Why do we like Quantum GIS

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RESUMO

While the server part of the FOSS stack offers highly competitive, often winning, solutions, the desktop part typically lags behind, having reached maturity only in the last years. The GIS sector is not an exception: only recently free desktop GIS are starting to be seen as serious alternatives to proprietary solutions.

This situation has to be unlocked, if we want to allow migration to FOSS, because of the strong need for interoperability, typical of GIS systems.

Among desktop GIS, our preferred solution is Quantum GIS, because:

- Is now among Open Geospatial Consortium registered products
- it is based on the Qt toolkit, so it is fast to develop, and easy & nice to see & use
- it is not java, therefore:
    - it can be used in a Linux Terminal Server
    - it is independent from a java virtual machine and from the choices of its main producer (Sun, now Oracle)
    - it is fast(er)
- it has Python bindings, so it is easy to extend with very limited investment
- it links to the best free GIS software:
    - GRASS, the most powerful analytical GIS
    - PostGIS, the enterprise relational spatial database
    - SpatiaLite, the brand new personal geodatabase
    - and all the rest of the open source stack: GDAL/OGR, MapServer, Proj.4, GEOS, etc.
- it is completely managed by the community, so it is easy to implement needed features and fix bugs, with a very low entrance barrier
- it is completely free, thus avoiding legal issues
- its development is fast: many features have been added and many bugs have been fixed over the last two years

Over the course of the last months an extensive work of bugfixing/testing has been carried on, leading to a version of QGIS (1.2 at the time of writing this abstract) that has virtually no critical bugs.

Many updates have been made to the GRASS interface by fixing/adding a number of modules as long as the GRASS shell. New editing tools have been added together with new core and 3rd part plugins. Moreover a completely new labelling framework is expected for the 1.3 version.

Faunalia provides technical support for Quantum GIS and contributes to its development:

- fixing bugs
- adding functions
- developing plugins
- translating documentation

Paolo Cavallini is a member of the Project Steering Committee.

Palavras chave: *Quantum GIS, QGIS,*