LINUX WORLD NEWS

INDIAN LIBRARIES EMBRACE OPEN SOURCE

What do the Indian Institute of Management in Kozhikode, the Indian Institute of Science in Bangalore, the Indian Institute of Technology in Bombay, and the Archives of Indian Labour, have in common? They all base their digital libraries on open source software, the Greenstone Digital Library Software, a multi-platform software for digitizing libraries, produced by the University of Waikato in Hamilton, New Zealand. 1st April (that is two months after version 2.63 was released) the British Council in Chennai, formerly known as Madras, played host to a lecture on this Java-based software, as part of a UNESCO-supported initiative to popularize open source in Asia.

Although the Greenstone distribution itself supports only English, French, Spanish and Russian, the software is not restricted to European languages and character sets. The Hindi and Kannada databases have been created by some of its Indian users, although not all of them are available online yet. A nationwide Support Organization Advisory Group has been formed to bundle Greenstone activities in India. It will be setting up an Indian download site and mailing-list, and organizing the Asian Greenstone Regional Training Workshop in Kozhikode this November.
http://www.hindu.com/2006/04/03/stories/2006040316000200.htm
http://www.greenstone.org/

LEARNING OPEN SOURCE IN PRAGUE

"It's time to take things in our own hands and become active creators instead of passive users of technologies", says Sophia Vajglova, one of the 20 participants of a web publishing training session for Czech women from non-profit organizations held in Prague, February 23-26, 2006. The workshops, given and organized by the Women's Information Technology Transfer (WITT), were – of course – powered by Linux and taught the women to use open source software to manage their communication and to use the web to promote their activities.

Writing content for the web, publishing with the content management system SPIP, privacy and security, gender and ICTs, communication tools (wiki, irc, voip),

as well as an introduction to open source software in general were some of the main topics. "Women from Central and East Europe and their opinions are rarely seen on the web. We try to get their voices online", says Joëlle Palmieri, one of the two international trainers.
http://www.witt-project.net/

NATIONAL FREE SOFTWARE COMPETENCE CENTERS

The interest of Norwegian authorities in open source solutions has continued to grow to a point where a national competence center for free software has now been proposed by the association of the country's local and regional authorities (KS), the local authorities of Buskerud and Troms, the ICT industry's lobbyist organization IKT-Norge, Buskerud University College and the Drammen region's regional council.

The idea behind the proposal is not just to enable authorities to save public money by using open source solutions but clearly to foster the local ICT industry which – following the country's oil industry – is already the second biggest economic sector.

Another idea behind the center is to build a national competence network which would enable the public sector to obtain reliable support. The hope is that this would make it easier for public authorities to decide in favor of open source solutions than it is today.

The cities of Drammen and Tromsø have been suggested as the center's physical location; this would be the second national free software competence center in Scandinavia, following the establishment of Denmark's "nationalt videnscenter for software" in April. The proposal is well-timed: all local and regional authorities in Norway are required to look into the use of open source software by the end of 2007.
http://www.friprogramvare.org/ (Norwegian)
http://ksikt-forum.no/filearchive/forslag_til_nasjonalt_kompetanse-senter_for_fri_programvare.pdf (Norwegian)
http://www.ks.no/templates/Startside.aspx?id=9876
http://www.oio.dk/software/videnscenter (Danish)