Open has Won! How & Why Higher Education Should Enjoy the Spoils

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Abstract

According to the 2015 Horizon Report: "Support behind technology-enabled learning in higher education classrooms has reinforced the trend toward open communities and university consortia, as educators and administrators recognize collective action as a sustainable method of supporting upgrades in technological infrastructure and IT service." The report recommends, as "a major topic of interest to national governments and universities," participation in open initiatives "requires effective policy to become mainstream in practice."

Traditionally associated with software, today "open" is applied to describe both the accessibility of resources (i.e. data, revise, reuse, etc.), as well as the collaborative nature (i.e. governance) of the communities that manage them. Open clouds, open data & analytics, assessment-think, "open badges" (e.g. MOOCs), open content (OER), open source textbooks, etc. are all becoming as common as open source software. Yet, again from the report, "open is a multifaceted concept often mistaken to simply mean free of charge." Advocates of openness have worked toward a common vision that defines it more broadly-not just free in economic terms, but also in terms of ownership and usage rights.

With institutions-and the organizations, businesses and even government agencies that support them-adopting open initiatives and promoting "open licensing," authentic engagement across communities is vital to not simply managing this disruption, but embracing the innovation.

Drivers

- [Educational] vendor adoption: Adobe, Air; Amazon; AT&T; Blindside Networks; Canossa; Cisco; Citrix; Dell; Google; HP Enterprise; IBM; Intel; Akahnu; Pearson; Microsoft; Red Hat; Sun; Unisys; VMware.
- You’re already using it: Apache; Drupal; Kuli; Linux; Moodle; Sakai; Wordpress...

OER could make up 15% of the textbook market and other course materials and 19% of supplemental materials within five years, according to a survey of OER users, traditional textbook users and industry experts conducted by Cengage Learning.

Year of the MOOC: Popularity of open courses have brought to light other open initiatives, open access, open education, open data, open educational resource, open textbooks, etc.

Open Source is Easing the Software World. "Acceptance of open source software across industries--government, financial, manufacturing--and by recognized leaders/innovators (including among higher ed’s service providers) Adable, Dell, Google, Microsoft, etc.

Open Textbook Policies: Creation of law and policy in California, Utah, Washington, SUNY, UMass, etc. recognizing benefits in access, content metadata and costs.

U.S. Federal Source Code Policy

Enhancing the educational mission & administrative infrastructure...

- [Open Source Initiative] and [National Science Foundation] have formally defined open source software as:

- Source code is owned by the community, not the individual developer or corporation.
- The software is freely distributed to the public and can be used, modified, and re-distributed by others.
- Source code is freely available for anyone to examine, and the source code is available to developers worldwide.
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We want to set up a mechanism where we encourage people to participate in open education, there have to be the appropriate rewards and opportunities.

Don’t tell me “openness” alone will change education for the better, because it won’t. You have to start thinking in integrated and complex ways.

When we talk about openness, some of the challenges are going to be around how do we assess that material.

Everyone should feel as though they can expand the system.

If you could have a system where all the input is coming in from multiple users and the users are driving what the content is and how the systems work, that is a way we could improve education very rapidly.

The old model, where you produce a thing, and then you mass-produce that thing, and you get feedback, that is not the way.

If you could have a system where all the input is coming in from multiple users and the users are driving what the content is and how the systems work, that is a way we could improve education very rapidly.

Library principles are similar to open source principles, access to information is a public good...intelectual commons...free distribution...derivative works...communtiy is the strength..."