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collective

Facilitating Tools for
Free Culture & the Commons

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Historical Context

Two Paradigms Clashing

	Attitude	Content	Perspective	Focus	Main Actor
Closed	Opacity	Proprietary	Individualistic	Profit	Corporation
Open	Transparency	Free Culture	Commons	Social	Community

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Multifaceted Crisis of the Old Paradigm

- Financial crisis
- Environmental crisis
- Energetic crisis
- Social crisis

Context of Clash

- Wikileaks & reactions

- Arab revolutions & spin-offs in the West

- Internet control (ACTA, eG8, NATO)

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Communities Challenges

- Difficult to form or join a **new collective**
- Collectives work **isolated**, and are poorly connected
- Difficult **communication** flow between nodes
- **Collaboration** among them is rare

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*How to promote the creation, in each field, of community-driven **alternatives** to the Closed Paradigm?*

*How to build **tools** that facilitate collaboration among communities?*

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Coming Back:
Two Paradigms clashing

	Attitude	Content	Perspective	Focus	Main Actor
Closed	Opacity	Proprietary	Individualistic	Profit	Corporation
Open	Transparency	Free Culture	Commons	Social	Community

Which types of collectives follow the Open paradigm?

- Transparency & Free Culture => **Reproducible** ®
- Commons => **Reinforcing the Commons**
- Social => **Not-for-profit** $
- Community => **Grassroots**

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Moving Collectives towards...

- Let's encourage collectives to follow these principles!

- Let's highlight & connect those who follow them!

Need of a new tool: Move Commons (I)

- Difficult to join a new collective
  - Volunteers need to **easily find** social initiatives/collectives
    - & Collectives want to be **easily found**!
  - Volunteers need to easily **understand** the collectives' work & approach
    - & Collectives need to **attract volunteers**!
- Collectives work isolated, and are poorly connected
  - Collectives need to easily find other collectives with **common interests**

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Need of a new tool: Move Commons (II)

- Using badges with icons and keywords

- Using some semantic code to facilitate searches

> «which initiatives exist in "*Beirut*" that are a **grassroots** organisation, **non-profit**, delivering **Creative Commons** content, related to "*alternative education*" and "*teen-agers*"?»

In the New Paradigm

Free/Libre/Open Source Software (FLOSS)

- **Successful example** of collaboration within communities

- Networks building & sharing common goods (Free Software)

Tools which were needed for the success of FLOSS

- **Philosophical Tools**: manifestos, definitions, works of R. Stallman

- **Legal Tools**: copyleft, licenses

  – e.g. GPL

- **Technical Tools**: tools that facilitate & promote collaboration among developers

  – e.g. Mailman, CVS, Wikis

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Tools needed for the success of Free Culture?

- **Philosophical Tools**: FreedomDefined, L. Lessig, etc

- **Legal Tools**: Creative Commons

- **Technical Tools**: Needed!!

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Tools needed for the success of the **Commons**?

- **Philosophical Tools**: P2PFoundation, D. Bollier, E. Ostrom, etc

- **Legal Tools**: Needed!!

  - anti-patent, environmental regulations, etc

- **Technical Tools**: Needed!!

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Today's Practices

Current Problem: Communities need tools for communication & collaboration

- Why not just using FLOSS collaborative tools?

- **We tried!**

    - ourproject.org (since 2002)

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ourproject .org

A "social sourceforge"

- Provides web services

  - for collaboration

  - hosting, lists, wiki, forums...

- For Social Initiatives

  - using free licenses

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- Today: 1,000 projects, 1,500,000 visits/month

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ourproject .org

A "social sourceforge"

- Provides web services
  - for collaboration
  - hosting, lists, wiki, forums...
- For Social Initiatives
  - using free licenses
- Today: 1,000 projects, 1,500,000 visits/month
- However:
  Only groups with a geek, move forward...

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Conclusions

- **Usability problem**: mainly for Geeks
- Dependency on geeks to build/maintain tools/websites
  - **Bottle-neck**
- Solution needed: **New usable tools**

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Similar Example: Photography in the Past

- **Usability problem**: it was only for professionals

- Dependency on them to develop photo-films
  - **Bottle-neck**

- Solution: **New usable tools**: Digital Camera
  - Allowed users to be autonomous and thus boosted photography

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Existing Solutions (I)

- Commercial (Google Docs, Facebook, Twitter, Youtube...)
  - **Usable** proprietary commercial services
  - However:
    - Centralized,
    - Antiprivacy,
    - Ads,
    - Censorship...

Existing Solutions (II)

- Alternatives (Diaspora, identi.ca, OpenOffice...)
  - Tend to roughly **imitate** commercial tools
    - *instead of building a new model that makes the existing model obsolete!*

  - Non-geeks **don't see a reason** for moving away from proprietary tools

Existing Solutions (III)

- All these solutions, too frequently:
  - **Focused on sharing, not on building**
    - on Communication not on *Collaboration*
    - on interaction for Fun, not for *Activism*

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Our Desired Solution:

- **Collaborative** tools for Free Culture & Commons

- **Usable** decentralized non-commercial free tools

- Trying to find **New Models** that make existing tools obsolete

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From Sharing to Building
From Communication to Collaboration

"To change something, build a new model that makes the existing model obsolete"
Buckminster Fuller

Our Proposal: Kune (I)

- A web-tool & infrastructure:
  - Focused on the **collaborative work** of social initiatives/academic groups/etc
    - Simultaneous edition: forget Google Docs
- Communication
  - **Social Networking**: forget Facebook for activism
  - Chat
- **Multimedia** galleries* & gadgets
  - forget Youtube & Flickr

(*) under development

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Our Proposal: Kune (II)

- Easily building of **web-pages***

- Many tools in one

  - New email, Docs, blogs, wikis, task-lists, mailing-lists

  - Barter: forget about Ebay

  - Maps, Polls, Mindmaps, twitter streams & third-party extensions...

- Encouraging **CreativeCommons** contents

- **Usable**, **Customizable**, **Decentralized** & **Free**/Open Source

Our Proposal: Kune (III)
Quick Demo

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Summing Up

- Comunes.org (@comunes) tries to build tools for social initiatives to reinforce the Commons

  – kune.ourproject.org ~ @kuneproject

  – movecommons.org ~ @movecommons

  – ourproject.org...

- We are not yet there, but we keep trying...

  "Life is trying things to see if they work"

  Ray Bradbury

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