

Open Source, Open Standards

OPEN MINDS

Our Hybrid Experience

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In partnership with:



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OCF Basics

- Started as Open Interconnect Consortium – July 2014
 - Intel, Broadcom, Samsung, Atmel, Wind River
 - Broadcom withdrew (reportedly over IP policy differences)
- Widely viewed as being a direct competitor to the older AllSeen Alliance
 - Both aiming to standardize IoT middleware protocols.
- Major differences between OIC vs. AllSeen Alliance
 - Which open source license gets used
 - The role of specifications vs. open source code
 - How patents are handled
- OIC > OCF as of March, 2016.

Observations on AllSeen Alliance Approach

- Code comes first.
- Spec documents the function of the code.
- No licensing of alternative implementations via the spec.
 - Advantage: one implementation makes it easier to ensure interoperability.
 - Disadvantage: one implementation may not meet all product needs.
- Clearly separates copyright license (ISC) from patent policy
 - vs. many open source licenses that state or imply patent grants
- Patent policy covers contributions, not “you were there when we put it in”.
 - But other policies possible.
 - OIC members very critical of specifics of ASA Patent Pledge
- Mike’s opinion: ASA is a new way of doing open source, not really a new way of doing spec + open source

OIC/OCF Approach (1)

- OCF is a conventional specification-writing group.
 - Contributions covered – no opt outs
 - Everyone else is obligated too, but can opt-out
 - Base policy is royalty-free
 - Four exceptions per company every five years.
 - Opt-out-ers must list their claims.
 - Most likely outcome – royalty-free
- OCF owns certification mark, tools, program
- OCF **sponsors** an open source project (IoTivity)
 - IoTivity is hosted by the Linux Foundation
 - OCF pays the LF bill, pays for IoTivity events.
 - Companies and individuals do not get paid by OCF to code (although they in theory, could)

OIC/OCF Approach (2)

- IoTivity has meritocratic open source project governance
- No membership requirement to participate
- Very common Apache 2.0 license.
- Not everything in IoTivity has to be in an OCF spec, but nothing can be required in an OCF spec without an implementation in IoTivity
- Sometimes code leads, sometimes spec leads.

How Does It Work in Practice?

- Open source norms are like the English Constitution – unwritten but revered nonetheless
- Standards People vs. Open Source People
 - You do your thing, we'll do our thing
 - Linkage only at the highest level
- Built in conflict, but it works
 - Philosophical (which approach is better)
 - Usually between people from the same company
 - Power (given that we do both, who leads)
 - Whoever has the best idea
 - The need to certify tends to bring everyone together in the end

Summary: Why Hybrid?

- Match the widest range of business needs:
 - Open source licenses (especially the traditional ones)
 - Standards and mutual IPR agreements
- Use all available talent:
 - Technical people with great ideas don't all have the same process skill sets
 - Some know how to work in standards groups
 - Some know how to work in open source projects
 - It's unusual to find people who know how to do both