

Open source not ready for higher education?

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A rather peculiar article at Inside Higher Ed examines a report published by IMS about open source software adoption in higher education. The article asserts that while interest in open source software is increasing, "it's not quite ready for prime time." A claim like that is certainly provocative, and in the context that it is expressed in the Higher Ed article, it really isn't defensible. What is not immediately apparent when one reads the article is that those quotations only address software specifically designed for higher education, not open source software in general.

In reality, the report itself found that open source software is being used on a massive scale by universities. According to the study results, 57 percent of all American higher education institutions are using open source software products somewhere within their infrastructure. 53 percent of all American higher education institutions use Apache, 51 percent use Linux, 38 percent use MySQL, and 35 percent use Firefox. Those numbers clearly show that open source software is widely used by American universities.

So what is the article referring to when it talks about open source software that isn't "ready for prime time?"

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