

Intensified Battle Lines

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Created 29/04/2007 - 4:06pm

Submitted by srlinuxx on Sunday 29th of April 2007 04:06:52 PM Filed under [Microsoft](#) [1] [OSS](#) [2]

Some years back Open Source Industry Australia (OSIA) spokesperson Steven D'Aprano had posed a most intriguing question, "If Microsoft has a problem with piracy, it shouldn't be blamed on OEMs who sell PCs with Linux pre-installed or no operating system at all. Should we discourage supermarkets from selling plain bread, because shoppers might steal butter from elsewhere?"

This summed up all debates between open source and proprietary model vis-a-vis the issue of piracy. In India, we have regularly been asking, does bundling or selling Linux with vanilla systems aid and abet Windows piracy?

For long now a tag has been associated with Linux. Industry players and resellers say Linux has become a smart, official, cheap and convenient form of piracy. The charge, is however, outrightly rejected by the Linux vendors.

At their end, open source vendors will not miss an opportunity to assert that anyone who has benefited out of piracy is the proprietary vendors, like Microsoft.

Actually, the primary reason for piracy stems from the basic question haunting any consumer, affordability - the pricing.

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[Microsoft OSS](#)

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