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The GPL Barter Cycle - A Graphic

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Created *05/01/2010 - 11:36am*

Submitted by srlinuxx on Tuesday 5th of January 2010 11:36:51 AM Filed under [Linux](#) [1] [OSS](#) [2]

In our efforts at Groklaw to explain the General Public License, or GPL, over the years, we've used many words. But the other day I asked if anyone could think of a way to show it graphically, and PolR has done it.

Some imagine that it's unthinkable to, as they view it, give away valuable IP for nothing. But, first, it's not giving it away, and second, it's not for nothing. Nor does pooling your code put you out of business. The diagram shows a barter process. This is the key word, because such contributions of code are compensated, but the consideration is not money. It is code. You give a little code, and you get back a lot more.

When people receive back a complete Linux, they have the source code. It lets them make changes and adjustments to suit their purposes more exactly, and then they can contribute those modifications back to the project and all the contributions are then able to be integrated into the project. This ball keeps rolling, and getting bigger, and Linux keeps improving. People contribute because they want Linux to be available and to improve.

[There's a fairness to it](#) [3],

[Linux OSS](#)

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