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The End of the Gorilla Game?

There's this idea that's been going around inside my head for the last few weeks and I can't make up my mind if it makes sense or not so I ask for your comments.

Is The Gorilla Game about to end? For some time now I have been working with open source software and, quite clearly, the authors can't make big bucks from it for the simple reason that distribution of the software is, essentially, free. Any money to be made comes from various forms of consulting services, not the stuff gorillas are made of.

Before you conclude that open source software does not have any future, I would like to bring to your attention some really successful open source projects. The English Language is one of them, as is Spanish and every other human spoken language. There is no gorilla that owns the code and we give it away for free to every new born. Lot's of people make money off these open source projects, Berlitz and thousands of teachers, editors and translators come to mind. Not one of them is a Moore gorilla.

We need to make a distinction between hardware and software. Anyone with a PC on his desktop can hack away at software, the investment required is minimal. Software, after all, is pure brainware, no hardware required. Hardware is a bit more difficult to hack. But what happens when hardware and software become interchangeable? What happens when hardware is not a thing but just "IP," Intellectual Property? Just how is an ARM core different from a software kernel?

The central aspect of diminishing returns, the economic law that governs commodity type products is, precisely, the diminishing profits that can be made for them as more competitors enter the market. Until now, it's been the "proprietary" part of the mantra that has kept the competition at bay. But once you have open source there is no proprietary architecture anymore to sustain the gorilla. All that is left to be sold are services of various types.

To close, I repeat the question: "Is the end of the Gorilla Game in sight?"

Denny Schlesinger
Caracas - Venezuela
denny@softwaretimes.com