

Proposal for Unisyn Open Source and Voting Software Foundation

“The open source model includes the concept of concurrent yet different agendas and differing approaches in production, in contrast with more centralized models of development such as those typically used in commercial software companies. A main principle and practice of open source software development is peer production by bartering and collaboration, with the end-product (and source-material) available at no cost to the public.”

Excerpts from Wikipedia 2010

Introduction

Open Source software is one of the key elements of providing a transparent voting solution; however, various barriers exist to its successful integration into new voting systems. These barriers include:

1. Lack of mediated forum for discussion
2. Unwillingness of vendors to release key components to Open Source
3. Certification barriers
4. Security concerns

Proposed Solution

Create a non-profit foundation focused on the development of Open Source Tabulation and Ranked Choice Voting (RCV) libraries, the key elements of a voting system. Libraries will be available to everyone for the purposes of code review, testing and verification.

Why Unisyn?

Unisyn is uniquely poised to create the foundation as it is the only voting company that has a digital optical scanning system certified to the 2005 Voluntary Voting System Guidelines (VVSG) set forth by the U.S. Election Assistance Commission (EAC).

Our experience and expertise, supported by the donation of the Unisyn OpenElect® Tabulation and RCV code from our 2005 certified system would provide the essential first step in infrastructure for which libraries can be established.

Unisyn will donate the Tabulation and RCV code from its 2005 certified system as the baseline for the libraries.

Goals of Foundation:

1. Create a set of Open Source libraries to support the Tabulation and Ranked Choice Voting functionality of a voting system
2. Provide a mediated forum for technical dialog between all interested parties
3. Create test harnesses for verification of library function (with both generated and live data)
4. Provide forum for Open Source contributions to the product
5. Support and encourage complete transparency of vote counting software
6. Work towards a standard for voting system interoperability
7. Promote methods to expediting Open Source software through certification process