



# New Zealand Open Source Society

## President's Annual Report

28<sup>th</sup> July 2010

The main points areas of focus have been:

- Education about the potential for free and open source software within Government and other sectors
- Running public awareness events such as Software Freedom Day
- Participating in events that further the causes of openness and freedom, such as PublicACTA
- Submitting on the Patent Bill in its select committee phase.

### Public Sector Remix and Government Sector

This seminal project, to help inform and educate Government agencies about the possibilities and pitfalls of a free and open source desktop has been well documented on the NZOSS site and in the news media. The NZOSS acted as a facilitator and three member companies contributed their time and expertise voluntarily.

So far the outcomes have been positive and well received. Over the April / May period two new agencies joined the project.

One key aspect of this project was a survey run by Victory University to determine the level of vendor support for FLOSS. The results were very encouraging and again, the research has been published.

In general the Government sector seems far more welcoming of FLOSS solutions and there are recent cases of agencies specifically requesting FLOSS licences for the solutions proposed. There is also a lot more engagement with the NZOSS and its members when it comes to various consultation processes. I expect this to increase. I would like to take this opportunity to once again acknowledge and thank John Rankin for his tireless work on this initiative.

### Software Freedom Day

Once again the bar camp format has proven a success around the country. In Wellington alone this event attracted over 200 people from many walks of life. There was a strong youth and education component with work streams for all ages of children as well as adult bar camp and install feast streams. Once thanks and kudos due to the organisers led by Jayne Wallis and all the sponsors. CWA New Media being the first and major sponsor.

### Education Sector

Three NZOSS member companies, TechnologyWise, Open Systems Specialists and Catalyst IT, teamed up to run an "Open Source In Schools" stand at one of the years most important technology in education conferences – [Learning@schools](mailto:Learning@schools) in Rotorua. The idea was to talk about \*why\* schools should use FLOSS.

In addition I was invited to talk to the TechHui event organised by Wellington high school students for high school students interested in technology.

### Business Community

The NZOSS has not forgotten the general business community. Most recently I was invited to speak to the Auckland Employers and Manufacturer's Association about the benefits FLOSS can bring. This comes on top

of other speaking engagements held in various parts of the country.

## **Software Patents**

The NZOSS has long held the view that software patents are harmful to our core principles and goals. We have therefore campaigned against the idea that software should be patentable. This position is one that is held by the vast majority of the NZ IT community. So it was pleasing to see politicians of all parties take note of the wider community's concerns specifically draft the Patent Bill to exclude computer programs as patentable inventions.

## **Focus for the Coming Year**

There will be a new President and council after this AGM so it will be up to that group to set next year's focus.

However, it is worth noting that the following events are on the calendar:

- Software Freedom Day
- NZ Open Source Awards (November)

## **Acknowledgements and Thanks**

I just want to thank the NZOSS Committee members for their work this year and over the three years of my Presidency. It has been a most rewarding role. I should also like to thank the many people who have given me and the NZOSS their valuable time and who have listened to our ideas with respect and interest. Most people are busy and have many pressures and objectives, to get a hearing is always an honour.

Finally, I wish my successor every success and my full support.

**Don Christie**

**President**