

Packages - Packaging Request #140

Possible to make a libre version of Chromium (web browser)?

2012-06-23 04:18 AM - migathesecond

Status: not-a-bug	% Done: 0%
Priority: wish	
Assignee:	
Category:	
Description <p>First off, I've really taken a liking to Chromium. I've used it in the past, and I like the interface and how quick of a browser it is. However, I have heard about license issues in the past, involving unlicensed files in the source code. I have noticed that in the source, LICENSE is the BSD license. Doesn't that mean that any files without a license are under that license? If not, is there a way to remove those files without reducing any significant functionality to the browser? Do these license issues even still exist? I'm guessing so, because chromium-browser still conflicts with the 'your-freedom' package.</p> <p>I'd really like to be able to use Chromium on a fully free system. I'm sure I'm not the only one, but I don't really know how difficult it would be to make a libre Chromium. I'd like to find out where to start, and hopefully, with the help of the community, bring what I believe is one of the best web browsers to Parabola.</p> <p>If anybody wants to take a look at the source code, here is one of the latest versions: http://commondatastorage.googleapis.com/chromium-browser-official/chromium-21.0.1180.4.tar.bz2</p>	
Related issues:	
Related to Packages - Freedom Issue #1167: [chromium][electron][qt5-webengine...	confirmed
Related to Packages - Freedom Issue #1231: [electron] embeds Chromium platfor...	fixed 2017-03-14

History

#2 - 2012-06-23 09:11 AM - mtjm

<http://lists.nongnu.org/archive/html/gnu-linux-libre/2012-03/msg00028.html> and following messages suggests the problem being old and not checked in new releases, maybe it could be easily fixed (i.e. check what unlicensed files are in a recent release). There is also the issue of it recommending nonfree extensions and plugins which needs fixing separately before it's unblacklisted.

#3 - 2013-04-19 07:00 AM - martin

The Debian Project is building packages of chromium with the following Copyright File [in this case for sid]:
http://ftp-master.metadata.debian.org/changelogs/main/c/chromium-browser/unstable_copyright

TL;DR It's an utter mess to read through.

#4 - 2013-07-10 05:11 AM - martin

Latest info detailing the connections made to Google servers on the start-up.

<https://github.com/nylira/prism-break/issues/169>

#5 - 2014-02-09 11:18 PM - icarious

I carefully checked for licenses from http://metadata.ftp-master.debian.org/changelogs/main/c/chromium-browser/chromium-browser_31.0.1650.63-1_copyright. A simple ctrl+f search for "no copyright* unknown" and I found around 70 files (approx) with unclear licenses. And also the possibility of non-free recommendation remains. Unless these issues are fixed, this keeps Chromium a lot distant to be included in Parabola, as FSDG compliant distributions include packages with clear licensing policies which respects freedom. Hope this clears the doubt.

#6 - 2014-02-09 11:33 PM - migathesecond

A year later, and still the copyright issues remain. Saddening, but I've stuck with (and like better than Chromium now) Iceweasel since I started using Parabola. Unfortunately I don't see these issues being fixed either.

#7 - 2015-06-16 06:18 AM - Anonymous

- *Tracker changed from Freedom Issue to Packaging Request*

#8 - 2015-12-21 05:30 AM - mytbk

Previously someone talked about Iridium in Trisquel's mailing list, and I've put it on AUR:
<https://aur.archlinux.org/packages/iridium/>

The Free Software Directory page for Iridium:

<https://directory.fsf.org/wiki/Iridium>

#9 - 2016-06-29 06:11 PM - lkcl

martin wrote:

The Debian Project is building packages of chromium with the following Copyright File [in this case for sid]:
http://ftp-master.metadata.debian.org/changelogs/main/c/chromium-browser/unstable_copyright

TL;DR It's an utter mess to read through.

right. i wrote "copyright_check.py" to deal with **exactly** this scenario. google that and you'll find it immediately.

basically what it does is a fuzzy-match search on anything that looks like a copyright notice, and builds up an internal dictionary of what's **ACTUALLY** in the files. it then reads the entirety of the debian copyright file and creates another internal dictionary.

then, using a horrible, horrible but unavoidable $O(N^3)$ algorithm, a tree-walk is carried out to find out what is **MISSING** from the copyright file, and, also, if there are any discrepancies.

be warned, it takes a LONG time to run, and running on the chromium sources could take several days: it used to be 1/2 an hour on the code i ran it on, and that was a couple of thousand source code files.

interestingly it can actually find copyright notices even in jpeg and png images, which i didn't expect.

anyway, what i'm saying is: you don't have to do the job by hand, there's a tool for it.

#10 - 2017-02-07 11:37 PM - isacdaavid

- Related to Freedom Issue #1167: [chromium][electron][qt5-webengine][qt6-webengine] QTWebgine/Electron embeds "entire Chromium platform" added

#11 - 2017-03-15 05:34 AM - isacdaavid

- Related to Freedom Issue #1231: [electron] embeds Chromium platform (or part of it), recommends nonfree DRM plugins added

#12 - 2017-05-09 11:43 AM - dllud

Any news on this? Iridium seems the way to go, they disable a lot of features related to third-party plugins:

<https://github.com/iridium-browser/tracker/wiki/Differences-between-Iridium-and-Chromium#disabled-features>

It would be great if someone could run lkcl's script or something similar on top of Iridium. I guess they've removed some of the problematic files. It might be easy to ask them to remove any that are left.

Although IceCat/IceWeasel does the job when it comes to web-browsing, I often need a Webkit-based browser to test sites that I'm developing.

#13 - 2018-12-16 05:26 AM - bill-auger

- Status changed from open to not-a-bug

a libre version of chromium would imply that the phantom problematically (un)licensed files were identified and removed or (re-)licensed - if these were identified and added to the original upstream bug report, the upstream, would **probably** address it themselves; and then there would be no freedom issues with chromium for any distro

whenever a freedom issue comes up, the first option is always to patch it - so the question of "is it possible to make a freed version?" is implicit in every freedom bug report - over the years, issue [#1167](#) has become the hub for all issues related this chromium/qt5-webengine/electron issue; so this one is redundant