



Regional government of Andalusia uses free software to advance society

Overview

Country or Region:

Andalusia (Spain)

Customer Profile:

Regional Government of Andalusia (Junta de Andalucía) manages public services for 8 million of citizens.

Business Situation:

Until recent times, Andalusia has been playing a passive role in the innovation and new technologies field. The regional Government wants to become a leader position in the new Information and Knowledge Society in order to improve their citizens' quality of life and advance technology and industry in the region.

Solution:

By creating their own GNOME-based GNU/Linux distribution tailored to their needs, they have been able to help school children, rural areas and people with disabilities to improve their quality of life. This strategy has also encouraged entrepreneurs looking to set up small software businesses in their home region.

Benefits:

- Low cost deployments
- Provide a free and inexpensive tailored software that satisfies citizens' digital rights.
- Digital literacy, with a focus on children and marginalized areas of society.
- Development of local software industry.

Introduction

Andalusia is an autonomous community of Spain. It is the most populous and the second largest, in terms of land area, of the seventeen Spanish autonomous communities. The Regional Government of Andalusia (Junta de Andalucía) is a large institution that provides public services to more than 8 million of citizens.

The Information Society is a new social paradigm founded on the possibility and capacity of its citizens, companies and governments to obtain and share information in the same moment in which it is generated, wherever it comes from and with the mediation of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT).

Since 2002, one of the strategic lines of action of the Regional Government of Andalusia (strategic plan *i@landalus 2002-2004*) has been to advance Andalusia into the Information and Knowledge Society. This plan was reinforced legally by Decree 72/2003 of Measures to Encourage the Knowledge Society in Andalusia which specifies the use of Free Software as a means to achieve this ambitious goal.

One of the instruments created by the Decree was the GNU/Linux distribution *Guadalinex*, released for the first time in 2003. *Guadalinex* is a GNOME-based distribution and it has been massively deployed in public schools, libraries, telecenters and elderly centers all over Andalusia.



Andatuz, the Guadalinux mascot
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“The Junta de Andalucía Administration will promote the dissemination and utilization of Free Software properly secured aimed at personal, household and educational use. To this end, it will establish a help service on Internet for installation and use of such products.”

The Decree 72/2003 of Measures to Encourage the Knowledge Society in Andalusia.

Article 31.3. Free Software.



Situation

The Regional Government was aware of the risk of the inequalities that exist between those that have access to the information and those that do not. Economic, sociocultural and territorial determinants continue being among the main obstacles to the advancement of the New Technologies and Internet in Andalusia.

Using free software, Andalusia has a great opportunity to position itself in the new Knowledge and Information Society, as other developed countries are doing. Not only does free software bring the internet to citizens but it also enables Andalusians to create new software companies solving their own problems and creating new jobs and a better quality of life.

By giving citizens access to the internet, telecommunications and computer infrastructure, the government can create an Information Society and all of the benefits it brings.

The Decree 72/2003 of Measures to Encourage the Knowledge Society in Andalusia established the legal background for the main lines of action. The use of Free Software was one of these measures.

Guadalinux

Guadalinux is the GNU/Linux distribution based on GNOME created by the Junta de

Andalucía. Its birth in 2003 is linked to another Regional distribution: LinEx (Linux from Extremadura), which pioneered the use of Free Software in

schools in the world. Andalusia and Extremadura are collaborating to develop Free Software solutions.

Like LinEx, the first versions of Guadalinux were derivatives from Debian. However, starting with version 3, in 2006, Guadalinux is based on Ubuntu.

The decision to use GNOME in Guadalinux was partly because it was chosen on LinEx, but there were several other important reasons behind that decision:

- GNOME has leading technology in accessibility which is important to ensure that all citizens have access to technology.
- GNOME has regular six month releases which is important for software products like Guadalinux that are relying on updates and patches to the technology they are using.
- GNOME has a strong presence in Spain. In 2002, the GNOME annual conference GUADEC was celebrated in Seville. Since then, GNOME has had two more of their annual European conferences in Spain and has created a GNOME Hispano group with its own annual conference in Spain, GUADEC-ES.

The election of GNOME is evaluated again in every new Guadalinux version, and it continues to be the desktop of choice for Guadalinux. This and other technical issues are



Software libre campus for children

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Guadalinex EDU

discussed at the Guadalinex developer summit, which is open to the public under the umbrella of the Junta de Andalucía. These summits follow a scheme similar to the Ubuntu Developers Summits, where it is common that Guadalinex developers also attend to collaborate with Ubuntu and share Guadalinex contributions.

Guadalinex is a distribution developed with common people in mind. With Guadalinex users can do all the typical tasks, but also it is guaranteed you can use it to access all the public digital services like making a medical appointment, applying for a job to the public employment services, etc.

Guadalinex EDU

Since 2003, the Junta de Andalucía has the very ambitious "Plan And@red" to incorporate computers into the classroom. The "ICT centers" are schools with a computer and telecommunication infrastructure. There are more than 2,000 such schools all over Andalusia.

The Education Department of the Junta of Andalucía has a special tailored edition of Guadalinex called Guadalinex EDU.

Guadalinex EDU is running on more than a half million computers of the Andalusian ICT School network. Guadalinex EDU takes advantage of the network infrastructure and servers from the center to offer systems that:

- allow any member of the center to become a remote user of its data in any computer of the center.
- transmit multimedia content to the computers of a classroom
- interact between students and teachers via the computer

This massive infrastructure is controlled remotely by the Advanced Management Center (CGA, Centro de Gestión Avanzada).

In the 2009-10 school year, the Education Department of the Junta de Andalucía has started a new program called "ICT School 2.0" in collaboration with the Spanish Education Ministry, for delivering 10" netbooks to students. In 2010 it has delivered 173,500 netbooks to students with Guadalinex EDU and 17,000 laptops/netbooks to teachers. This new plan extends the use of the computer as a pedagogical tool from the schools to homes, enabling families to participate in their children's educational process.

Guadalinfo

The Guadalinfo project is a social initiative for supporting innovation, training and employment, which goes beyond its initial conception focused on digital literacy in rural and marginalized areas.

Today, Guadalinfo is a large project led by the Junta de



Guadalinfo logo

<http://www.guadalinfo.es>

Andalucía in collaboration with the Provincial Councils of Andalucía and it is managed by the public Consortium "Fernando de los Ríos". The Guadalinfo Project is co-financed with European Regional Development Funds (ERDF).

There are about 600,000 Andalusian citizens belonging to this network and 764 Guadalinfo centers and CAPIs (Public Internet Access Centers):

- 636 in municipalities with less than 10,000 inhabitants
- 56 in municipalities between 10,000 and 20,000 inhabitants
- 72 CAPIs in marginalized areas in cities.

Guadalinfo is defined as an open space with high digital and local value that fosters economic, social and sustainable development and whose main pillars are in innovation, talent, the value of human capital, technological culture, integration into the knowledge society and connection and openness to the new global society. The strong presence in the municipalities of the Guadalinfo network turns Guadalinfo centers into a key tool for the identification, detection and activation of new innovation processes.

The system of choice of Guadalinfo centers is a tailored version of Guadalinfo known as Guadalinfo edition.

The accessibility capabilities of GNOME are very valuable for the Guadalinfo project because the Guadalinfo centers have been added to the network of centers for people with disabilities. Furthermore, Guadalinfo has contributed to improve even more the ally support of GNOME as one of the actions of their program "Guadalinfo Accesible" with contracts for improving some ally features of ORCA, Evince and other GNOME components.

Guadalinfo in Public Libraries and Elderly Centers

The Junta de Andalucía collaborated with Red.es, a Spanish National Government entity, to provide access to Internet to the Public Municipal Libraries of Andalucía. This program was co-financed with European Regional Development Funds (ERDF). The deployment was done by the Culture Department of the Junta de Andalucía using Guadalinfo Bibliotecas. The Internet connection allows users to access the Catalog of the Andalusian Library Network.

Guadalinfo has been used as well for desktop computers in computer classrooms in Public Elderly Centers managed by the Social Affairs Department of the Junta de Andalucía.

