

## **Determinants of Open Source Software adoption**

### **Abstract**

This thesis presents a descriptive study towards the determinants of the adoption of open source software (OSS) in for-profit organizations. Based on a literature review on open source and OSS in general, in combination with a review of research in technology innovation adoption and diffusion, several relationships are hypothesized between expected influential factors and OSS adoption. In total, twenty-two relationships are proposed.

Based on a survey among IT managers in for-profit organizations, eighty-four responses were gathered for statistical analyses. Due to the large number of variables compared to a small sample size, the number of hypotheses that could be tested in the final model had to be reduced to eight (out of twenty-two). The variables which were eventually included are: task compatibility, skill compatibility, compatibility, triability, software costs, continuity, third party support, and top management support. The dependent variable was the binary adoption decision on OSS: yes or no. Three variables were found to be relevant: Perceived task compatibility, compatibility, and triability. In addition, source code availability and software quality were found to be less important.

A possible explanation for these findings could lie in the fact that this research treats adoption as a binary decision, while many of the factors which have not been found relevant might appear important at later stages than the adoption stage. In addition, the classic innovation characteristics are found to be important for the adoption stage of OSS: compatibility and triability.