

Free Software Foundation Files Suit Against Cisco For GPL Violations

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The Free Software Foundation (FSF) today announced that it has filed a copyright infringement lawsuit against Cisco. The FSF's complaint alleges that in the course of distributing various products under the Linksys brand Cisco has violated the licenses of many programs on which the FSF holds copyright, including GCC, binutils, and the GNU C Library. In doing so, Cisco has denied its users their right to share and modify the software.

Most of these programs are licensed under the GNU General Public License (GPL), and the rest are under the GNU Lesser General Public License (LGPL). Both these licenses encourage everyone, including companies like Cisco, to modify the software as they see fit and then share it with others, under certain conditions. One of those conditions says that anyone who redistributes the software must also provide their recipients with the source code to that program. The FSF has documented many instances where Cisco has distributed licensed software but failed to provide its customers with the corresponding source code.

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