License Zero

sustainable software in the open

License Zero is a shot across the bow of Open Source software entitlement, free-as-in-worthless, and maintainer disposability.

Feel overwhelmed by business-driven demand for open software, maintenance, and support? License Zero offers all the tools you need to go in business yourself, and start receiving compensation for your contributions.

Tired of seeing your open code end up in closed systems, with no contribution or support flowing back? License Zero puts the teeth back in copyleft, requiring community members to give back to Open Source or support those who do.

Want a simple, low-friction way to support maintainers of open code you use and rely on, when you can't give back in kind? License Zero makes it easy, right from the command line.

Users

Noncommercial users of noncommercial projects, and Open Source users of reciprocal projects, don't need any special permission to use License Zero software. For them, License Zero code works like Open Source under two-clause BSD, MIT, or a similarly permissive license.

Customers who want permission for commercial or non-Open Source uses can identify, price, and buy licenses for all License Zero dependencies of their Node.js projects, in one checkout transaction, using a free command-line tool:

```
npm install -g licensezero
# Installs the License Zero command-line interface.
l0-create-licensee someco "SomeCo, Inc." US-CA team
# Creates an identity, "someco", for a corporation in
# California that needs team-tier licenses.
cd a-node-project
l0-quote someco
# Lists License Zero dependencies in node_modules
# and the costs of missing licenses.
l0-buy someco
# Opens an online order page for all needed licenses.
l0-purchased $ORDER_BUNDLE_URL
# Imports a bundle of purchased licenses from the order page.
```

Sponsors

In a perfect world, making software wouldn't cost anything, and neither would using it, no strings attached.

License Zero maintainers can offer to bring their software closer to that perfect world, by relicensing, for a fee, on permissive, two-clause BSD terms. Sponsors can accept those offers just like they can buy licenses:

```
npm install -g licensezero
# Installs the License Zero command-line interface.
l0-create-licensee someco "SomeCo, Inc." US-CA team
# Creates an identity, "someco", for a corporation in
# California that needs team-tier licenses.
l0-sponsor someco $PROJECT_ID
# Opens an online order page for sponsoring relicense
# of a project onto BSD-2-Clause terms.
```

Maintainers

On the maintainer side, it's quick and easy to create, license, and price projects, with just a few short commands:

```
npm install -g licensezero
# Installs the License Zero command-line interface
l0-register-licensor adam@licensezero.com "Adam Maintainer" US-TX
# Creates an identity for offering private licenses
# for Adam, a developer in Texas.
# Provides a link to connect a Stripe account for payments, and
# an access token once the Stripe account is connected.
l0-add-licensor $NEW_LICENSOR_UUID
# Prompts for the new new licensor's access token, to save for use
# offering projects for license.
cd a-node-project
l0-offer --solo 500 --team 1000 --company 10000 --enterprise 50000
# Offer private licenses through licensezero.com at $5 for solo,
# $10 for team, $100 for company, and $500 for enterprise.
l0-license --noncommercial $NEW_PROJECT_UUID
# Writes LICENSE and package.json metadata for l0-quote to read.
git add LICENSE package.json
git commit -m "License Zero"
```