

Tech Evangelists and open source

By *srlinuxx*

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Mike Boich

Jeff Barr

Steve Balmer

Steve Jobs

Richard Stallman

Jon "Maddog" Hall

Tim O'Reilly

Linus Torvalds

Al Lowe*

*Al Lowe? Who is Al Lowe? Did you know at Microsoft they have a job title called "Developer Evangelist"? What do they do? They work with the public to gain developer feedback and organize developer days.

What the above list all have in common is they are all evangelists for one form of tech or another. And why am I writing about them? In my last column (Ubuntu 9.04: Wow) I was ripped to shreds as being nothing more than a glorified cheerleader. Don't worry, this isn't going to be one of those columns where I defend my words and my background. What I thought I wanted to do was take a look at how tech evangelism really effects the IT industry - especially open source.

We have all been evangelists at one point or another. Whether it be trying to sell corporate headquarters on a new piece of software or hardware or even convince an end user that what they now have in front of them is, in fact, better than what they used to have.

But for some of us, especially in the open source world, being an evangelist is looked upon poorly.

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