



General Information

@COM Products are based on Open Source software or are Fully Open Source. The difference between this is the ability to gain access to the Open Source software. Within the @COM product group we maintain three different varieties that apply to certain @COM products;

- Open Source based and fully managed by the vendor
- Open Source based and managed by the vendor and customer (using a for example a special web interface)
- Open Source and fully managed by the vendor and customer via intensive cooperation with the manufacturer

Some products, like the @COM Business Manager, are only available as an Open Source based solution. However the knowledge and already created solutions can be used in Open Source solutions via cooperation with the manufacturer, creating a custom @COM based telephony solution to your specific needs.

What is Open Source?

Open Source is an approach to the design, development, and distribution of software, offering practical accessibility to the source code of software. This means that the sources of the open source software are available to everyone on request and can be edited by the user if he or she has the necessary knowledge for doing so.

Even though the sources are available to everyone, this does not mean that everyone can do with them whatever they want. In most cases the sources have been made available under a specific license, in most cases this will be the General Public License (GPL). In general it means that anyone who changes the original source code must also offer the changed sources on request to customers on request.

An example of the most common Open Source software is the Unix Operating System with its many different variations, called "distributions", like Fedora, Debian, Symbian and CentOS. Depending on used distribution its might also be referred to as Linux. Unix and Linux distributions are widely used in routers, firewalls and mobile phones so it's very likely you are already using Linux without even knowing it. Other examples are applications such as the Asterisk Open Source PBX and Open Office.



What is Open Source Based?

Open Source based means that a solution uses Open Source software which is combined with closed software from the manufacturer. Depending on the Open Source licensing used, the solution may or may not be accessible by customers and sources created or changed by the manufacturer are also not available to customers. In most cases the changes to the Open Source Software must be made available if requested by a customer, but access to the sources on the system itself don't have to be accessible.

The @COM Business Manager

The @COM Business Manager is an example of an @COM Product that uses an Open Source Based solution. The system uses a CentOS based Linux Operating System and the Asterisk Open Source PBX. The interface to this open source software is made available only via the custom build webbased Local Management Tool and a special command line prompt for Expert administrators.

To prevent and guarantee that the @COM Business Manager is a reliable, secure and stable telephony solution, the access to the system is limited. Items such as the Linux command line interface or any other application like the SQL database or the Asterisk software running on this system are all unavailable to any kind of user.



This "lack" of access might not be what you would like, but it has been done for a very good reason; The average customer does not have the required knowledge of the software running on the @COM Business Manager which could resolve in stability and security issues if such a customer should change certain settings on this server. However if you do have the necessary knowledge or are willing to invest into gaining the knowledge please read the next paragraph.

The Open Source @COM based PBX

The @COM software is available under license from the manufacturer. Together with developers of @COM products and their knowledge it's possible to create an Open Source PBX based on existing @COM software to your own specifications. It will obviously require certain knowledge requirements from your part but you will of course have full access to every little bit of the system and the possibility to change whatever you want!

The advantage of this is the low cost of ownership and the full flexibility of designing it to your specifications. Implementation of the solution will however take more hours than using an off the shelf product. But because many parts of software are already designed for products like the @COM Business Manager, these sources can be used to cut the total development time of the system and quickly set up your own professional Open Source PBX.