

FreeBSD Ports Licensing Infrastructure

A Brief Introduction

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Legalese

- I am not a lawyer
- What I am talking about is no substitute for proper legal advice

Licenses in General

There are many popular license models out there

- ASL
- BSD
- GPL v1 v2 & v3
- LGPL 2.0 2.1 3.0
- phk Beerware
- MIT
- Etc, etc, etc

Why license software?

- CYA
- Protect your IPR
- Other reasons that are important to you as a developer

Reason's cont'd

- Some licenses make it easier to share and or distribute the code base
- Other licenses are more permissive
- Some licenses are more restrictive
- The debate really could rage on as to which is better and which is worse

Understanding your choices

- Who really reads or accepts licenses in OSS?
- Apparently there are those who do!
- For everybody else, there is
Mk/bsd.licenses.mk and
Mk/bsd.licenses.db.mk
- When you maintain a port, you should know what the license is
- The licensing infrastructure give you a choice to read and accept a license

History

- Alejandro Pulver, alepulver@, did the original work
- He designed the original code that would be hooked by a port Makefile
- With the right code block in the Makefile, a user could read, and accept or reject installation based on what they read

Basic Example

- After the COMMENT, declare your license

```
LICENSE=      GPLv2 # or whatever
```

- It is that easy :)

More examples

- Some ports have combined licenses, use something like the following

```
LICENSE_COMB= multi  
LICENSE=      BSD LGPL21 MPL
```

- NB no quotes around the licenses

Finding the license in a port

- Many, but not all, licenses are found in the root of the project
- Often named README LICENSE COPYING
- This will hopefully give you the license to declare in the Makefile
- The infrastructure will utilize these files to display the license

License in port, cont'd

- Perhaps the license is in a non-standard location, declare the following

```
LICENSE_FILE= license/license.txt
```

- This is relative to `${WRKDIR}`

Bringing it together

- By default, all licenses are accepted
- To fine tune what licenses you want to auto-accept auto-reject or prompt to ask, consider setting the following in /etc/make.conf

```
LICENSES_ACCEPTED= GPLv2 LGPL BSD  
LICENSES_ASK= GPLv3  
LICENSE_REJECTED= BADLICENSEv1
```

- This will bring up a dialog(1) box that will prompt you for your choice

Updating the infrastructure

- Is the infrastructure perfect?
- No, file a PR for improvement requests
- Is the license database comprehensive?
- No, file a PR to include a new license

Links and References

Why you should use a BSD style license,

http://www.freebsd.org/doc/en_US.ISO8859-1/articles/bsdl-gpl/article.html

Beerware explained, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Beerware>

Interpreting the License Group Analysis,

http://fossology.org/interpret_the_license_group_analysis_report

Comparison of free software licenses,

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Comparison_of_free_software_licences

GPL FAQ, <http://www.gnu.org/licenses/gpl-faq.html>

Open Source Initiative, <http://www.opensource.org/licenses/index.html>

Thanks to Alejandro for all his initial work in setting this up, and thanks to all the contributors that have added their license requests, enhancements and so on.