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Beyond Code: Expanding the Open Source Ethos to Build a Fairer Economy and Stronger Democracy

Stefano Pampaloni

Bolzano - 08/11/2025

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Beyond Code: Expanding the Open Source Ethos to Build a Fairer Economy and Stronger Democracy

A cultural call to action to bring open values beyond software and into the foundations of business and society

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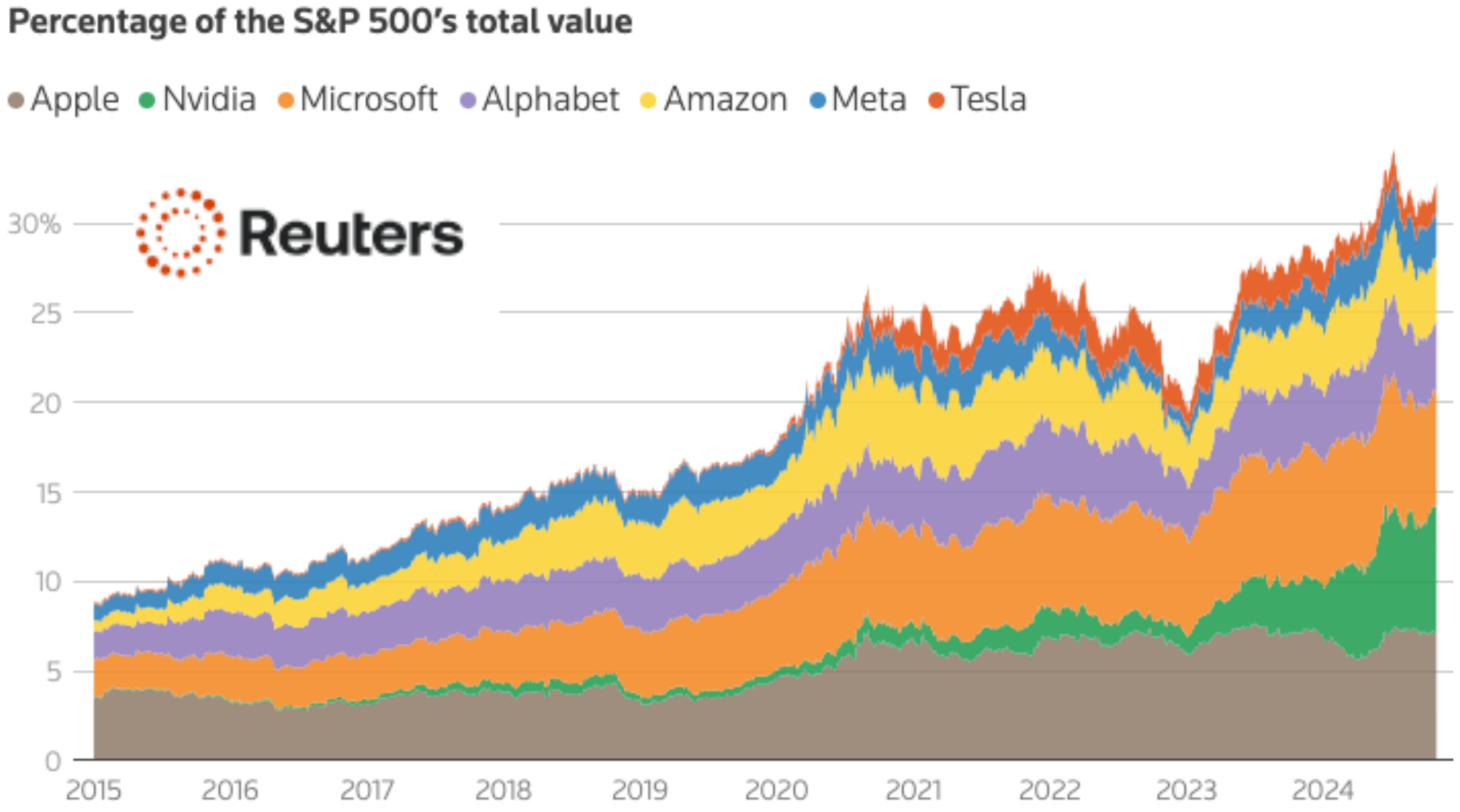
The Big Picture



- **The Magnificent Seven:** Apple, Nvidia, Microsoft, Alphabet, Amazon, Meta, and Tesla
- **Technology Dominance:** Since 2015, the combined share of these companies has grown significantly, with some fluctuations around 2020-2021,

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https://www.reuters.com/data/magnificent-seven-monitor-2024-10-30/

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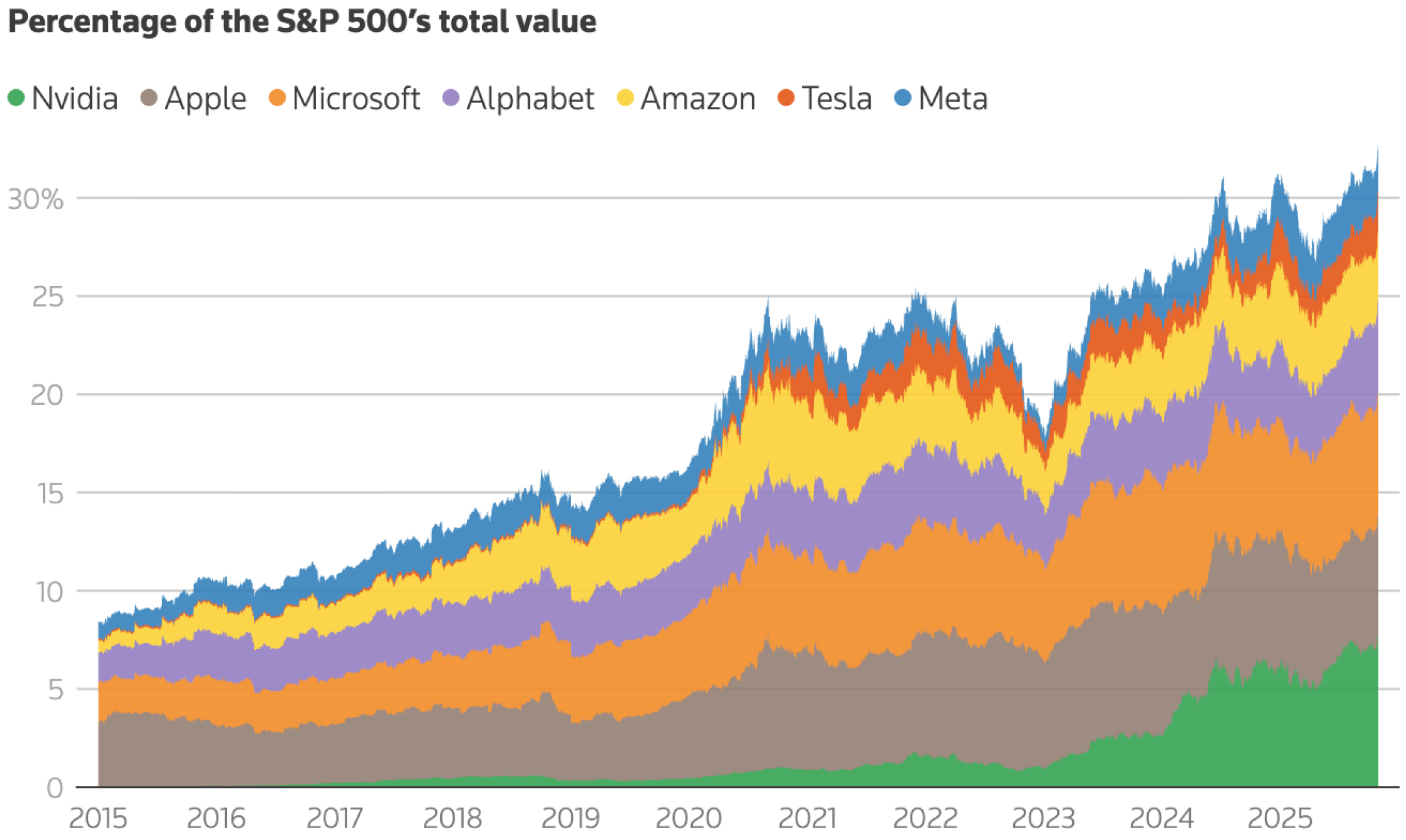
The Big Picture

The "Magnificent Seven" companies now make up nearly a record 37% of the S&P 500's total market capitalization and have consistently outperformed the index. But that growing concentration raises

https://finance.yahoo.com/news/magnificent-seven-makes-one-third-140006761.html



Extractive capitalism & democracy under pressure

Extreme concentration: *Magnificent 7* now ≈ **37% of S&P 500** market cap (all sectors, whole economy). finance.yahoo.com

"Superstar firm" dominance: tech & finance attract outsized capital and market power; concentration keeps rising. econstor.eu

Inequality persists: in OECD countries the **top 10% earn ~8.4×** the bottom 10% on average. OECD

Innovation skew: misallocation in R&D linked to slower productivity growth (evidence for the U.S., illustrative globally). elibrary.imf.org

Freedom House

Freedom Map Countries Issues Perspectives Policy Recommendations

PRESS RELEASE February 26, 2025

NEW REPORT: Amid Unprecedented Wave of Elections, Political Violence and Armed Conflict Fueled 19th Consecutive Year of Decline in Global Freedom

19th straight year of decline in global freedom; 60 countries worsened in 2024.

Freedom House

Global democracy score at a multi-decade low (EIU Democracy Index 2024 avg. **5.17**).

Economist Intelligence Unit

Trust is fragile and polarized across institutions (Edelman Trust Barometer 2025).

edelman.com

THE DELIBERATELY BLURRED LINES BETWEEN PROFIT-SEEKING AND NATIONAL DEFENCE

Takeover by Big Tech

Big Tech is rewiring the American state; it's not just a case of corporate capture but a transformation of sovereignty itself.

BY FRANCESCA BRIA

The Authoritarian Stack
How Tech Billionaires Are Building a Post-Democratic America — And Why Europe Is Next
https://www.authoritarian-stack.info/

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Why Open Source is a credible antidote

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Harvard study finds Open Source is worth up to $8.8 trillion

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Why Open Source is a credible antidote

Gold in the vaults of the Bank of England. Not worth as much as OSS.

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Global GitHub Developers by Region

Region	Stand-out markets	2024 → 2025 net new devs
APAC	India, Japan, Indonesia	**+13M**
LATAM	Brazil, Mexico, Colombia	**+3.2M**
Europe	Germany, United Kingdom, France	**+6.3M**
Africa & Mid East	Nigeria, Turkey, Egypt	**+3.4M**

A growing movement that must play a role beyond code

https://github.blog/news-insights/octoverse/octoverse-a-new-developer-joins-github-every-second-as-ai-leads-typescript-to-1/

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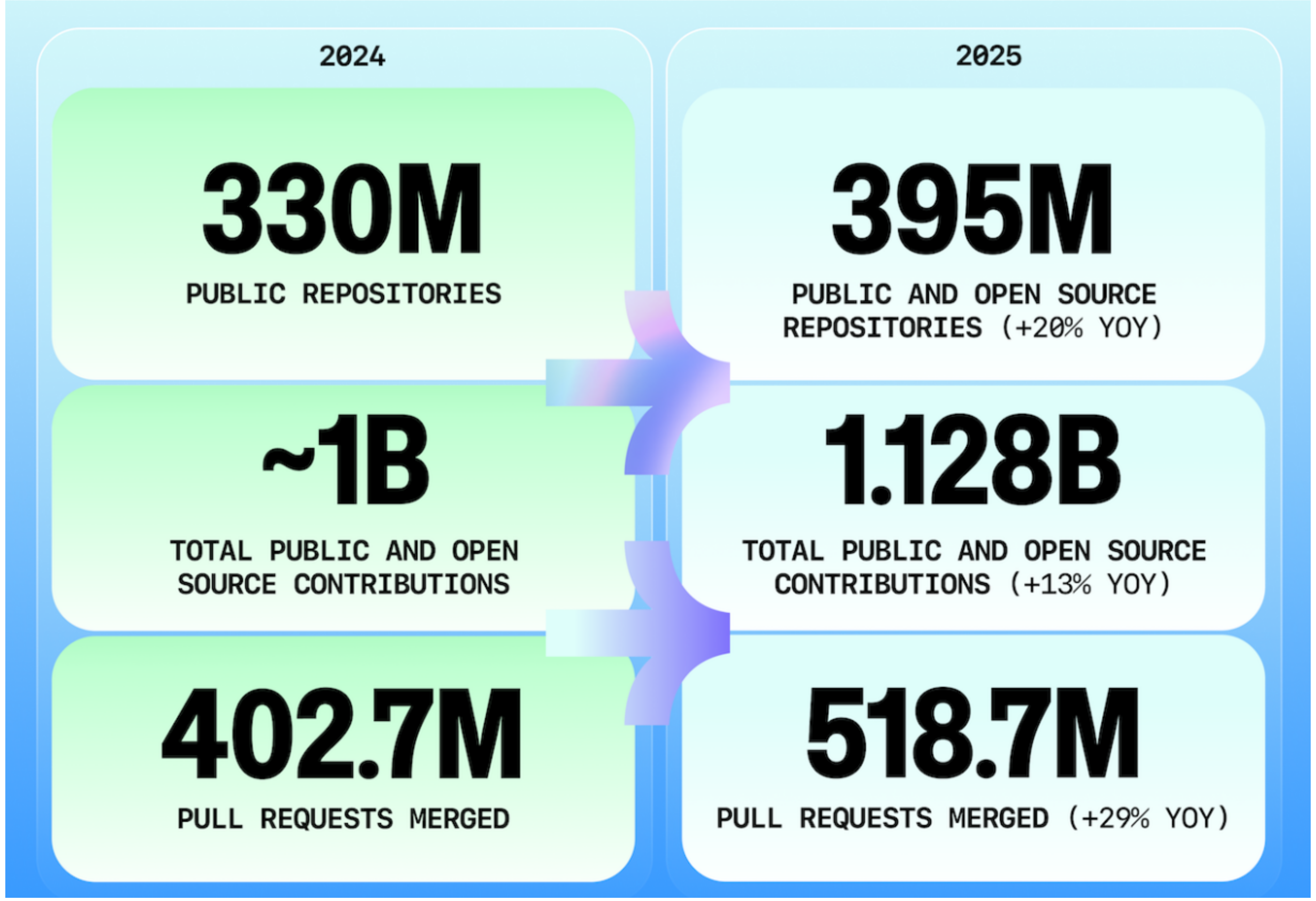
Opensource in 2025



A growing movement that must play a role beyond code

https://github.blog/news-insights/octoverse/octoverse-a-new-developer-joins-github-every-second-as-ai-leads-typescript-to-1/

OSS already won by the numbers

180M+ developers on GitHub; **1.12B contributions** in 2025.

Linux powers **~58% of websites** and **100% of TOP500 supercomputers**.

In independent audits, **96% of codebases contain OSS**

On average, **~77% of the code** comes from OSS

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Why OSS values counter today's risks

Transparency → Democratic trust

Collaboration → Resilience: distributed ecosystems reduce single points of failure

Open governance → Shared power: clear rules, rewards **merit**, not **rent-seeking**.

Interoperability → Fairer markets: open standards and portability limit lock-in and concentration.

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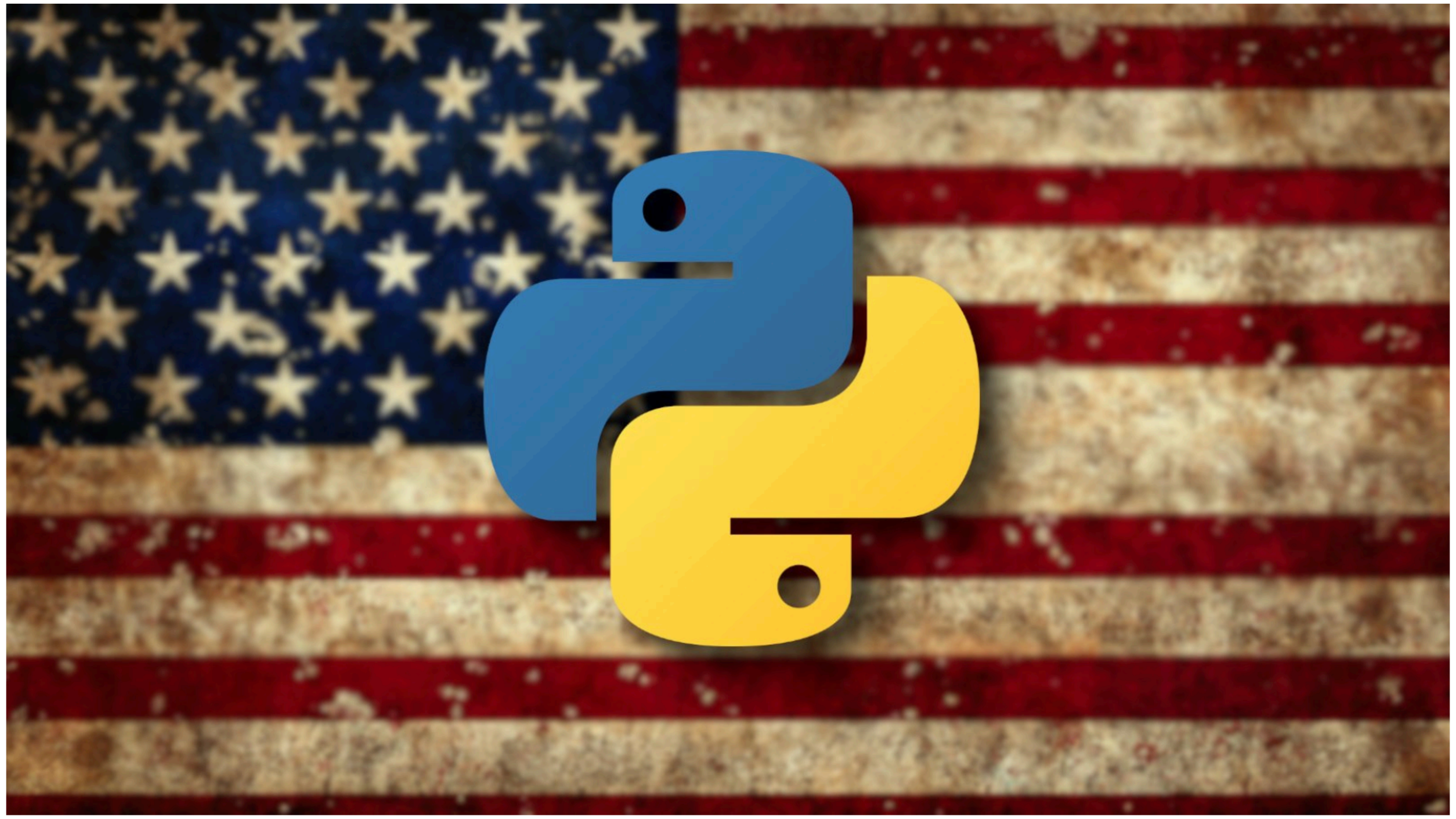
Case Study: Values in Action
Python Software Foundation



Python rejects $1.5M grant from U.S. govt. fearing ethical compromise

European Tech Fund

Venture capital: **Runa Capitale, >Commit and more**

Github fund

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The Model: Sustainability & Funding Patterns

OPEN SOURCE ENDOWMENT

endowment.dev

Permanent endowment: invest the principal, fund OSS yearly from returns.

Transparent index allocates grants by usage impact and risk.

Open governance + public reporting: a durable safety net for critical projects.

Are we alone?

Interviste - 10 Dicembre 2024

Capitalismo e democrazia: quale equilibrio tra competizione, conflitto e cooperazione? Intervista a Fabrizio Barca

Are we alone?

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FEATURE PHILOSOPHY & CULTURE

The Endless Possibilities Of Open-Source Urban Design

When architects relinquish their dreams of total control, they unlock the power of organic, iterative development that is sensitive to the needs of people and nature.

BY DANIELE BELLERI AND CARLO RATTI

MAY 18, 2023

ROSA LUXEMBURG STIFTUNG
NEW YORK OFFICE

PLATFORM COOPERATIVISM

Challenging the Corporate Sharing Economy

By Trebor Scholz

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What You Can Do on Monday

- Developers: prefer OSI licences; upstream early; publish SBOMs; join a foundation.
- Companies: adopt an open-first policy; fund critical OSS; measure upstream KPIs; buy public code.
- Policy makers: procurement for open standards; fund Digital Public Goods; enable data trusts.
- Citizens & communities: choose open platforms; support co-ops; demand portability & transparency.

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What You Can Do on Monday

- ✦ Adopt purpose & governance in writing; make it inspectable.
- ✦ Budget for shared infrastructure and open participation.
- ✦ Design for portability and exit rights from day one.
- ✦ Measure what matters: trust, participation, public value — not just revenue.

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Liberty Leading the People

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