

# The open source business process

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Created 25/07/2005 - 7:10am

Submitted by srlinuxx on Monday 25th of July 2005 07:10:47 AM Filed under [OSS](#) [1]

Open source is more than Linux, more than software.

It is at heart a business process. You let people see what you're doing. You use open APIs. You link to as many other business models as possible.

This was seen in full last week, as Macromind founder Marc Canter (right, by our own Dan Farber) announced the GoingOn Network at Tony Perkins' AlwaysOn conference.

Canter calls GoingOn a Digital Lifestyle Aggregator (DLA). It supports subscriptions, all types of digital publishing and templates, but more important it's based entirely on open standards.

"Our APIs and schemas will be completely open and anyone can use them to interconnect social networks together. Not just to our network. Any network to any network," he writes. (Marc also pointed out numerous mistakes in my first blog entry about this, so you you might call this story a result of open source journalism.)

The open source business process is a two-way street, Canter adds. He's also supporting a number of other APIs, especially concerning identity, as seen in this chart.

This open source business process is catching on at companies both large and small. Google's Map API is an example of an open source business process. Yahoo's MyWeb 2.0 is another example.

SixApart VP Anil Dash says his company's LiveJournal pioneered this approach five years ago. Key components of Movable Type and Typepad, including implementations of Atom, FOAF and SOAP, have all been released as open source, "and we eat our own dog food by building on top of them in the applications and platforms we ship."

I think it's the two-way open source business process, not open source software per se, which companies like Microsoft and Oracle are finding the greatest trouble with. It's the first great business invention of the 21st century. It's changing the world in Internet Time.

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