

Open Source software for libraries

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Open-source software (OSS)

is computer software of which the source code and certain rights are provided under a license that allows others to study, change, improve and often also to distribute the software.

Open-source software (OSS)

is usually developed in a public, transparent and collaborative manner where developers review each other's work and give credit to each contribution.

The community

decides what features to develop, a manager or managing team reviews the code, approves it and adds it to the final release.

Open-source software (OSS)

is available at no costs

BUT

a developer or distributor may charge for services, including:

- special programming,
- configuration and installation,
- training,
- file migration,
- technical support, and
- hosting services for libraries that do not want to implement and maintain an in-house system

Libraries and Open Source both believe that

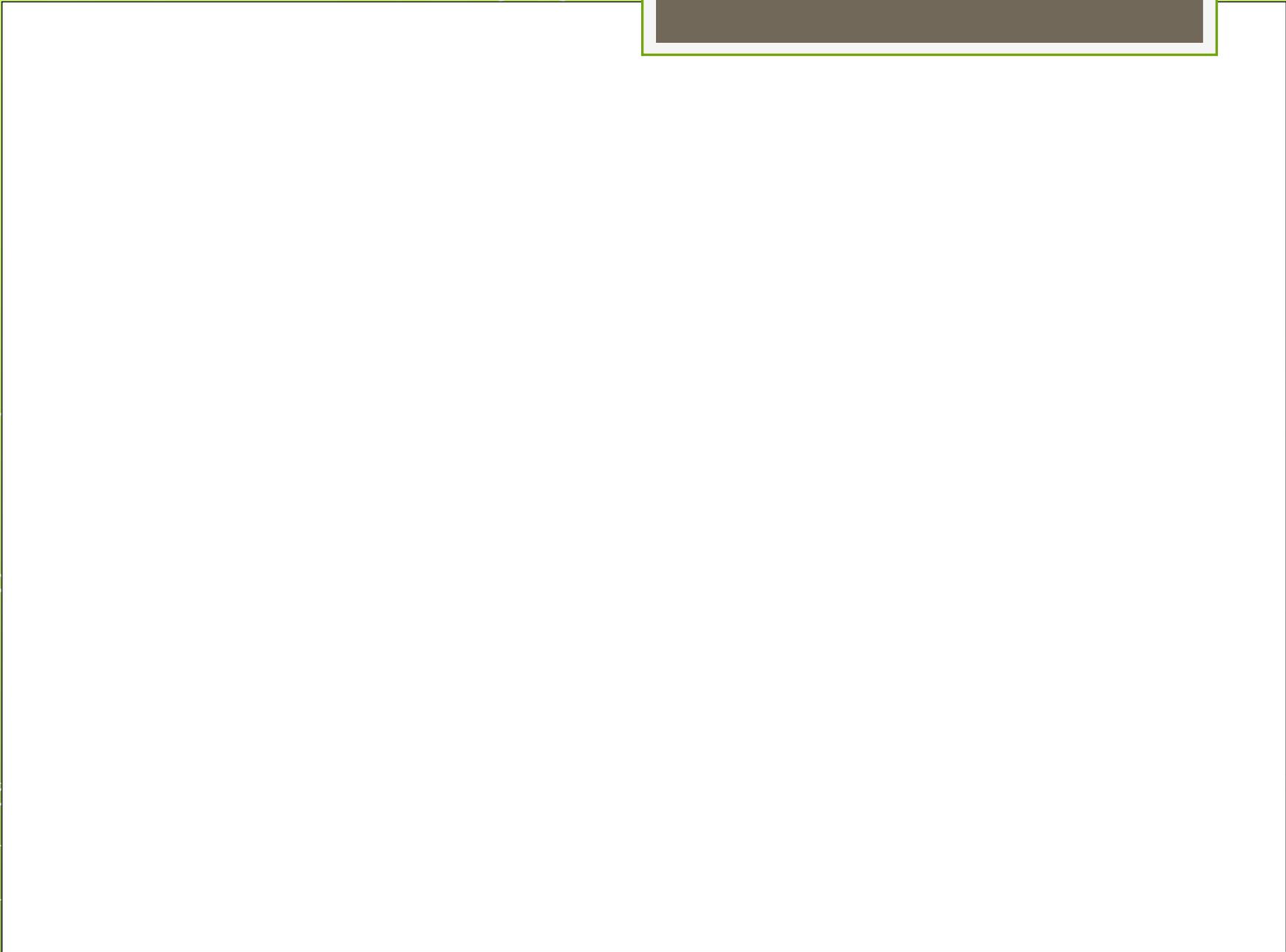
- information should be freely accessible to everyone
- benefit from the generosity of others
- are about communities and
- make the world a better place.

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How to choose an free and open source
Integrated Library System
by Tristan Müller (2011)

Provides an analysis in three steps of 20 free and open source ILS platforms offered to the library community.



Demonstration databases

- Koha: <http://www.liblime.com/demos>

Username and password: liblime

- Evergreen: <http://demo.evergreencatalog.com/>

Username: admin, password: demo123

Overview of work at <http://www.evergreen-ils.org/dokuwiki/doku.php>

- PMB: <http://pmb.falcon.org.in>

Username: falcon, password: library

My own experiences...

- open source library softwares are not plug-and-play, and require technical support for installation
- configurations are required for you to have your own framework

My own experiences...

- Softwares like Koha and Evergreen come with useful features for creating reports, placing orders, user administration, circulation etc.
- They have quite elaborate end user interfaces, called Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC).

Conclusion

At one extreme, open source ILSs are thought to require more technical sophistication, and hence present a greater technical challenge to install.

Documentation is also a commonly cited weakness of OSS.

Conclusion

At the other extreme, open source ILS users are more satisfied than proprietary ILS users with the affordability and customisability of their systems.