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The quick guide to open source enterprises

How large organizations use open source to build better software, faster.

The new way to build software

Nearly every industry today uses technology to differentiate their products and services. Software has become the great equalizer—allowing small companies with big ideas to challenge the status quo and compete against major corporations.

Developers turn to the open source community for the resources they need to build better software, faster. However, enterprises have been more cautious, typically limiting open source adoption to proven areas like operating systems (Linux) or programming frameworks such as Ruby or JavaScript.

59 percent

of IT leaders plan to increase their use of open source code in the next year.

"The State of Enterprise Open Source" 2019 report

How organizations make the change

Maximum innovation, minimal risk: that's the goal of adopting open source. By adding an open source software (OSS) component to your project, you benefit from the work of potentially thousands of developers—and also take on the risk of consuming code you didn't create. As you bring in more code from outside your development team, your skills and approach to building software must also change.

Change is hard. Most enterprises aren't used to working with external communities or even working across their own organizational silos. The ones who embrace change and build balanced, secure relationships with the OSS community become a new type of organization: open source enterprises.

What is an open source enterprise?

Open source enterprises are organizations that recognize OSS as essential, not optional, for modern software development. They engage in open source communities and keep up with the best and latest technology. Open source enterprises transform their businesses by strategically investing in open source with the help of a secure platform. As a result, these organizations experience rapid innovation, outpace competitors, and cut down costs—all while minimizing risk.

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github.com/enterprise
sales@github.com
1.415.735.4488

Three factors that make an open source enterprise

Open source engagement

OSS is the product of thousands of contributors. Getting the most out of open source requires commitment and action. According to a recent study by Harvard Business School, companies who contribute to open source receive up to twice the benefit of those who just use open source code. Open source enterprises consume and adopt open source, but also contribute to and mentor the communities they depend on.

Innersource culture

Open source communities are transparent and collaborative, which increases diversity of thought and promotes the best ideas. Open source enterprises use these same principles with their teams internally—an approach known as "innersource." By implementing open source practices in your organization, you optimize your workforce and increase your output.

Secure and compliant platform

Open source usage comes with risks, and teams need to know how to work safely with OSS suppliers. Understanding open source dependencies and their vulnerabilities can be the difference between being patched or hacked. Open source enterprises invest in the right platform and tools to manage code vulnerabilities and use open source securely.

GitHub is the home to the world's largest open source community, with over 36 million developers and millions of open source projects. Want to learn more about how your organization can become an open source enterprise?

Contact us:

github.com/enterprise
sales@github.com
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