

Open Source Business Cases Free/Libré Open Source Software FLOSS

Open Source Business Cases: Introduction & Worksheet

sales.org Inc.

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WWW <http://www.sales.org>

Email info@sales.org

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CASE STUDY WORKSHEET

INTRODUCTION

CREATING EFFECTIVE BUSINESS CASES FOR
CHOOSING FREE/LIBRÉ OPEN SOURCE SOFTWARE

Part

1

Free/Libré Open Source Software (FLOSS): The objective of these Business Cases is to illustrate the evaluation, selection, development, deployment, and sustainable advantages of developing enterprise solutions using FLOSS.

By providing this information you are helping other IT professionals gain a better understanding of the value and process for introducing and advancing open source within their organizations.

Business Case Objectives Business Cases offer significant help to potential FLOSS implementations by providing other decision-makers with documented real-world success stories. These also offer you and your organization great advantages that you may not expect — the most important is the help in building the installed user base of FLOSS:

- ☑ As more companies deploy FLOSS, more designers, architects, developers and systems administrators acquire FLOSS competencies — and the easier they are to find when you need to hire them
- ☑ As more applications are developed in FLOSS, more advanced features become important to add to the FLOSS code libraries, ensuring that the strategic and competitive advantages of FLOSS for your organization are always being maintained and advanced
- ☑ By completing this Business Case, your contribution can be seen by the entire FLOSS community. As with any community, those who are active and participative are rewarded by greater acceptance and with greater support back from the community when you need it most.

Golden Rules: Creating compelling Business Cases The impact of what you have to say can be greatly improved if you are able to present your Business Case as you might expect it to appear as a news article. Here are some of the golden rules for creating compelling Business Cases:

- ☑ Describe the case in the context of solving a business need
- ☑ Include the who, either by name or role — people relate best to other people in similar situations
- ☑ Cover off all five W's, so also include the what, when, where and why of the decisions and the implementation
- ☑ Include quotes from people who were involved in your company (e.g. "FLOSS saved us weeks of development time and buckets of money" observes CFO John Smith, "allowing us to deliver a better product to our customers at a lower cost than any of our competitors.")
- ☑ Include quotes from your customers who have received the benefits (e.g. "XYZ Inc. delivered on time, under budget, and right on the mark — they are definitely the best of breed in what they do.")
- ☑ Don't knock the competition — yours or others (e.g. "MySQL sucks, PostgreSQL rocks" may sound cool, but it doesn't help others in understanding or accepting PostgreSQL's value, nor will it add any credibility to you and your story. Instead... "We compared the features and benefits of MySQL, OtherSQL, AnyDB, and PostgreSQL — and chose PostgreSQL because it was the right tool for the job now, and has all the scalability needed to be the right tool for the job in the future.")
- ☑ Whenever possible and appropriate, provide quantifiable examples. (e.g. "Our development team was half the size of what we needed when we used other software."; "We saved over \$xx,xxx on hardware requirements alone..."; "Maintenance and admin costs have been reduced by 50%"; etc.)

BUSINESS CASE WORKSHEET BACKGROUND

COMPANY, MARKETS, AND
PRODUCTS INFORMATION

Part

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Who are you?

Please provide your company name. (e.g. sales.org Inc.)

What are you
selling / what
business are
you in?

Please provide one or two sentences describing your business. (e.g. Sales, Management, Leadership, Learning & Organizational Effectiveness competency testing and training for recruiting, selection, and development of the best people for the best companies)

What's in it for
me / how do you
add value to your
customers?

Please provide information on the benefits that you offer your customers. (e.g. Skills & Capabilities Assessments to help find the most competent people, and to identify targeted learning opportunities directly linked to performance. Training & development programs based on the best Adult learning and decision making methods and tools.)

Why should I
believe you?

Please provide information that supports the credibility of your company and your offer. (e.g. Our programs are used in university Human Resource Development curricula "Managing Performance through Training & Development", Nelson Press, and are featured in leading Training & Development trade publications including "Best Practices: Training and Development", Carswell Publications)

How do you use
FLOSS in your
business?

Please describe the FLOSS implementation for this Business Case in the context of your business and benefits to your customers. (e.g. PostgreSQL provides the Object Relational Database Management System necessary to capture and report the level of details required to drive our competency testing tools, and at a cost that ensures these programs are easily accessible and affordable for any business or individual committed to achieving top performance from their hiring, training and development programs.)

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BUSINESS CASE WORKSHEET

STRATEGIC ADVANTAGES

OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE, PRODUCT LEADERSHIP
AND CUSTOMER INTIMACY

Part

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OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE

Please describe how the use of FLOSS helps to reduce and control your operational costs of doing business. (e.g. FLOSS eliminated the initial software license costs for development, and any need to charge sales.org Inc.'s clients a license fee based on the number of locations, systems, processors or seats. This FLOSS deployment also provided the lowest cost for delivery of the assessments online, reduced costs of customization for corporate clients, and full 24/7/365 access to the assessments, reports, and data.)

PRODUCT LEADERSHIP

Please describe how the use of FLOSS helps to differentiate your product from your competitors (e.g. PostgreSQL enabled sales.org to create truly object-relational assessments of the skills and capabilities of individuals. This FLOSS deployment also provided the lowest cost for delivery of the skills & capabilities assessments online, reduced costs of customization for corporate clients, and provided full 24/7/365 access to the assessments, reports, and data.)

CUSTOMER INTIMACY

Please describe how the use of FLOSS is helping you to better understand the needs of your customer, and the quality of your customer experience. (e.g. FLOSS powers an online, real-time suite of competency assessments that provide the individual participant with immediate results and an Action Plan for performance improvement. At the same time, the Sales.org Inc. application is collecting the information necessary to understand the overall competency of the organization and the opportunity to more effectively target organizational plans for training, development, and performance improvement.)

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BUSINESS CASE WORKSHEET

TACTICAL ADVANTAGE

RISK—RATED RETURN ON INVESTMENT

Part

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Strategic advantages are critical to both the immediate and long-term success of a business, but need to be brought down to a tactical level and applied to seven (7) Risk-Rated Return On Investment categories:

**1. Add Value
(qualitative)
to the Customer**

Please provide information on how using FLOSS helps Add Value to your Customers. (e.g. The assessments we developed using FLOSS have provided customers with a better understanding of how their personnel compare to the industry.)

**2. Add New
Customers**

Describe how your Sales.org Inc. deployment helps in attracting new customers. (e.g. As an online Web-based tool, new customers are attracted to the Website daily to test their own competencies.)

**3. Retain
Existing
Customers**

Please provide information on how your use of Sales.org Inc. may help you to retain Customers. (e.g. The assessments create a benchmark of competencies, along with performance improvement SMART Action Plans – encouraging customers to continuously revisit and reassess their skills & capabilities to ensure a competitive lead is achieved and sustained.)

**4. Improve
Profitability**

Please describe how FLOSS helps to improve profitability. (e.g. FLOSS solutions are the equivalent to Recycling for sales.org Inc., enabling us to reuse code, reduce licensing, programming and systems admin costs, and eliminate 90% of the costs associated with paper-based testing and reporting. FLOSS provided sales.org Inc. with a solution that was \$70,000 less expensive to create, and over 70% lower in cost to operate and maintain than any of the commercial DBMS offerings.)

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BUSINESS CASE WORKSHEET

S.W.O.T. ANALYSIS

STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES,
OPPORTUNITIES AND THREATS

Part

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As with any sound business decision, the choice of FLOSS likely included some level of SWOT Analysis prior to your decision to develop this application.

STRENGTHS (INTERNAL ADVANTAGES)

What are the Strengths that you identified FLOSS would provide for your business internally. (e.g. Access and control over the Source Code, a comprehensive set of application interfaces, extensive development tools, and ease of meeting business requirements with internal developers after a short learning curve.)

STRENGTHS (EXTERNAL ADVANTAGES)

What are the Strengths that you identified FLOSS could bring to your business. (e.g. SQL standards, Unicode support, a large and growing community of developers available online, scalability and adaptability.)

WEAKNESSES (INTERNAL ADVANTAGES)

What are the Weaknesses that you identified FLOSS could have for your business internally. (e.g. Limited commercial support, little internal experience with FLOSS or other advanced software, difficult to sell to senior management based on limited information on the acceptance and use of FLOSS by other companies.)

WEAKNESSES (EXTERNAL ADVANTAGES)

What are the Weaknesses that you identified FLOSS could bring to your business. (e.g. Heavy pressure & disinformation from media and commercial software vendors suggesting limitations in FLOSS's durability, extensibility, scalability, and capabilities.)

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**OPPORTUNITIES
(INTERNAL
OPPORTUNITIES)**

What are the Opportunities that you identified FLOSS could have for your business internally. (e.g. Greatly reduced costs for prototyping and development, and ease of integration with other information technology and applications..)

**OPPORTUNITIES
(EXTERNAL
OPPORTUNITIES)**

What are the Opportunities that you identified FLOSS could bring to your business externally. (e.g. Zero cost for adding new systems, users, customers, and locations. Strong portability across multiple hardware platforms, and Rapid Application Development easily built onto the pre-existing work – without the traditional version control issues of many legacy or commercial alternatives.)

**THREATS
(INTERNAL RISKS)**

What are the Risks that you identified FLOSS could present to your business internally. (e.g. Unknown deployment and sustainment costs, performance, stability, durability, scalability, extensibility, security & controls, capabilities, system requirements.)

**THREATS
(EXTERNAL RISKS)**

What are the Risks that you identified FLOSS could present to your business externally. (e.g. Unknown level of compatibility with industry standards, interaction with other applications, or competency of the FLOSS and commercial support offered. Strong pressure from existing commercial vendors to stay with their applications entirely 'or risk it all' and 'not get support on their product if they believe the problem was with FLOSS'...)

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BUSINESS CASE WORKSHEET

EPILOGUE

REVIEWING THE PROS AND CONS IN SELECTING POSTGRESQL

Part

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Most FLOSS users have been able to build on the Strengths & Opportunities, and address the Weaknesses & Threats either during the selection process, or following the release of the application they have developed.

GREATEST ADVANTAGE

What do you consider the greatest advantage that FLOSS provides you? e.g. FLOSS provided sales.org Inc. with a mature, stable, extremely well supported solution that enabled us to create products and services with built-ins sustainable competitive advantages – more than capable of running and growing our mission critical applications and allowing us to provide our customers with information and direction that is otherwise unavailable)

GREATEST DISADVANTAGE

What do you consider the greatest disadvantage that FLOSS presents (or presented) you? (e.g. Fear of the unknown. Despite decades of development and use, FLOSS is relatively unknown to CIO / CTO audiences, and often draws strong negative feedback from commercial competitors. The lack of certified training or other indications of competency makes recruiting architects / developers more difficult, and the current user interfaces lack some of the ease / polish that the high costs for licensing have helped fund for commercial software.)

FLOSS Resources

Which FLOSS resources do you use (please check all that apply):

- ☐ www.FSF.org
- ☐ www.FLORA.ca
- ☐ www.floscaribbean.org
- ☐ www.gnu.org
- ☐ opensource.mit.edu
- ☐ www.xandros.com
- ☐ www.redhat.com
- ☐ www.linux.org
- ☐ www.freebsd.org
- ☐ www.postgresql.org
- ☐ www.mysql.org
- ☐ ISP FLOSS Support or Service Contract
- ☐ Other: _____; _____; _____

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WORDS OF ADVICE

[illegible]

What advice can you give to others to help them in making a decision to choose FLOSS and become involved in advancing the use and functionality of *Free/Libre Open Source Software*? (e.g. My initial choice for FLOSS was one of the most effective decisions I have ever made on software. In over 5 years of continuous use and ongoing development, this deployment has never required a costly conversion from past versions, has proven itself extremely stable and scalable, and has yet to fail to offer any critical business capability whenever we've needed one added. sales.org Inc. has saved tens of thousands of dollars in purchasing costs for licenses, development costs for the applications, and avoided thousands of dollars in flow through charges for licensing versions for the internal use of our clients. FLOSS enables sales.org Inc. to capture and report all the details for our competency testing tools, and at a cost that ensures these programs are easily accessible and affordable for any business or individual committed to achieving top performance from their hiring, training and personal development programs.)

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THANK YOU

Sales.org Inc. would like to thank you for taking the time and effort to provide this information in support of promoting Free/Libré Open Source Software solutions. The growing success and rapid pace of improvements in capabilities of FLOSS is because of participation, sharing, and efforts like this that you and others continue to contribute to all the FLOSS communities.