

Press release

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Open source shows the way out of dependency on Microsoft

An increasing amount of companies start to realize how dependent they are on Microsoft. In the sector “Groupware” open source producer Kopano provides the tools to get rid of this dependency.

A group of European journalists have diagnosed Europe’s administrations and governments to have a “fatal dependency of Microsoft”. Using the example of Microsoft Office, their research unveils a chain of dependencies on this single company. Their article also describes how some of these organizations could already break free from their dependency by using LibreOffice.

By far the biggest culprit in this chain of dependencies on other Microsoft solutions is Outlook, which is used by the vast majority of the organizations. This is perceived as the biggest challenge – especially when it comes to teamwork involving email and calendars.

Web-based apps – the trend towards independency

We see companies try to move away from the dependency on products like Outlook, which only integrates with services of a single vendor. In this case Microsoft Exchange or Office 365. This can only be achieved by replacing Outlook with a more open application.

Web-based applications have become a viable alternative and are increasingly popular. On smartphones you simply cannot do without web-based applications. This trend can also be seen with producers of software – they integrate their own software as ‘widgets’ in web-based applications as well – it prevents them from having to develop and maintain integrations for specific programs. In the end, both the vendor as well as the user benefits from this reduction in dependencies.

Kopano offers a way out

Kopano is a fork of Zarafa. It offers a platform for communication, content sharing and self-organization through Kopano DeskApp. This web-based application enables software vendors to easily integrate an application with Kopano (e.g. via widgets). Kopano DeskApp is available for Windows, MacOS and Linux. Most of these features and integrations are brought to the browser by Kopano WebApp. Smartphones, tables and Outlook (2013 and newer) with the Kopano Outlook Extension can be connected through Z-Push, the open source implementation of the Exchange ActiveSync Protocol (EAS).

Solutions like Kopano, combined with LibreOffice help users to disengage themselves of the dependency on Microsoft and enable companies to choose their software stack more freely.

Companies aiming to reduce dependencies and regain control over their software and data can test the code of the open source product themselves.

[1] <http://www.investigate-europe.eu/en/new-investigation-europes-dire-dependency-on-microsoft/>

[2] http://blog.gestreift.net/2015/05/zarafa_outlook_aenderung/

About Kopano

Kopano is a fork of Zarafa which is groupware compatible with Outlook. Many former employees of Zarafa now work for Kopano in Delft, Hannover and Plochingen. They develop new apps and integrations, which enable communication beyond what regular email can do.

The base of the system is provided by the Kopano Core server, which can be operated on premise, hybrid or in private cloud setups. Kopano users can work with Kopano DeskApp on Windows, macOS or Linux. DeskApp combines groupware features (such as email, contacts and calendaring), videotelephony, chat and much more in a single application. Almost all of these features are also available in the browser when using Kopano WebApp.

Moreover Kopano is the main contributor to the Z-Push project, an open source implementation of the Exchange ActiveSync protocol (EAS). The ActiveSync protocols can be used by mobile devices like smartphones and tablets. It can also be used by Microsoft Outlook, which has its feature set expanded with sharing and group functions by the Kopano Outlook Extension. The source code of all components is available under <https://stash.kopano.io>. Kopano customers get access to the latest packages that have gone through a quality assurance process.

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