Open-Source Software

By Rachael King

Find an Enterprise Software Alternative

If you're a user of business software, chances are there's an open-source alternative to the expensive licenses pitched by big vendors like Microsoft (MSFT), Oracle (ORCL) and SAP (SAP). But don't expect sales people to come knocking. You'll need to do your own legwork to find the right stuff.

A good place to start is SourceForge.net, a Web site where nearly any open-source software might be found and downloaded. While open-source software is free to download, there are usually costs associated with maintaining it and training employees how to use it. Companies can purchase those services in annual subscription fees from commercial open-source vendors.

We asked Bernard Golden, chief executive officer of Navica, a consulting firm that helps companies implement open-source software, to recommend some of the most popular alternatives to conventional software.

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