JOHAN LINÅKER (RISE), CIARÁN O'RIORDAN (OPENFORUM EUROPE)

Behind the Scenes of Open Source Program Offices in the Public Sector: Insights and Guidelines

RI.
SE

OSPO = Open Source Program Office

"center of competency for an organization's open source operations and structure" – TODO Group

"a cross-functional team to help define and steer an organization's open source management strategy and organizational readiness" – OSPO Alliance

"an institutional organizational construct that supports and accelerates the consumption, creation, and application of Open Source software" – OpenForum Europe
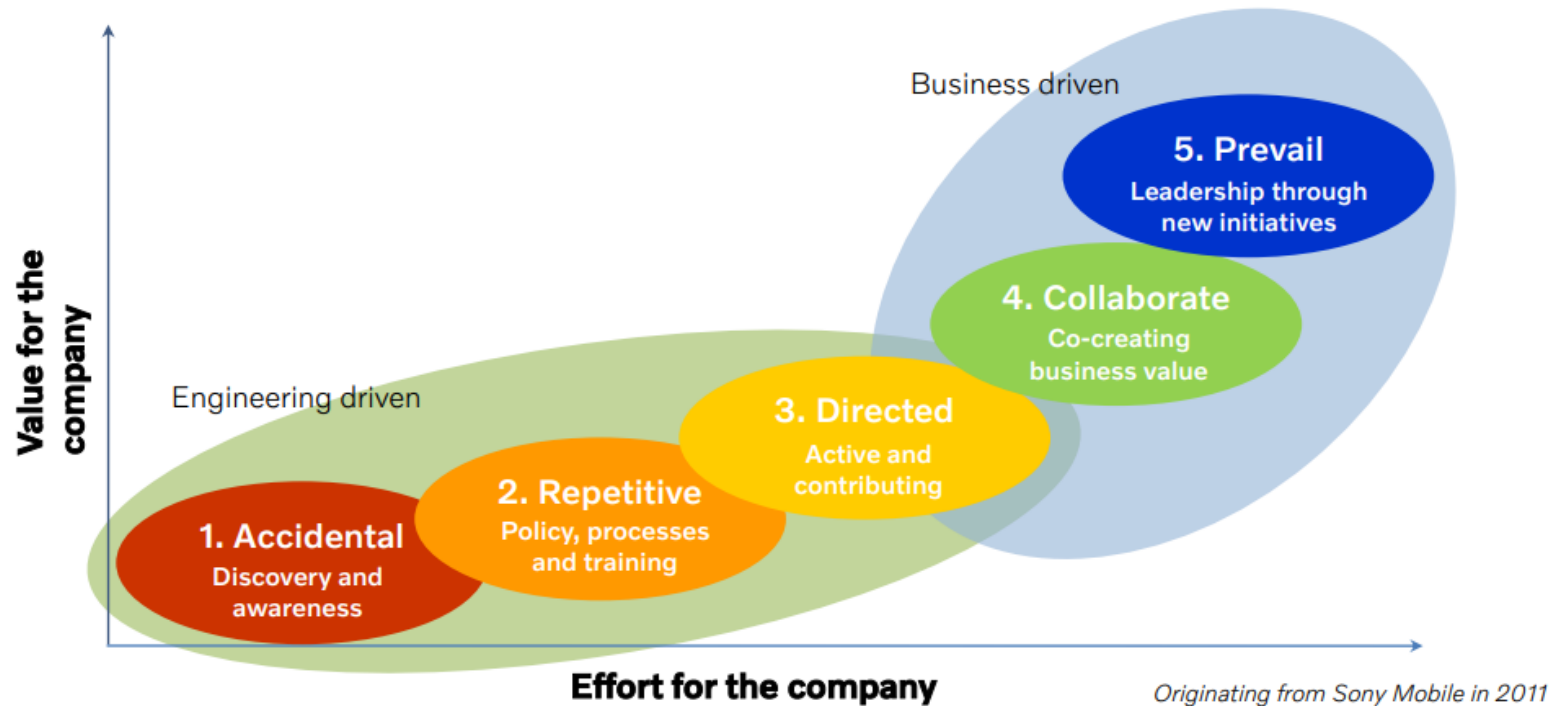
RI.
SE

So, what is an OSPO?

- Center of competency and support

- Drives organizational readiness and maturity forward on open source

- Designs and executes an organization's overarching open source strategy

- Provides voice of reason and objectivity on the benefits, risks, and costs of open source and how to balance between

- Supports use, development, and collaboration on open source

RI.
SE

So, what is an OSPO?

- Naming convention not always very well suited for public sector

- Other naming conventions, and structures occur

- Focus should be on the support-function and competence/resource provisioning needed to solve needs at hand

RI.
SE

The Open Source Maturity model

Value for the company

Effort for the company

Business driven

Engineering driven

5. Prevail
Leadership through new initiatives

4. Collaborate
Co-creating business value

3. Directed
Active and contributing

2. Repetitive
Policy, processes and training

1. Accidental
Discovery and awareness

Originating from Sony Mobile in 2011

RI.
SE

How are OSPOs organized and structured in public sector organizations?

RI.
SE

No one suit fits all...

National government OSPO – France

- Law in place since 2016 by extension requiring software developed by public sector to be released as open source.

- A central group (Free Software Unit) within French Interministerial Digital Directorate

- Educates and supports development and growth of processes, knowledge, and culture

- Guides, catalogs, and interactive support provided for users in terms of finding, choosing, and collaborating on open source

- Developer community spanning public and private sector, academia and civil society supporting efforts

Local-government OSPO – City of Paris

- Role under the City's CIO, providing support for the City's departments at large on OSS adoption and development

- Main focus on growing Lutece – an e-service platform with plugin ecosystem

- Developed by the City of Paris since beginning of 2000s

- Drives the development through internal IT department. Open to conributions, onboarding new cities and universities

- Pre-packeging containerized solutions provided to lower barrier to adoption

- Working to grow community nationally and cross-border

Photo by Chris Karidis | https://unsplash.com/photos/nnzkZNYWHaU

Foundation-based OSPO – OS2

- Association of 80+ Danish municipalities, including some regions and state agencies

- Projects are initiated by smaller numbers of members with development procured from ecosystem of vendors

- Governance and project development process in place. Vendors sign an MoU.

- Copyright transferred to OS2.

- Technical committee responsible for long term maintenance together with vendor(s). Procurement through municipalites directly.

- Additional municipalites can join at any time. Finacial logic based on size.

Foundation-based OSPO – Open Cities

- Open Cities (Otevřená Města) – a Czech non-profit gathering 20 cities in Czech republic to support their digitalizations

- Recieves and hosts OSS projects initaited by public entities. Facilites joint requirements engineering and planning

- Currently hosts three projects, including Cityvizor - an open source tool for transparent municipal management

- Collaborates with civil tech and hacker communities

- Features implemented by Open Cities directly with support from the municipalites. City of Prague a lead user.

Photo by Ouael Ben Salah | https://unsplash.com/photos/S2Wek5-5oEc

Institution-focused OSPO – Swedish Insurance Agency

- Working towards a national public sector cloud platform based on open source to reduce costs and increase interoperability and digital sovereignty

- Has a central center of competency for supporting the agency in adopting and working with critical open source projects

- Development happening both internally and towards the communities

- Guidelines and processes developed for acquisition, development and collaboration on open source. Adopted by other public secttor organizations in Sweden

Academic OSPOs – Lero

- Constituted by an internal community of subject matter experts

- Support and train researchers in how to develop, collaborate and disseminate software-based research-outputs as open source

- Considers open source as an instrument for open science, with a broadening interest for other areas there within

- Ambition of extending the OSPO and open source as an instrument to the Technology Transfer Office, similar as to Trinity College Dublin

- Rapid growth of Academic OSPOs in the US

Which suit to pick?

Differences of a public sector OSPO

Profit motive	Efficiency
Level of cooperation decided based:	
Competition factors	Efficiency & effectiveness
Show *their* value, take credit, keep users	Show good governance
Need to stand out, focus on innovation	Priority on stability, inclusion, availability
Single hierarchy	Hierarchy of hierarchies
Multiple legal jurisdictions	Single legal jurisdiction
Multi-national	Single geographic area
Competition law & cooperation	Investments can't distort market

Differences of a public sector OSPO

|	
Profit motive	Efficiency
Level of cooperation decided based:	
Competition factors	Efficiency & effectiveness
Show *their* value, take credit, keep users	Show good governance
Need to stand out, focus on innovation	Priority on stability, inclusion, availability
Single hierarchy	Hierarchy of hierarchies
Multiple legal jurisdictions	Single legal jurisdiction
Multi-national	Single geographic area
Competition law & cooperation	Investments can't distort market

RI.
SE

PA OSPO role #1: Procurement

- Training of procurement officers

- Catalogues

- Coordinated procurement of services

PA OSPO role #2: Using FOSS

- Tech help for users encountering bugs

- Training for users – materials, documentation

- Community involvement – What benefits? How? worth it?

- Security audits
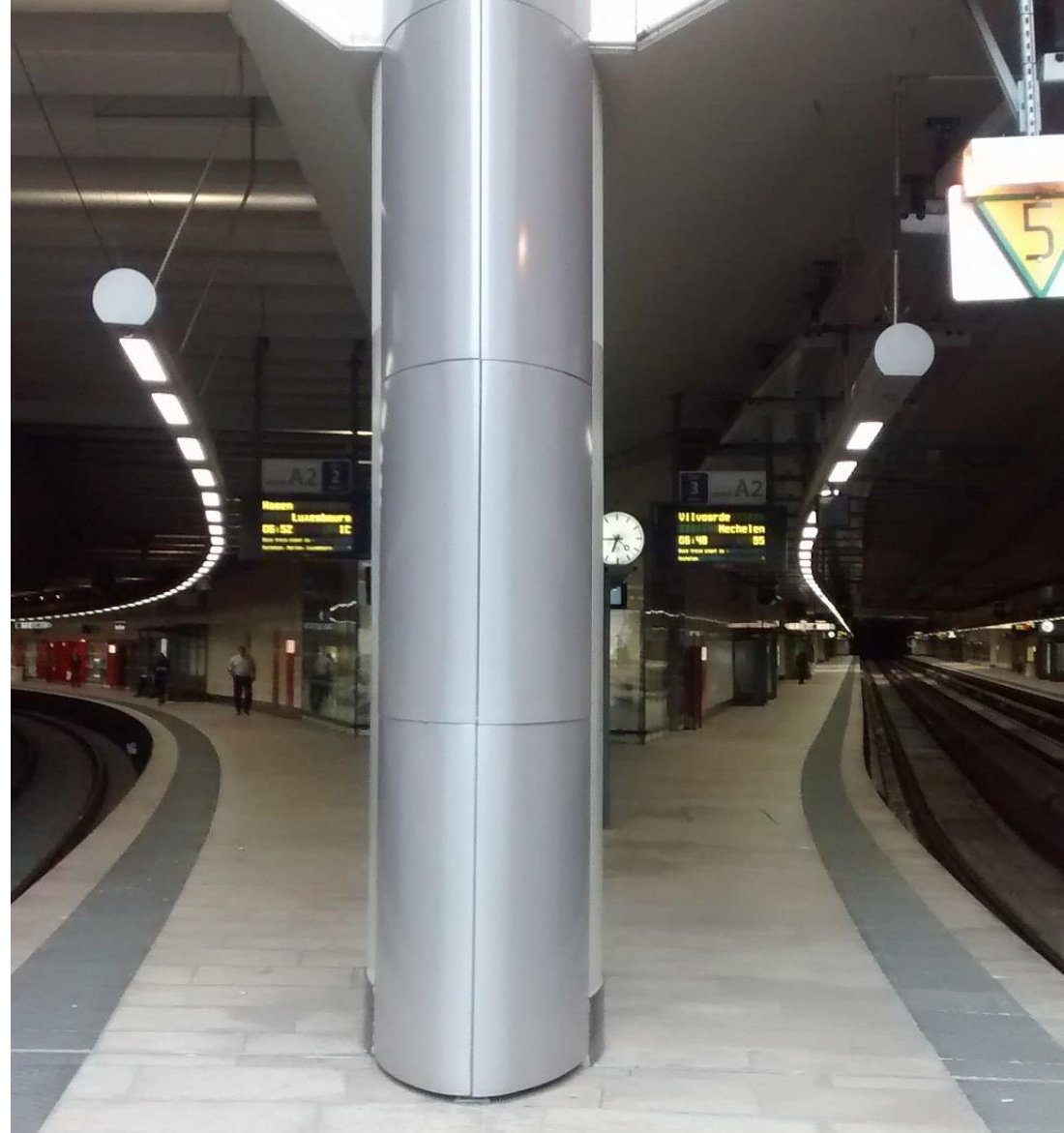
PA OSPO role #3: Publishing

- Tech issues

- Legal issues – licences, authorship

- Community building & interaction – get the benefits available

- Help with setting policies, such as having a CLA or not or what's in the CLA

- How to make reuse possible (needs specific attention because it's not currently happening)

PA OSPO role #4: Coordination

- Co-financing among administrations (dev, docs, training)

- Hub to bring people in contact, to share info

PA OSPO role #5: Legislative input

- How FOSS is developed

- How new laws would help or hurt

- How to contact FOSS experts