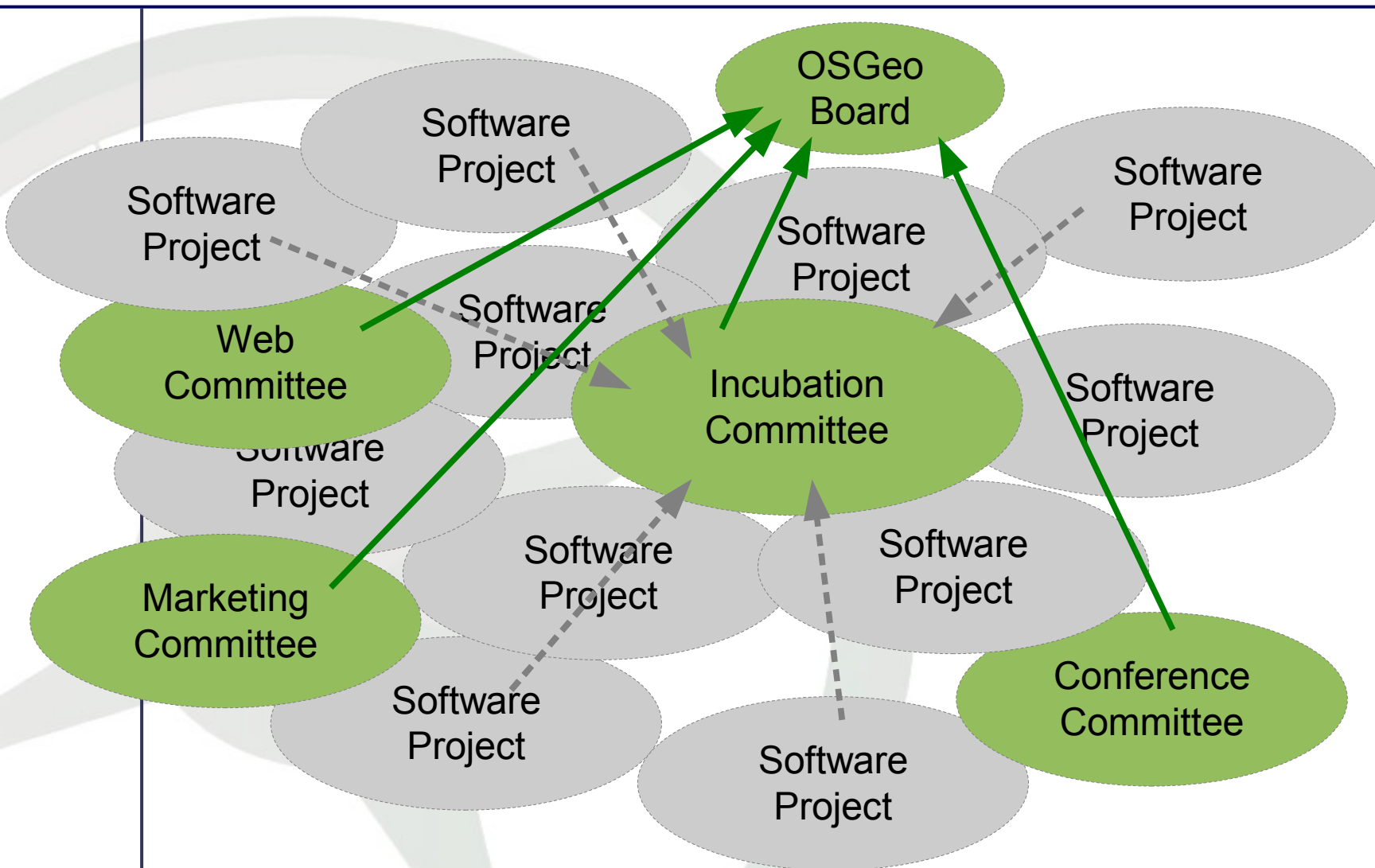
Coase's Law and The Business Web [1]

- A firm will tend to expand until the costs of organizing an extra transaction within the firm become equal with the costs of carrying out the same transaction on the open market.

- As long as it is cheaper to perform a transaction inside your firm, keep it there.

- But if it is cheaper to go to the market place, do not try to do it internally.

There is a new entity that reduces the transaction cost to almost nothing. It is the Business-Web, clusters of firms that come together over the internet. Each company retains its identity but they function together.

[1] From http://www.wikinomics.com/book/

The Business Proposition

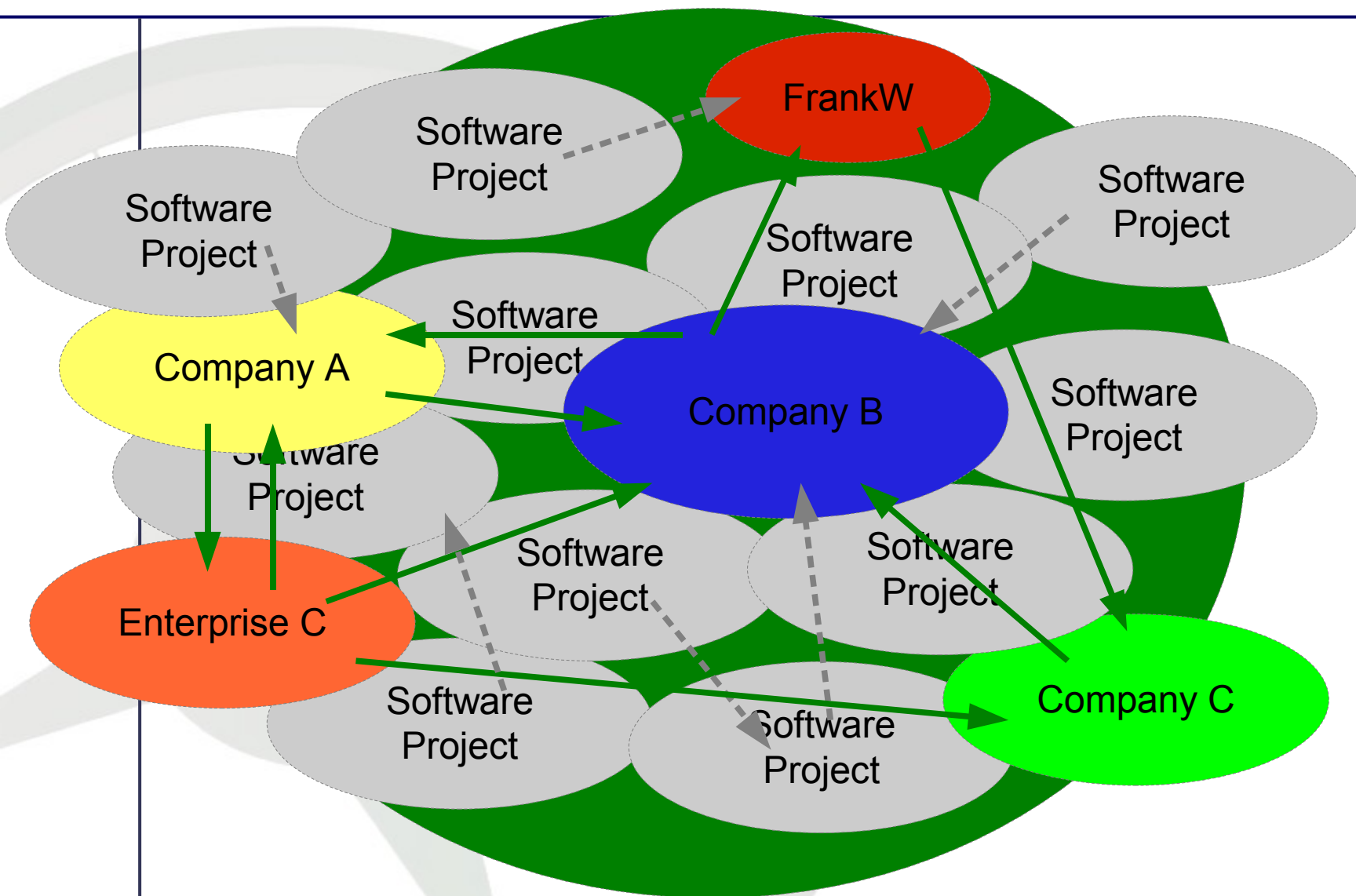Business

Business

Business

Business

OSGeo

Business

We are a little freaky, but we know how to connect.

OSGeo and Commercial Businesses

- OSGeo operates a service provider directory.
http://www.osgeo.org/search_profile
- The Wiki contains advocacy information.
http://wiki.osgeo.org/wiki/Category:Advocacy
- Appearances at trade shows, conferences and other events spread word and promote sponsors.
http://wiki.osgeo.org/wiki/Category:Events
- With its considerable size, mature projects and stable history the foundation has built a good reputation. And you can talk to OSGeo:

What can we do for you today?

![OSGeo - Your Open Source Compass]

OSGeo's Emerging Business Web

OSGeo for Businesses

- OSGeo has a process to evaluate legal, governance and quality of software projects.

- OSGeo has users, developer and service provider communities.

- OSGeo has software that can be used to implement government policies (INSPIRE...).

- OSGeo organizes software sprints for SME developers.

- OSGeo operates the Open Source Park at the Intergeo trade show.

Discussion

Arnulf Christl
(President OSGeo)

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Your Open Source Compass

Author: arnulf@osgeo.org