



# Open Source for the Enterprise: Managing Risks, Reaping Rewards

*Dan Woods, Gautam Guliani*

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Open source software is changing the world of Information Technology. But making it work for your company is far more complicated than simply installing a copy of Linux. If you are serious about using open source to cut costs, accelerate development, and reduce vendor lock-in, you must institutionalize skills and create new ways of working. You must understand how open source is different from commercial software and what responsibilities and risks it brings. *Open Source for the Enterprise* is a sober guide to putting open source to work in the modern IT department.

Open source software is software whose code is freely available to anyone who wants to change and redistribute it. New commercial support services, smaller licensing fees, increased collaboration, and a friendlier platform to sell products and services are just a few of the reasons open source is so attractive to IT departments. Some of the open source projects that are in current, widespread use in businesses large and small include Linux, FreeBSD, Apache, MySQL, PostgreSQL, JBOSS, and Perl. These have been used to such great effect by Google, Amazon, Yahoo!, and major commercial and financial firms, that a wave of publicity has resulted in recent years, bordering on hype. Large vendors such as IBM, Novell, and Hewlett Packard have made open source a lynchpin of their offerings. Open source has entered a new area where it is being used as a marketing device, a collaborative software development methodology, and a business model.

This book provides something far more valuable than either the cheerleading or the fear-mongering one hears about open source. The authors are Dan Woods, former CTO of TheStreet.com and a consultant and author of several books about IT, and Gautam Guliani, Director of Software Architecture at Kaplan Test Prep & Admissions. Each has used open source software for some 15 years at IT departments large and small. They have collected the wisdom of a host of experts from IT departments, open source communities, and software companies.

*Open Source for the Enterprise* provides a top to bottom view not only of the technology, but of the skills required to manage it and the organizational issues that must be addressed. Here are the sorts of questions answered in the book:


- Why is there a "productization gap" in most open source projects?
- How can the maturity of open source be evaluated?
- How can the ROI of open source be calculated?
- What skills are needed to use open source?
- What sorts of open source projects are appropriate for IT departments at the beginner, intermediate, advanced, and expert levels?
- What questions need to be answered by an open source strategy?
- What policies for governance can be instituted to control the adoption of open source?
- What new commercial services can help manage the risks of open source?
- Do differences in open source licenses matter?
- How will using open source transform an IT department?

Praise for *Open Source for the Enterprise*: "Open Source has become a strategic business issue; decisions on

how and where to choose to use Open Source now have a major impact on the overall direction of IT abilities to support the business both with capabilities and by controlling costs. This is a new game and one generally not covered in existing books on Open Source which continue to assume that the readers are 'deep dive' technologists, *Open Source for the Enterprise* provides everyone from business managers to technologists with the balanced view that has been missing. Well worth the time to read, and also worth encouraging others in your enterprise to read as well." ----Andy Mulholland - Global CTO Capgemini

"*Open Source for the Enterprise* is required reading for anyone working with or looking to adopt open source technologies in a corporate environment. Its practical, no-BS approach will make sure you're armed with the information you need to deploy applications successfully (as well as helping you know when to say "no"). If you're trying to sell open source to management, this book will give you the ammunition you need. If you're a manager trying to drive down cost using open source, this book will tell you what questions to ask your staff. In short, it's a clear, concise explanation of how to successfully leverage open source without making the big mistakes that can get you fired." ----Kevin Bedell - founding editor of LinuxWorld Magazine

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