OSS Watch

OSS Watch: Doing stuff

Ramón Casero
ramon.casero@oucs.ox.ac.uk

© 2007 University of Oxford
Creative Commons, Attribution-Share Alike 2.0 UK: England & Wales

JISC

OSS Watch

JISC

We dwell in Oxford...

Photo: R. Casero

OSS Watch

... hosted by the OUCS

Photo: S. Yeates

JISC

OSS Watch

What are we?

- JISC free-of-charge advisory service for UK FE and HE on open source software

JISC

OSS Watch

UK Gov open source policy

- “consider OSS solutions alongside proprietary ones”
- “only use products for interoperability that support open standards and specifications”
- “avoid lock-in to proprietary IT products and services”

JISC

OSS Watch

UK Gov open source policy

- “the software [produced by publicly funded R&D projects] shall be exploited either commercially or within an academic community or as OSS”

JISC

OSS Watch

What aren't we?

- Advocacy group
- Developers
- Lawyers (e.g. patents depend on JISC Legal)

JISC

OSS Watch

History

- Estb. July 2003: 1.2 FTE
  - Randy, Sebastian, Rowan, Stuart
- Dec 2007: 5.2 FTE
  - Ross, Mike, Rowan, Stuart, Ramón, Elena, Gabriel
  - Preparing 3rd round of funding

JISC

OSS Watch

People

JISC

OSS Watch

Staff

Randy (2003-2007)

Ross (2007-)

- Line managers
- Emphasis in open communities
- Engage with JISC projects and beyond

JISC

Staff

Sebastian (2003-2007)

Mike (2007-)

- Directors
- Strategy

Staff

Rowan (2003-)

- Legal expert
- Licensing, IP consultation
- Knowledge transfer

OSS Watch

Staff

Stuart (2003-2008)

- Documents, help desk, friendly face
- Communities (Moodle, RSC, projects)
- Open educational resources

JISC

Staff

Elena (2005-)

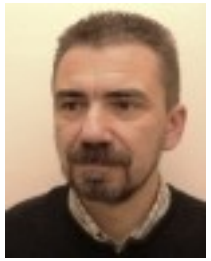
- Content manager
- Website, QA, LoveIns
- External content with 3rd parties

Staff

Ramón (2006-)

- Research
- Studies and national survey 2008
- Community metrics?

Staff



Gabriel (2007-)

- Anthropological study of open communities
- Consultations (community building, sustainability)

Alumni

Barry (2005-2006)

- Wiki, website, stylesheets
- Surveys: Usage of Linux at OU, national survey 2006

Alumni

James (2006-2007)

- Content creation
- Events (conferences, workshops...)

OSS Watch

External consultants

- David Tannenbaum (DPhil student)
  - OSS scoping study 2003
- Ellen Helsper (DPhil student)
  - National survey 2006
- Intelligent Content
  - Sustainability conference and study editing

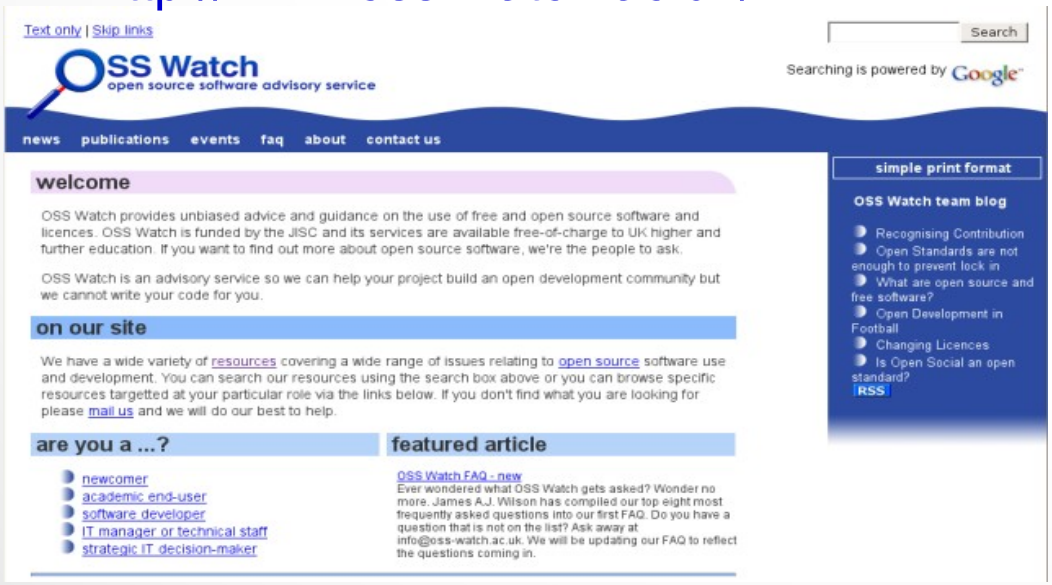
JISC

Our output

JISC

Publications

- Website
  - http://www.oss-watch.ac.uk/



Publications

- Briefing notes (~50, QA)

OSS Watch

Publications

- Briefing notes (~50, QA)
- Book reviews
- Conference reports
- Opinion pieces

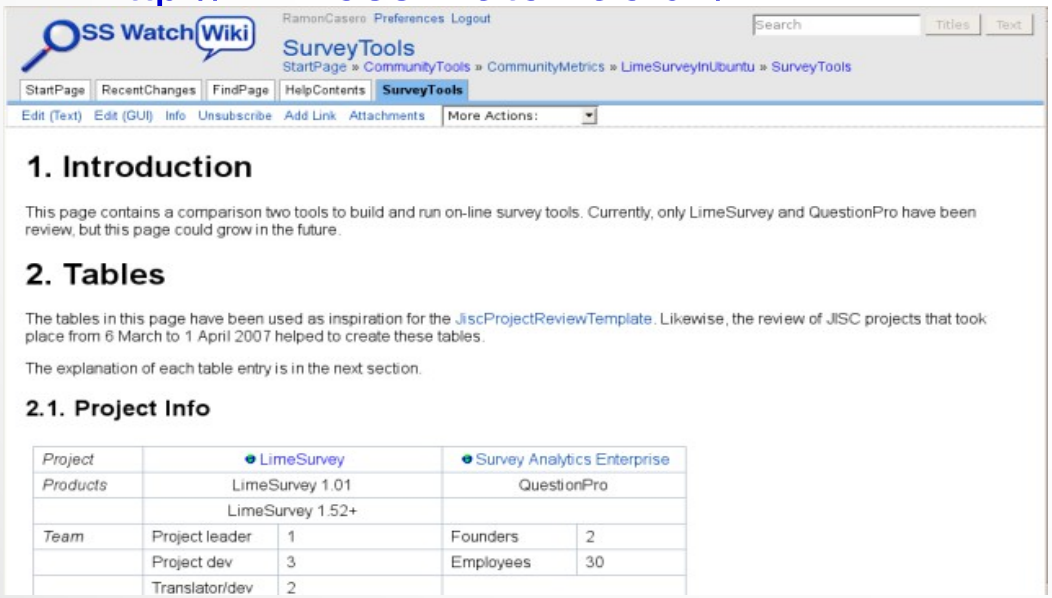
JISC

Online resources

- Team blog (opinions, discussion)
  - http://involve.jisc.ac.uk/wpmu/oss-watch

Online resources

- Wiki (non-QA documents)
  - http://wiki.oss-watch.ac.uk/



OSS Watch

Events 2006

- CETIS e-Learning programme meeting - *Sustainability and Communication*
- UKUUG Linux conference
  - *What are all these distributions and how should I choose one?*
  - *The State of Open Source in Higher and Further Education*
- Open Source VLEs: the next generation - *Open source software and the VLE*
- Oxford ITSS conference - *Engaging with open source*
- IWMW - *What does open source mean for the institutional web manager?*

JISC

OSS Watch

Events 2006

- RSC Northern Ireland - *Engaging with open source*
- BCS Aberdeen - *Open source is for real, and it's for you*
- Higher Education Academy - *Open source: an introduction*
- RSC Eastern E-Learning Forum - *Open source: an introduction*
- **Open Source and Sustainability**
  - *Open source: an introduction*
  - *The Linux Kernel: evolving into sustainability*
  - *The open source licensing framework*

JISC

OSS Watch

Events 2007

- Single Source Publishing with Apache Forrest
- Selecting a Linux distro
- Copyright in online resources
- OpenOffice course
- Foundations of Openness, development workshop
- Free and Open Source Software: How and Why?, AURIL/OSS Watch full-day workshop
- Open source for photographers
- Copyright in online resources

JISC

OSS Watch

Events 2007

- **Community Workshop** (National)
- **Introduction to survey design** (with OII)

JISC

OSS Watch

Consultations

- ~30 face-to-face
- Building communities
  - Licence strategy
  - Once the project is running
  - From the beginning (better)
- Commercial exploitation

JISC

OSS Watch

Consultations

- Help JISC projects (150+), Research Councils to comply with open source policy
- Help academics release software as OSS

JISC

OSS Watch

Studies

JISC

OSS Watch

Scoping study 2003

- OSS in UK FE and HE survey
- 38% of HE, 9% of FE have OSS policy
- Staff with OSS skills
  - 88% of FE very few members
  - 59% of HE moderate or significant

JISC

OSS Watch

Scoping study 2003

- Consider OSS for deployment
  - 15% of FE
  - 73% of HE
- Reasons to choose OSS
  - Cost, interoperability
- Lack of licence policy, 59% of institutions

JISC

OSS Watch

National survey 2006

- Update Scoping study 2003
- Response rate from 6% to 18%
- 25% have OSS policy, 77% consider it
- 13% known to submit patches
- 56% FE use Moodle
- 29 different CMSs

JISC

OSS Watch

National survey 2006

- No wikis or blogs
- OSS and PS mixed in servers 75%
  - databases 62%
  - web servers 59%
  - operating systems 56%
- In-house support

JISC

OSS Watch

National survey 2006

- OSS and PS mixed in desktops 42%
  - Linux 11%
  - Mozilla/Firefox 68%
  - Thunderbird 22%

JISC

OSS Watch

National survey 2006

- Reasons for OSS
  - TCO
  - No lock-ins
  - Interoperability

JISC

OSS Watch

Automatic MTA survey 2007

- Large number of institutions:
  - 441 FE, 163 HE, 2300 Other
- Outsource email:
  - 46% FE, 26% HE, 48% Other
  - 52% to ac.uk, 52% to commercial

JISC

OSS Watch

Automatic MTA survey

- Favourite MTAs
  - Exim: 8% FE, 33% HE
  - MS Exchange: 22% FE, 5% HE
  - Sendmail: 3% FE, 6% HE
- Bash and GNU R scripts
  - http://code.google.com/p/mta-tracker/

JISC

OSS Watch

Sustainability study 2007

- Commissioned by the JISC
- Successful open source projects
  - Apache Cocoon (Web dev. framework)
    - Apache-style community of peers
  - APLAWS (CMS for local authorities, LAs)
    - 5 LAs, 2 charities, Sun, Red Hat, Oracle
    - Camden and beyond, user group meetings

JISC

OSS Watch

Sustainability study 2007

- Exim, MailScanner
  - One-man project + voluntary contributors
  - Cambridge and Southampton Universities
- Sakai (VLE)
  - 100 paying education & commercial members
  - Close community → Open community

JISC

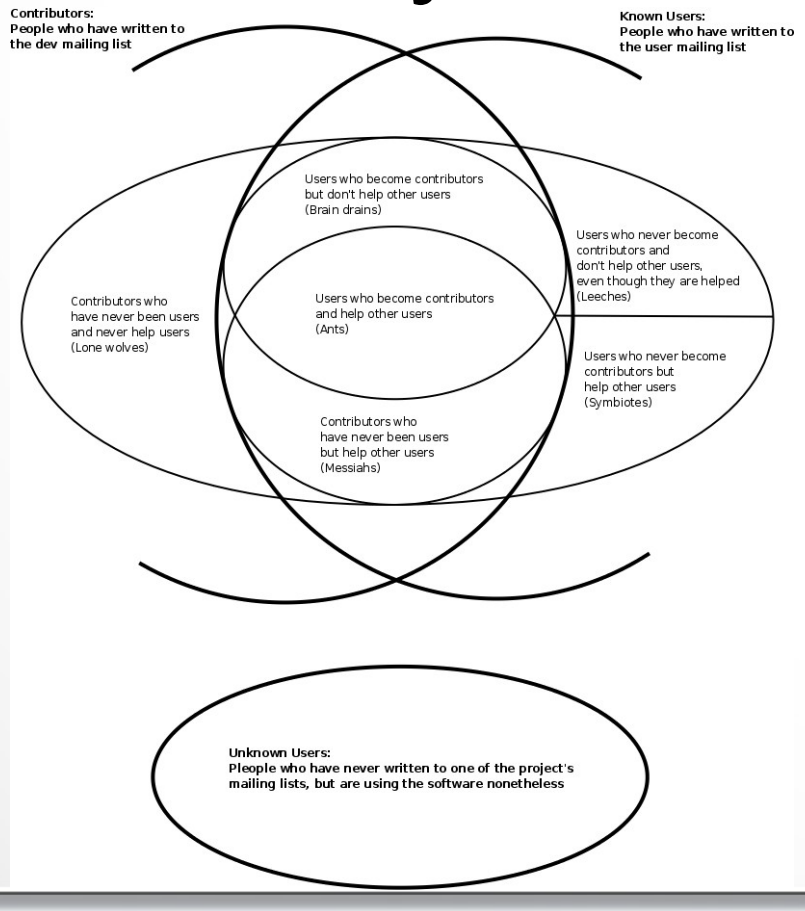
OSS Watch

Sustainability study 2007

- Moodle (VLE)
  - One-man project → early release
  - Commercial services → franchising + Trust
  - LAMS, Open University (£5)
- DSpace (digital repository)
  - HP + MIT Alliance → open source, Foundation
  - Community of educational institutions
  - 2 years to release OSS + 1.5 years transition

JISC

Community metrics?



OSS Watch

That's all folks!

JISC