

DO YOU
REALLY
GET WHAT
YOU PAY
FOR?

Addressing Open-Source Alternatives

An opinion letter from JNetDirect's CEO

At the most recent JavaOne conference, I was talking with a developer who had evaluated our JDBC driver, but was implementing an open source alternative. I asked him how it was proceeding and he responded by saying that he was adding a feature lacking from the open source project, but present in ours. I asked him how long he had been making this change and he responded, "about three and a half months."

I immediately knew it was unlikely that he would become a customer of ours. JNetDirect builds software components for expert developers. A key characteristic of an expert developer is knowing the value of their own time and effort.

The Value of Real Support

Recently, a customer of ours on the west coast upgraded their IBM WebSphere platform. Unexpectedly, the JDBC drivers were loaded differently in this new version than in previous versions. After an unsuccessful attempt for us to resolve this problem remotely, I made the decision to send our product's lead engineer to California and fix their problem on-site.

The contract we had with this customer was not a high dollar amount. JNetDirect paid the expenses of this support call, making the specific financial transaction of questionable profitability. However, this customer will never again debate the value of JNetDirect's commitment to supporting our products.

Anyone want a free puppy?

The old adage still holds true: *as with a free puppy, the work and expense start once you get it home.* Sara Garrison, VP of Technology for Visa USA, recently commented on many of the challenges of selecting open source solutions. The "single biggest" issue she identified was not knowing whether open source software can run in demanding environments and that support is never just a phone call away.

Sara also noted that, "Open-source licensing is the one gotcha in all of this." Visa USA's legal department must fully vet all open-source licenses, because programmers - not lawyers - wrote most of them; something that makes companies uneasy. Many open source projects include legal obligations to share enhancements, bug fixes and even the technology that leverages the open source itself.

The Choice of Expert Developers

Fortunately for us and our customers, expert developers understand that JNetDirect makes specific investments to protect our customers. Our legal agreements protect the rights of our customers and our international law firm is prepared to defend those rights worldwide.

On the technology side, we protect our customers' future with innovation driven from close collaboration with the industry leaders in the technologies we support. JNetDirect is a licensee of the Sun J2EE platform for the certification of our JDBC products. We are a Microsoft Certified Partner and work closely with the teams who develop the technologies we support.

But it is not only the technological innovation that is significant. The engineering methodologies for product definition and architecture, regression testing, code review and scheduled releases all contribute to lower cost of ownership. Open source projects often include dozens of "dot" releases a year to catch up with commercial innovations. How is your organization expected to evaluate the readiness of such releases for your environment? What is the likelihood that these hastily added features have been reviewed and beta-tested across disparate deployment platforms? Have any new features violated international patent protections? Who can be held accountable if technical, support or legal issues arise?

At JNetDirect, we own that accountability. We back it with an unmatched Software Component Guarantee. For expert developers, the selection of JNetDirect and our products is hardly a difficult choice.



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JNetDirect Software Component Guarantee

JNetDirect builds advanced software components for expert developers. Our components are unconditionally guaranteed to reduce development time, perform reliably and deliver specific benefits.

JNetDirect will exceed your expectations in product quality and technical support or we will buy our product back from you at the full purchase price.