

For Immediate Release

April 22, 2008

Relais products go Open Source

Relais International is excited to announce that we will be moving all or part of the Relais software to an open source model.

Why are we doing this?

Open source software has been a buzzword in the library community for several years now. There's no doubt: open source is exciting. But many still don't understand why.

Reliability

Open source software is peer-reviewed. It is exposed to extreme scrutiny, with problems being found and fixed instead of kept secret until the wrong person discovers them. This peer-review process results in a code base that's more reliable than closed proprietary software. Mature open source software is as bulletproof as software ever gets.

Security

With proprietary software, source code is "closed," and support and future development of the product rely on the success and resources of a single vendor.

In contrast, open source solutions rely on stable code bases developed and supported by many providers worldwide. As a result, libraries using open source products typically have more support options than those using proprietary software.

User Driven

Proprietary software vendors must focus on providing functionality improvements that meet the needs of the majority of their customers in a large and diverse market.

In contrast, open source software features emerge from the community of users that have paid for or developed and contributed them. This makes open source software user-driven--you decide what features are important and deserve attention rather than a vendor.

Innovation

When the code is open, users are free to innovate and improve the software to meet their needs. They can accomplish this either by joining the development process directly, or by using companies such as Relais International to develop their ideas. Free innovation also means that open source software has much faster development cycles when compared to proprietary

What are the implications for our customers?

Relais International will review all existing contracts and agreements, we will then provide customers with options for converting to a service agreement that incorporates support, maintenance and custom development.

Our aim is to make this transition with minimal impact to our existing customers with the exception of providing more options and flexibility for those customers who are interested in adding to and modifying Relais as you work to address the needs of your user community.

When will this happen?

The first modules to be moved to an open source model will be available before October 1, 2008.

There are a number of key decisions to be made as this process moves forward, including the selection of an appropriate license under which the Relais software (or part of the Relais software) will be available. We will keep all customers informed of our progress and invite your comments and suggestions.

“We are fully dedicated to Relais, the company and the product” says Clare MacKeigan, Chief Operating Officer of Relais International. “Our customers are the basis for our success to date and we want this to continue. We anticipate that this decision will result in an even stronger more vibrant user community. Each of our customers brings a unique perspective to the table, and by giving more options to capitalize on this we know that all of our customers will benefit.”

Please follow our web site and blog for more news as this process unfolds.

In the meantime if you have any questions, comments, suggestions or concerns please don't hesitate to contact us.

Relais™ International Inc is based in Ottawa, Canada and has been providing systems and services to support interlibrary loan and document delivery services since 1996. Relais International (www.relais-intl.com) assists libraries in implementing intelligent and automated methods to support the delivery of documents. Relais products range from scanning stations through to fully integrated request management, scanning and delivery software suitable for a single library through to a consortium.

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