



WollMux becoming an OSOR partner

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The spoken word prevails.

Dear Ladies and gentlemen,

I'm very pleased to be with you today at the official launch of the Open Source Observatory and Repository. Our WollMux was the first project at OSOR and during the next minutes I will try to show you how and why we became an OSOR partner.

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At first some words about the City of Munich. Here you can see some nice impressions from our city in the southern part of Germany. I'm sure you know the Oktoberfest and the Allianz Arena, home of Germany's famous soccer club FC Bayern Munich. Well, Munich has about 1.3 million citizens and is the 12th largest City of the European Union. And after the next few minutes you will also know what WollMux means and that it's not a dangerous animal.

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I will talk about four topics today, at first some information about our LiMux project and after that let's look at the WollMux in detail. Thirdly I will answer the question why WollMux is free software and why we think that we greatly benefit from the Open Source Observatory and Repository.

So let's start.

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As I mentioned before, WollMux is part of Munich's LiMux project. And what is LiMux?

Our City Council decided in 2003 to use free software and open standards for the desktops of the city administration – and to get all business applications platform independent and based on open standards in the future.

The Council decided for this alternative, because Munich wants to increase

the independence from software suppliers, platforms, consultants and external timelines and therefore

increase the possibilities for small and medium companies to take part in the software market.

This will lead to a broader competition and improve the quality of products – for lower prices.

And shortly after our decision we recognized that exactly this happened, no doubt.

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Well, what's the current status? Nearly every of our 14,000 workstations in the administration uses free software, mostly as web browser and email client. A lot of employees are trained to use more than these two basic applications. The migration to OpenOffice.org is in progress and about 60% of our workstations are using OpenOffice.org. Of course, the open standard „Open Document Format“ is going to be our document exchange standard for the future.

And, so far there are about 1,200 workstations running with our linux client, the number will increase during the next years.

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As already mentioned the migration to OpenOffice.org is an important part of LiMux. During the detailed conception we realized that there are over 16,000 office objects to deal with in Munich, that means only templates – maybe containing some macro code – and forms. We did not count the number of documents with contents.

Remember, there are about 16,000 users: that means at least one office object per user. And all of them are unique?

That can't be true. So there must be redundancies, different solutions for the same problems in many cases. Because of this our migration to OpenOffice.org is also a great opportunity for us to consolidate, one solution for equal requirements, and to standardize the same technical base where possible.

Well, and our WollMux is one great achievement of this process.

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Let me explain to you what WollMux exactly is.

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WollMux is the name of a self developed software solution for template processing in Munich.

The main objective for WollMux was to develop an easy to use letter head system to assist our employees in their daily business. As we learned from some existing solutions for Microsoft Office, all based on Visual Basic for Applications, this is the base functionality nearly everyone needs. Yes, everyone needs letter templates containing his or hers personal data like the name, telephone number, email and for example the connection via public transportation. WollMux automates the provision of personalized templates to our employees in a great manner. Implementing this functionality reduced the amount of macros by 20 percent!

When the development was in progress we learned about many other requirements of our employees. They had some quite good solutions for Microsoft Office, but fears and doubts about OpenOffice.org.

So we extended the functionality of WollMux and added possibilities for form management, text module management and some comfortable functions for dealing with paper based workflow marks (sachleitende Verfügungen in german, I don't know any word in english which will exactly describe this) and improving the print functions for them.

So WollMux provides help to our employees in many cases and nowadays it is an important tool for the success of our migration to open standards, especially the free software OpenOffice.org.

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Some background facts about the WollMux. It interacts with OpenOffice.org through the UNO interface and is a java based extension. So it's independent from the operating system and needs only OpenOffice.org and a Java Runtime Environment. We use the WollMux on Microsoft Windows and also, of course, on our linux workplaces.

The development began in 2005 and today there's a huge number of users in Munich – imagine, they all report bugs and propose improvements.

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Right now, you know the background of WollMux and our LiMux project. So it is time to talk about becoming a partner of OSOR.

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Why did we release the WollMux as free software?

Well, you – not you personally, but many of the people visiting us to learn about LiMux – asked us to do so. There are similar requirements throughout every public authority. But there are mostly solutions for Microsoft Office, a lot of them based on the vendor dependent Visual Basic for Applications.

Of course it was not a decision made during one day. We had a lot of questions to be examined by our legal department. Questions belonging to the system of free software as such and questions regarding the interference in the market. But we answered them and in the end, we could publish our WollMux as free software under the European Union Public License. I will explain some details on the slide after next.

Now, you can get the WollMux at the OSOR site from the URLs listed on this slide.

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In our opinion there are three parties who could benefit from our WollMux being free software.

At first, of course, YOU! Every other municipality, government or other interested public authorities, maybe even private companies, can use the WollMux for the same tasks we do. For free. Just download it, read the documentation and configure the right way. OK, that could be a hurdle, but there's help.

Secondly, we benefit from the experiences, enhancements and patches everyone using the WollMux contributes. And we also benefit from OpenOffice.org bugs being found by our employees during their daily work. So many bugs get visible, can easily be reported and reproduced – and maybe solved.

Thirdly, even OpenOffice.org profits because WollMux uses many functions and interacts a lot using the UNO interface. WollMux heavily stresses this software and it could be a great opportunity for the OpenOffice.org community to run the WollMux as a part of their stress tests during their quality assurance process.

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We benefit from using the Open Source Observatory and Repository for WollMux. Why?

Well, there are many technical advantages and we need not to reinvent the wheel at our own. We can use the technical infrastructure provided by OSOR for mailing lists, bugs and feature tracker, the file download utility and of course the webspace. There's someone providing this services to us – for free. We can concentrate on the WollMux and do not need to deal with the

infrastructure around.

For us, an important advantage over for example sourceforge is that a public body keeps control over OSOR. We have been discussing the release of WollMux for two years now with our decision makers and lawyers – and knowing that there's a big public body behind us was an convincing argument for them.

But the main point is another, I think. Opening OSOR to the public is a big step for sharing solutions, opinions and news between public authorities throughout europe in the field of free software. I guess, OSOR will become a meeting point for collaboration and maybe a starting point for strenghtening the community thinking in the public sector throughout europe. WollMux and all other projects can be found easily at one place – you don't need to know about special project sites of member states, governments or municipalities.

In my opinion this is a great enhancement for the future.

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Some up to date numbers.

From the release date until now WollMux was downloaded nearly 3,000 times and over 12 gigabyte of data was transfered. Over 12,000 interested people visited the web pages, a big peak on the first day in May. On the right side you can see a screenshot of the current discussions on the mailing list. There are XX users subscribed until now.

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Let me briefly talk about another great benefit for us.

Chosing the EUPL means for us a higher level of legal certainty. We need this to weaken the raised concerns about releasing self developed software as free software - until now an uncommon step for Munich.

We are very happy about the EUPL, because this license addressed these concerns. As stated below for the first time, a public body of the size of the European Commission has officially developed and approved an Open Source licence for the release of software.

Although the EUPL v. 1.0 was approved originally by the European Commission only in English, German and French, it is now available in all (except the Irish) official languages of the European Union and may produce legal effects in any of these languages.

The EUPL has considered the specificity and diversity of Member States Law and the Community Law (copyright terminology, information, warranty, liability, applicable law and jurisdiction).

The EUPL ensures compatibility with the most relevant other licences (including the most intensively used, the General Public licence or GPL).

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So let me drop some final words.

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At first let me thank all of the people who designed, developed and now provide the Open Source Observatory and Repository. You did a really great job.

And I will also thank you for the possibility, that we could be your beta tester for the technical

infrastructure during the last month. On the one hand side we found some issues and you solved them fast and straightforward. On the other side we got the possibility to use the infrastructure some weeks earlier, when we needed it for the release of our WollMux.

Thank you very much for this great job.

I would like to stress the Community argument here again:

Let us use this great opportunity to set up a community between public authorities throughout Europe, like it is in the Open Source community. The Open Source Observatory and Repository should be the first step and now it is up to us.

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Thank you for your attention.