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HOME      ABOUT      LOG IN      REGISTER      SEARCH      CURRENT      ARC

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

**Reading Tools**

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*De Paoli, Teli, D'Andrea*

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PEER-REVIEWED JOURNAL ON THE INTERNET

Free and open source licenses in community life:
Two empirical cases

by Stefano De Paoli, Maur
and Vincenzo D'Andrea

Abstract
Review policy
About the author
How to cite item
Indexing metadata
Print version
Notify colleague*
Email the author*

RELATED ITEMS
Author's work
Government policy
Book
Book reviews
Dissertations
Online forums
Quotations
Resources
Media reports
Web search

## Abstract

How do licenses participate in the life of Free and Open Source Software (FL
communities? This paper aims at answering this question.

Despite the dynamic character of FLOSS development, the sociological deba
granted a static perspective of communities, as organized around a restricte
values and rules. Criticizing the main sociological approaches to FLOSS comi
observed in our two cases that, on the contrary, the free/open character of I
be assumed as an *a priori* explanation of the coordination efforts in these co

Focusing on the role of software licenses, considered as boundary objects in
of FLOSS communities, we observe that controversies and conflicts around I
fundamental parts of communities' lives. Basing our research on two differer
Geographical Information System GRASS and the OpenSolaris™ operating s
how the construction of the free/open character of FLOSS takes place within
licenses.

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All

Search

CLOSE

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## Contents

## 1. Introduction

How do licenses participate in the life of Free and Open Source Software (FL
communities? This paper aims to answer this question. We want readers to
role of licenses in the wider construction process of large FLOSS projects. W
power of the artefacts called software licenses in building and shaping politi