

## OSS recommended picks for business users

By [Kevin Kwang, ZDNet Asia](#) on December 23, 2010

Amid an enterprise environment that is now more receptive to utility computing and focused on service-based contracts, open source software adoption has grown over the past two years and entered the IT mainstream.

In an earlier ZDNet Asia report, Vuk Trikovic, senior analyst at Ovum, said the 2008 recession sent a call for change in the business landscape, in which the model of paying for support was winning mindshare over traditional licensing models. He added that the recession had raised the profile of cloud computing, which had a positive spillover effect on open source. "It's clear that cloud computing and open source go well together, with [third parties providing cloud services that are powered by open source," Trikovic noted.

ZDNet Asia spoke to three open source software vendors and developers to unveil their top open source enterprise software picks, which they would recommend to help boost business operations and growth.

### **Workflow, content management**

Sujee Saparamadu, CEO and co-founder of open source HR (human resource) management startup, OrangeHRM, pointed to workflow application, ProcessMaker ([www.processmaker.com](http://www.processmaker.com)).

Saparamadu said the software was designed to give users the freedom of integrating HR processes, or workflows, that they want instead of having to adapt their workflows to competing software. "We explored many alternatives to deliver a greatly customizable product and concluded that ProcessMaker was by far the best," he said.

The CEO then recommended enterprise content management (ECM) tools offered by open source vendor, Alfresco ([www.alfresco.com](http://www.alfresco.com)).

He noted that he particularly appreciated the fact that the software has application programming interfaces (APIs) that make it easy for other third-party vendors to integrate their applications.

Brian Reale, Colosa's CEO and co-founder, also singled out another open source content management, MindTouch, in his choice picks.

Reale, who is also co-founder of the company that developed ProcessMaker, told ZDNet Asia in an e-mail that the OSS has a "very interesting approach" to content management and wikis.

MindTouch's Web site states that its flagship product, Technical Communications Suite ([www.mindtouch.com](http://www.mindtouch.com)), is designed to create, manage and improve discovery and curating process in a company's Web portal.

Reale said: "They have a great team and are innovating constantly in the area of content management. I like how they are adding vertical extensions to their product."

He also highlighted Openbravo ([www.openbravo.com](http://www.openbravo.com)), a Web-based enterprise resource planning (ERP) software. Openbravo, according to Reale, is a useful business tool and he pointed to the program's latest 2.5 version release as "outstanding".

The ERP application integrates accounting, sales and customer relationship management (CRM), procurement, inventory, production and project and service management, allowing each functionality to be added or dropped from the user's Web browsers, according to Openbravo's Web site.

Reale added: "[Openbravo] is successfully developing an ecosystem of plugins that extend their product...and these guys are clearly the innovation leaders in open source ERP software."

### **Productivity, groupware messaging**

When queried, Novell developer and contributor to OpenOffice, Michael Meeks, picked LibreOffice ([www.documentfoundation.org](http://www.documentfoundation.org)) and Evolution (<http://projects.gnome.org/evolution/>) as two software programs that he "personally loves".

Of LibreOffice, Meeks noted that "despite much hype" about Web-based productivity suites, the thick-client office suite will remain the "backbone of document editing", which makes the open source software a good alternative to Microsoft Office and Google Docs.

LibreOffice was created after a group of programmers, called the Document Foundation, decided to branch out from OpenOffice.org and published beta versions of LibreOffice for download in September. OpenOffice is the open source rival to Microsoft Office that was formerly created by Sun Microsystems and now owned by Oracle.

Describing Evolution the "premier groupware client on Linux", Meeks said the OSS gives users a slick e-mail and personal instant messaging package that connects to all standard protocols, as well as Microsoft Exchange and Novell's GroupWise collaboration software.

