

A Case Study of Open Source Development Practices within a Large Company Setting

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Abstract : Open source communities have demonstrated that complex and enterprise grade software can be produced, supported, and maintained by self-organizing groups of developers using primarily electronic form of communication. Due to the inherent nature of open source development, a specific set of open source software development practices has evolved. While there is an ongoing research on the topic of applicability of open source development practices within a company setting, still little is known about their benefits and challenges. The objective of this research is to understand if and to what degree open source development practices observed within a mature open source community are aligned with development practices within a large software and hardware company setting. For the purpose of this case study a set of open source development practices that are present in a mature open source community has been identified. Then, development practices of a large, international, hardware and software company based in Sweden were assessed and compared to the identified open source community practices. It is shown that there are many similarities between a mature open source community and a large company setting in regard to software development practices. We also identify practices that exist in open source communities and that are not standard within a company setting, but whose implementation can result in an improved software development efficiency within the company setting.

Keywords : development practices, open source software, innersource, closed open source

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