

# How Would Software Freedom Have Helped With VW?

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Created 30/09/2015 - 9:05am

Submitted by Roy Schestowitz on Wednesday 30th of September 2015 09:05:15 AM Filed under [OSS](#) [1]

Would software-related scandals, such as Volkswagen's use of proprietary software to lie to emissions inspectors, cease if software freedom were universal? Likely so, as I wrote last week. In a world where regulations mandate distribution of source code for all the software in all devices, and where no one ever cheats on that rule, VW would need means other than software to hide their treachery.

Universal software freedom is my lifelong goal, but I realized years ago that I won't live to see it. I suspect that generations of software users will need to repeatedly rediscover and face the harms of proprietary software before a groundswell of support demands universal software freedom. In the meantime, our community has invented semi-permanent strategies, such as copyleft, to maximize software freedom for users in our current mixed proprietary and Free Software world.

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