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SourceForge locked in projects of fleeing users, cashed in on malvertising [Updated]

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The takeover of the SourceForge account for the Windows version of the open-source GIMP image editing tool reported by Ars last week is hardly the first case of the once-pioneering software repository attempting to cash in on open-source projects that have gone inactive or have actually attempted to shut down their SourceForge accounts. Over the past few years, SourceForge (launched by VA Linux Systems in 1999 and now owned by the tech job site company previously known as Dice) has made it a business practice to turn abandoned or inactive projects into platforms for distribution of "bundle-ware" installers.

Despite promises to avoid deceptive advertisements that trick site visitors into downloading unwanted software and malware onto their computers, these malicious ads are legion on projects that have been taken over by SourceForge's anonymous editorial staff. SourceForge's search engine ranking for these projects often makes the site the first link provided to people seeking downloads for code on Google and Bing search results.

And because of SourceForge's policies, it's nearly impossible for open-source projects to get their code removed from the site. SourceForge is, in essence, the Hotel California of code repositories: you can check your project out any time you want, but you can never leave.

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[3] <http://arstechnica.com/information-technology/2015/06/sourceforge-locked-in-projects-of-fleeing-users-cashed-in-on-malvertising/>

[4] <http://techrights.org/wiki/index.php/SourceForge>