

Packages - Freedom Issue #3146

[translate-shell] SaaS, spyware

2021-12-19 10:26 PM - gap

Status: fixed	% Done: 0%
Priority: bug	
Assignee: bill-auger	
Category:	
Description This program acts as a CLI for Google, Bing, and Yandex translation SaaS. Since SaaS is equivalent to nonfree software which is also spyware and has a universal backdoor, this program is spyware. It can also be used with Apertium, which appears to be free, although any free program can still be operated as SaaS; it is necessary to run Apertium locally or on your own server to have freedom.	
Related issues: Related to Packages - Freedom Issue #3147: [ydcv] SaaS, spyware fixed	

History

#1 - 2022-02-22 05:12 PM - GNUtoo

I'm not sure how to deal with that since it's configured for Google translate by default and its manual doesn't even advertise apertium:

```
trans - Command-line translator using Google Translate, Bing Translator, Yandex.Translate, etc.
```

A way to deal with that could be to modify the defaults and fix the manual.

As for Apertium, you could also interact with an instance of an organization or project you are part of, and AFAIK that doesn't have the same issues than regular SaaS as long as that organization does have control over that software.

Denis.

#2 - 2022-03-31 08:02 PM - bill-auger

a program is not SaaS, merely because it interacts with a remote network service, nor because it is spyware - locally installed software can also be spyware - the defining characteristic of SaaS, is that the job it does, could be accomplished with locally-installed software

SaaS running on a remote server to be spyware, suggests that it is spying on the server operator, not users of the service - users of the service are not "the user" of that software - the server operator is "the user" - a parabola user would be the user of the client software - so strictly speaking, even if the server software is spying on remote clients, the client software is most likely not "spyware"

luckily in this case, we have apertium - apertium is fundamentally a native application, with a CLI interface and an optional web interface - so no network service is needed at all - the optional web interface can also be run locally

apertium is in the parabola repos, since 2016 - that makes this program unnecessary; so we need not invoke the FSDG - that is generally true, naturally, for any SaaS software - there is no imperative, and little value in liberating it, regardless of which remote services it can interact with, because by definition, some software already exists to accomplish the same task(s) - it is only a matter of having that software in the repos, and only if the task it accomplishes is important enough

#3 - 2022-03-31 08:11 PM - gap

If it offers no significant benefit over just using Apertium, such as extra features, then I agree.

#4 - 2022-03-31 08:53 PM - bill-auger

- Assignee set to bill-auger

- Status changed from unconfirmed to confirmed

#5 - 2022-03-31 09:01 PM - bill-auger

- Status changed from confirmed to fixed

#6 - 2022-04-01 12:06 AM - bill-auger

i would not concern with extra features - "extra" implies "non-essential" - tools should be treated generally; because

they are all likely to have some differences, beyond the core feature-set

if the tool is a hammer, it need only to drive nails - if one has a leather handle grip or another has glow-in-the-dark painting, those are not important features of concern when someone asks "do we have a hammer?"

for a translator, as long as they can transform "hello, friend" into "hola, amigo", they are all equivalent IMHO

#7 - 2022-04-01 12:24 AM - gap

Hang on, did you mean to blacklist it? Do you disagree it's SaaS? Surely having baked-in links to web services to which the user sends data and expects a response to be a computation performed on said input data which could have been performed offline on the user's computer in the first place is the textbook definition of SaaS?

Also, from a quick glance, it appears to communicate with at least Bing via insecure, unencrypted HTTP, which is a security and privacy issue on its own.

By the way, I wrote a translator which is in compliance with your specification:

```
translate :: String -> Maybe String
translate "hello, friend" = Just "hola, amigo"
translate _               = Nothing
```

Surely it is equivalent to all the other translators now in your humble opinion? ;)

#8 - 2022-04-01 12:45 AM - bill-auger

i intended to blacklist it - it is SaaS - parabola does not need it - were you expecting another decision?

the toy example does not demonstrate a missing important or extra feature, only that your translator has a limited vocabulary - extending it's vocabulary, would not be a new feature

#9 - 2022-04-01 12:49 AM - gap

Oh, I was confused because the issue was set to "fixed" but there was no blacklist commit.

#10 - 2022-04-01 02:33 AM - bill-auger

i made the change; but did not send it yet - the ticket state would be set to 'wont-fix' or 'not-a-bug', if the intention was to reject it's suggestion - the filter runs only once per day, so changes to the git repo do not have an immediate effect

#11 - 2022-04-01 07:28 PM - gap

To clarify, do you mean you didn't push the commit yet? I can't see it.

#12 - 2022-07-10 01:01 AM - bill-auger

- *Related to Freedom Issue #3147: [ydcv] SaaS, spyware added*