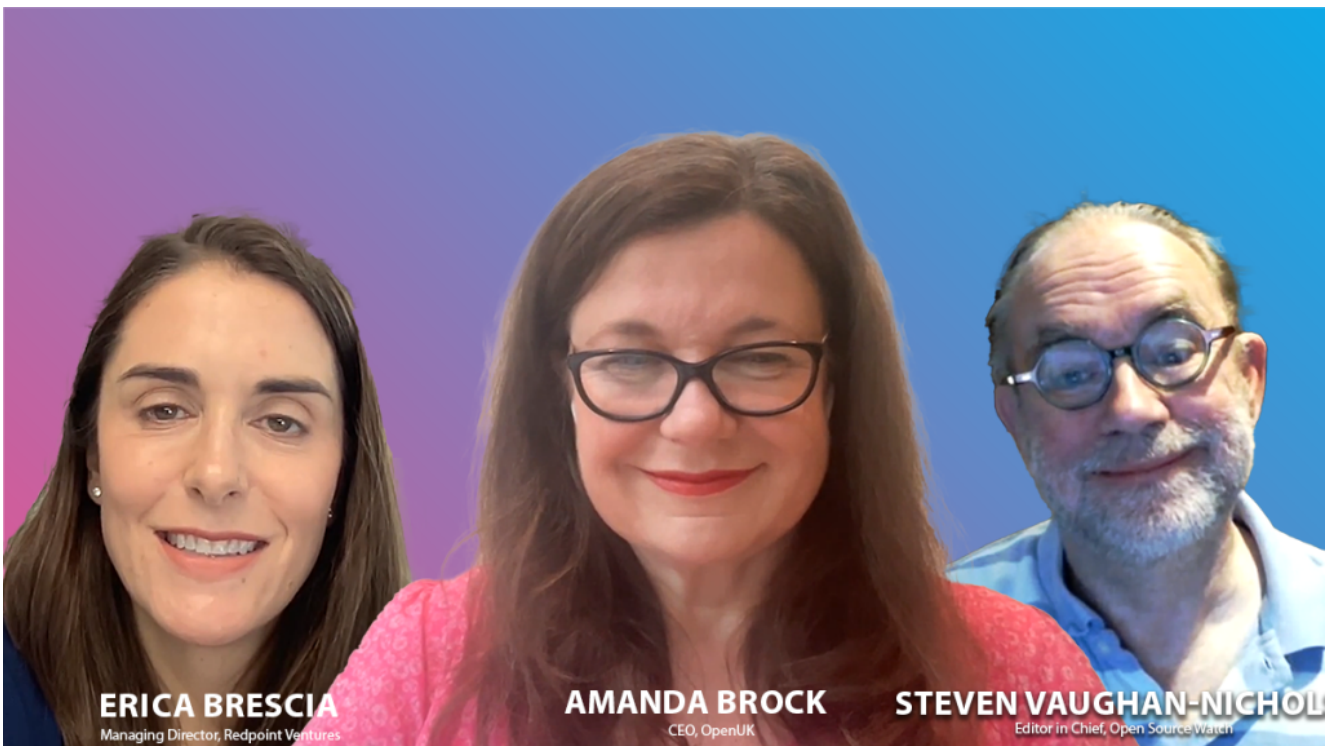AI / OPERATIONS

Open Source AI and the Llama 2 Kerfuffle

The definition of open source is being challenged in the age of AI. Three experts join the conversation to discuss what needs to evolve.

Aug 18th, 2023 8:54am by Alex Williams

VOXPOP

Try our new 5 second poll. It's fast. And it's fun!

Is Python Getting too Complicated for New Users?

No way: The improvements are much needed, backward compatible and optional to use.

Yes: Python's chief value is its simplicity, not its speed. Production can be executed with R, or C++ or some other performant language.

You can't even call AI open source without any certainty, said Amanda Brock, CEO of OpenUK, in a recent discussion about open source in the age of AI.

It's even more muddied when considering the roots of open source, the trend away from purely open source licenses, and how to treat AI, which encompasses almost everything, particularly personal and health data protected by privacy laws.

Open Source AI and The Llama 2 Kerfuffle - Challenging the Definition of...

Our topic, Llama 2, and the conversation that ensued when the large language model (LLM) launched and the team at Meta labeled Llama 2 open source. Llama 2 is not open source, even though the Meta blog says it is, as does the page for downloading Llama 2. It's confusing. For instance, "open innovation," is the term that Meta uses on their site. So, what is it? It may have support from the vendors but it's not open source.

The Open Source Initiative (OSI) emerged in 1998, looking for a more collaborative approach to licensing. Out of OSI came the Open Source Definition. Open source licenses work in compliance with the definition.

"I don't think we're going to see going forward any LLM or any significant AI being able to be licensed as open source, because the key to open source is the Open Source Definition," Brock said.

"And we're just not going to see that with the LLM," Brock said. "So we wanted to support a move forward and an opening up of innovation, but certainly not a mischaracterization of it as open source."

We need language to talk about open source and AI. It may mean the need to evolve the Open Source Definition in recognition of where the world is today compared to the pre-cloud age when the community created the open source definition, Brescia said.

OSI is developing a new definition for open source and AI. Work is ongoing. The OSI team will host a third community review September 19-21, 2023 at the Open Source Summit in Bilbao, Spain.

Brescia said that open source will continue to get watered down if we don't evolve how we think about open source and how we define open

FOLLOW TNS   TNS DAILY

see encouraged are just going to stop even trying to get close to open source because they can't find a way to do that and still build a business," Brescia said. "And I know there will be purists who argue, 'Hey, that's not what open source is about.' But I think a lot of the world has moved on. And honestly, because open source has kind of won and become so pervasive, people are focused on other things now than they were 20 years ago when these definitions all came out."

Some vendors have shifted from open source licenses to Server Side Public License (SSPL).

"They all faced the cloud, and they all blinked," Vaughan-Nichols said.

They all changed their licenses and alienated their community when they did so, Vaughan-Nichols said.

The historical significance of the cloud in software development has meant a new capability to use data in generative AI. It also implies a question about how changing definitions will affect all the existing open source licenses that serve as the foundation for so much software development.

TNS

Alex Williams is founder and publisher of The New Stack. He's a longtime technology journalist who did stints at TechCrunch, SiliconAngle and what is now known as ReadWrite. Alex has been a journalist since the late 1980s, starting at the…

Read more from Alex Williams →

SHARE THIS STORY

Unleash the Power of Generative AI to Shift Left

Stack Overflow Adds AI: Will the Community Respond?

Exploring Chroma: The Open Source Vector Database for LLMs

Meeting the Operational Challenges of Training LLMs

How Vector Search Can Influence Customer Shopping Habits

INSIGHTS FROM OUR SPONSORS

SENTRY

Sentry Profiling now supports Browser Javascript, React Native, and Ruby
17 August 2023

Let's Talk About Open Source
3 August 2023

July Product Updates for Sentry
1 August 2023

StormForge

StormForge Chosen as Gartner Cool Vendor in Container Management
10 August 2023

Observing and Experimenting: Enhanced Kubernetes Optimization
3 August 2023

StormForge Appoints Rod Squires Chief Executive Officer
20 June 2023

FOLLOW TNS   TNS DAILY

The New Approach to API Management
18 August 2023

Service Mesh for Developers, Part 2: Testing in Production
11 August 2023

Fine-grained Service Authorizations with Istio and OPA
8 August 2023

THE NEW STACK UPDATE

A newsletter digest of the week's most important stories & analyses.

EMAIL ADDRESS

SUBSCRIBE

The New stack does not sell your information or share it with unaffiliated third parties. By continuing, you agree to our Terms of Use and Privacy Policy.

FOLLOW TNS   TNS DAILY

Edge Computing
Microservices
Networking
Serverless
Storage

ENGINEERING

AI
Frontend Development
Software Development
Typescript
WebAssembly
Cloud Services
Data
Security

OPERATIONS

Platform Engineering
Operations
CI/CD
Tech Life
DevOps
Kubernetes
Observability
Service Mesh

CHANNELS

Podcasts
Ebooks
Events
Newsletter
TNS RSS Feeds

FOLLOW TNS   TNS DAILY

FOLLOW TNS

roadmap.sh

Community created roadmaps, articles, resources and journeys for developers to help you choose your path and grow in your career.

Frontend Developer Roadmap
Backend Developer Roadmap
Devops Roadmap