

# **GNU Dictionaries**

**The License & The Collaboration System**

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# Introduction

- Last year, Arabeyes group received a request from Wikitionary administrator for appending Arabeyes's dictionary to Wikitionary project, and a very interesting discussion started in the Arabeyes mailing list.
- Here we have a GPL dictionary, and we want to insert it in an FDL project, can we do it?

# GPL vs. FDL

This simple question, will lead to several important questions:

- Which is more suitable for a dictionary: GPL or FDL?  
And:
- What is Dictionary considered originally: a software component or a text?  
And once you think that it's a database, neither a software component nor a text, you might say:
- Which is more suitable for a database: GPL/LGPL or FDL?  
And finally:
- What's the basic difference between GPL and FDL?

# GPL vs. FDL (cont.)

- The basic difference is that FDL focuses on the material as a printed material, but not as a software library.
- While GPL/LGPL discuss the library issues, but not the printed material issues.
- But here, we're talking about (**Dictionary**),  
On the other meaning,  
We're talking about (**Database**)!



**So...**  
**What's Dictionary?**  
**What's Database?**

# Technically, what's dictionary?

- By simple analysis, you can realize that dictionary basically, is not a code; it's something real, you can print it, publish it for human readers. But in the same time, in practical, it's a (library), that could be understood and used by software applications, so that they can employ it, and capitalize on it, for there own sake.
- Simply: it's a **printable library**.
- And actually, this is database!

# IPM

## The Intellectual Products Matrix

**Printable**                      **Library**                      **License**                      **Collaboration system**

<b>Software</b>	x	y	LGPL/GPL	CVS
<b>Text</b>	y	x	FDL	Wiki/HTTP
<b>Databases</b>	y	y	??	??
<b>Images (Arts)</b>	y	y	CC	x
<b>Media (Arts)</b>	x	y	CC	x

# The Requirements

So, we need:

- A GNU license for Databases/Dictionaryes, which considers:  
Library issues, and printing issues.
- A powerful and agile collaboration system which can really capitalize on the power of databases.

# The License

It should cover and discuss all the potential usages of a dictionary:

- A software dictionary.
- A printed dictionary
- Using their terms in commercial/noncommercial media materials.

# The Collaboration System

Massive appending

No web interface  
required

Wiki/HTTP	X	x
SQL/SMTP	y	y

- Appending contributions via POP3/SMTP client mail is the best way for a collaborative database project.

# IPM

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<b>Text</b>	y	x	FDL	Wiki/HTTP
<b>Databases</b>	y	y	GDL (GNU Dictionary/Data base License)	SMTP/SQL
<b>Images (Arts)</b>	y	y	CC	x
<b>Media (Arts)</b>	x	y	CC	x

# Feedback

- “You cannot **copyright databases** in the US AFAIK. There was a case about a phone dictionary”
- “A dictionary requires as much work as a phone book and isn't a very **creative process**”
- “you cannot copyright the name + number in that phone book, since that is considered a **‘fact’**.”
- “a list (database) of **genomes** for a bunch of species isn't copyrightable either”
- “why would we regard some **dictionaries' definitions as better than others?** There is not a single, correct definition of any English word”.
- “The amount of work isn't important, it's about the **creativity**. Writing all those definitions in the dictionary requires creativity, so you get copyright on the dictionary”.

# Feedback: Subjects to copyright

- Normalization
  - Designing UML/ERD
- Structuring something unstructured
  - Word definitions are not “Facts”

# Conclusion

- GPL vs. FDL
- What's dictionary?
- IPM
- The Requirements
  - A GNU Database License
  - An Agile Collaboration System
- The Improved IPM
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# References

- The request for Arabeyes dictionary:  
<http://lists.arabeyes.org/archives/doc/2005/August/msg00012.html>
- Feedback about this paper in GNU Mailing list:  
<http://lists.gnu.org/archive/html/gnu-misc-discuss/2006-09/index.html>

*Thanks for Listening!*