

Legal Quality and FLOSS Promotion

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Quality

- ▶ Quality is the key word for FLOSS acceptance and promotion
- ▶ Focus of the QualiPSo FP6 EU project
 - <http://www.qualipso.org>
- ▶ Legal quality is a major component of overall quality
 - Understanding the legal issues coming from Law (national laws)
 - Understanding what happens when some given pieces of code are mixed, modified, composed...

Two important topics

- ▶ Addressed in the Legal Issues activity of QualiPSo
 - Legal analysis (audit) of component-based software
 - Unified resource on FLOSS legal issues
- ▶ Exemplifying the need for close cooperation between lawyers and computer scientists - software engineers
- ▶ And the value of the community...

Legal Analysis : the problem

- ▶ Software made from various pieces (components), mixed, modified, composed in various ways
- ▶ Each piece with its own license, legal context (authors and their statuses, contractual obligations...)
- ▶ The components may or may not be explicitly identified...
- ▶ They can be numerous (several dozens...) with many authors and a long (and complicated) history
- ▶ How to determine the rights and obligations on the resulting assembly ?

Legal Analysis : some solution...

- ▶ Provide a methodology to help people understand the legal situation of the resulting software
- ▶ Based on information gathered by tools
 - Discovering licenses and similarities
- ▶ And information collected from the developpers
- ▶ And a synergy of both
 - from an audit team associating software engineers and lawyers
- ▶ Towards IPR tracking and best practices...

A unified Web resource on FLOSS legal issues

- ▶ A Web resource with some simple principles
- ▶ National answers to relevant (selected and organized) questions
- ▶ Multiple answers possible
 - As several legitimate opinions may exist...
- ▶ Answers available at least in one common language
 - To be able to compare
- ▶ Neutral editorial line
- ▶ For the practicing lawyer (but not only)

Building a community to share

- ▶ On a very practical basis
 - Provide answers to already registered questions
 - Help us identify relevant national resources (web sites, case law, articles...)
- ▶ And plan the future...
 - Supported by QualiPSO till November 2010
 - Focus on the data : will be independent of any implementation
 - A community to build...