Open Source Software and Libraries
MSU Academic Library Symposium: October 4, 2007

Abstract: Open Source software and the programming habits surrounding Open Source software are becoming more and more popular in library settings. We’ll take a closer look at the possibilities and drawbacks of Open Source as well as some practical examples of Open Source applications in libraries.

Jason A. Clark
Digital Initiatives Librarian
Montana State University
jaclark@montana.edu
www.jasonclark.info
Open source: Cons

- Lack of documentation, support
- Lack of focus on user interface design
- Tendency to program with open source developers as an intended audience, rather than the general public
- Reinventing the wheel syndrome - refusing to learn lessons from proprietary software
Open Source: Pros

- Fewer conflicting priorities due to marketing pressures
- There is no single entity on which the future of the software depends.
- Availability of the source code and the right to modify it
Open source: Discovery

OpenSearch Plugins

http://www.lib.montana.edu/~jason/dev/tools/
Open Source: Experiments and Innovation

Montana State ETD Application

http://etd.lib.montana.edu/etd/view/
http://etd.lib.montana.edu/etd/view/itunes.xml
Open Source: Standard Skills and Programming Techniques

Montana State Libraries People and Resources Management Tools

http://new.lib.montana.edu/people/
http://new.lib.montana.edu/resources/