



FSFW

Hochschulgruppe für
Freie Software und
Freies Wissen Dresden

„Fund-Raising for Free Software - Thinking Big“

(Carsten Knoll)

Overview



- ▶ Who we are and what we do
- ▶ Theses about free software for desktop usage
- ▶ Analysis of existing business models
- ▶ Idea: Combination-Model – Selling Support Certificates
- ▶ How to proceed? → Discussion

FSFW: Who are we?



- ▶ University group for Free Software and Free Knowledge (founded 2014)
- ▶ Projects:
 - ▶ Linux-Install-Party, Linux-Presentation-Day
 - ▶ Encryption competition
 - ▶ Monthly [Help desk](#) (L^AT_EX, Libre-Office, ...)
 - ▶ Publications: [Programmpapier](#), [Blogposts](#)
 - ▶ Workshops ([git](#), [python](#), [EMail encryption](#))
 - ▶ Weekly lecture (Ringvorlesung):
„Free Software and Free Knowledge as Profession“
 - ▶ UniStick: 8GB with useful
Free Software for university students

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FSFW: Why do we do this?



→ **By Conviction**

▶ **Conviction 1:**

Free and Open Source Software is (mostly) the better choice
(technical/non-technical Arguments).

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▶ **Conviction 2:**

Scientific contents *financed with public money* (authors, reviewers) should not be sold to *public* libraries for *ridiculous prices* by journal publishers.



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**Nicht:
Es muss etwas
geschehen,
sondern:
Ich muss etwas
tun.**

Hans Scholl, „Weiße Rose“

WISSEN SCHAFFT
EXZELLENZ



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Not:

“Somthing has to happen!”

But instead:

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GUWAG!

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TU Dresden gegen Rechtsradikalismus und Intoleranz

Gründet Hochschulgruppen für Freie Software und Freies Wissen!



Warum?

- Hohe Dichte an Interessierten
- Zukünftige Lehr- u. Führungskräfte
- Zugang zu Räumen, ...

Mehr Infos: fsfw-dresden.de/fork



Following thoughts are also available as a blogpost:

<https://fsfw-dresden.de/funding-foss>



Theses about free software for desktop usage



1. There exist amazing products.

Theses about free software for desktop usage



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2. Society would benefit from higher FOSS market share.

Theses about free software for desktop usage



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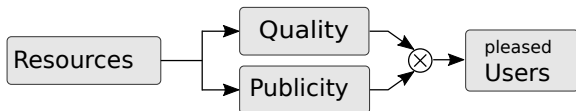
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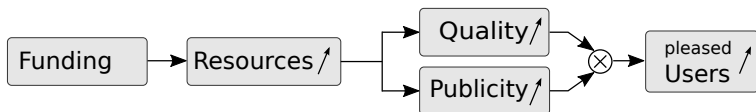


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Why does the concept of “Free Software” work at all?

People dedicate time and effort to FOSS-projects

- ▶ driven by enthusiasm
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- ▶ for money (raised by some existing FOSS business model)

Analysis of Existing FOSS Business Models

Existing FOSS Business Models

Wikipedia: 18 business models



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Not applicable for sustainable end-user software:

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Not applicable/desired for sustainable end-user software:

- ▶ Open sourcing on end-of-life, dual-licensing, ...
- ▶ Selling support, delayed open-sourcing, proprietary extensions

Remainder:

1. Selling of branded merchandise
2. Selling of certificates and trademark use
3. Partnership with funding organizations
4. Bounty driven development
5. Crowdfunding/reverse-bounty model
6. Advertising-supported software
7. Voluntary donations

“Voluntary Donations”



- ▶ Contradict *economic rationality*?
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Established examples of “irrational spending”

- ▶ Brand awareness and status consumption
- ▶ Future-oriented self-interest

Combination Model

Combination Model (Overview)



Project A

User 1

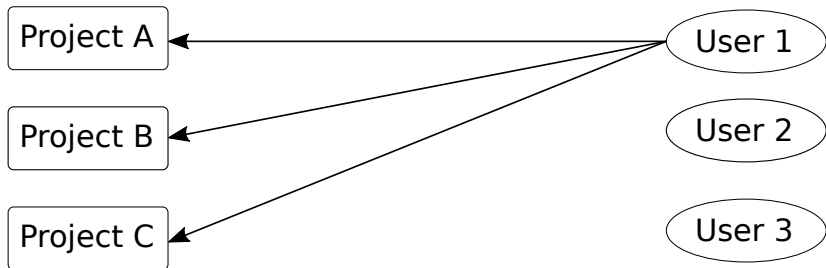
User 2

Project C

User 3

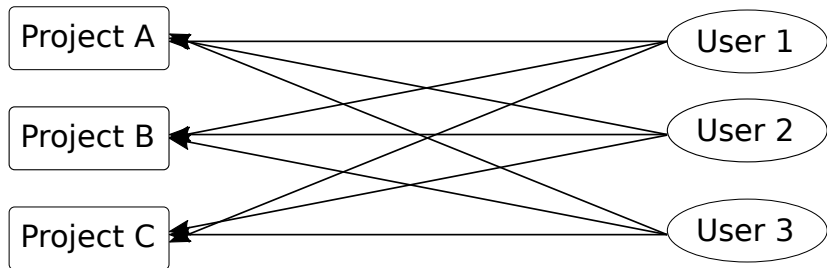
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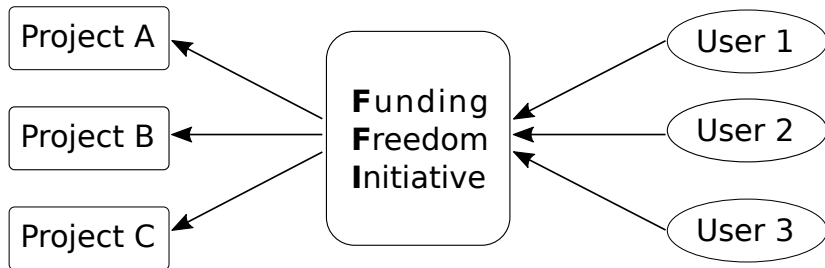
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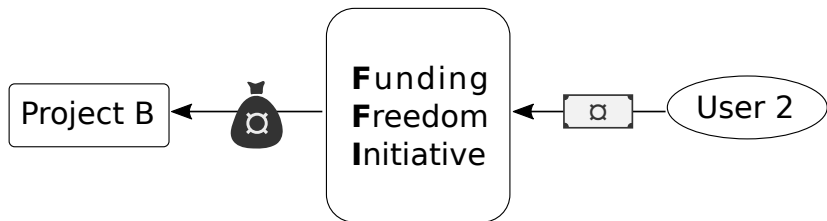
- ▶ Current situation: n -to- m relationship → bad effort-benefit ratio

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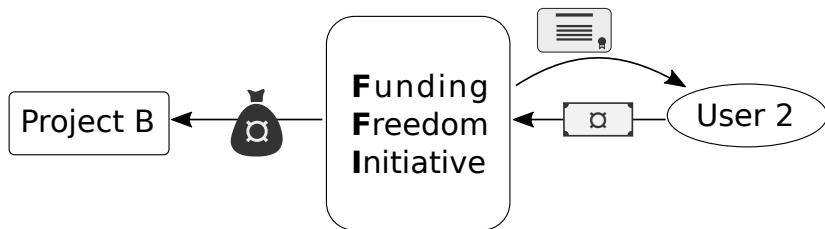
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Working title: “Funding Freedom Initiative” (FFI)

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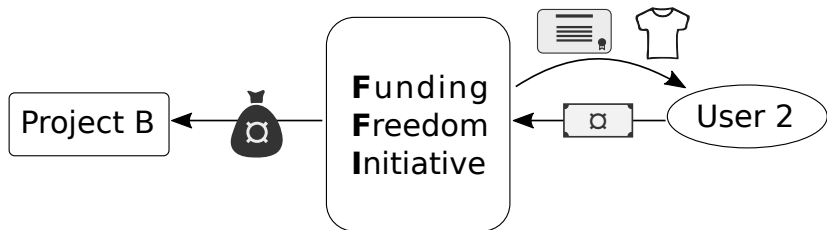
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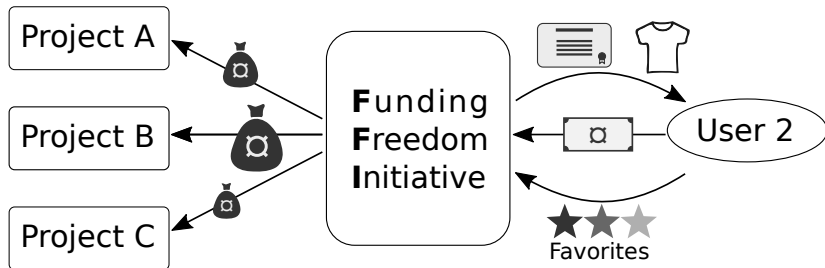
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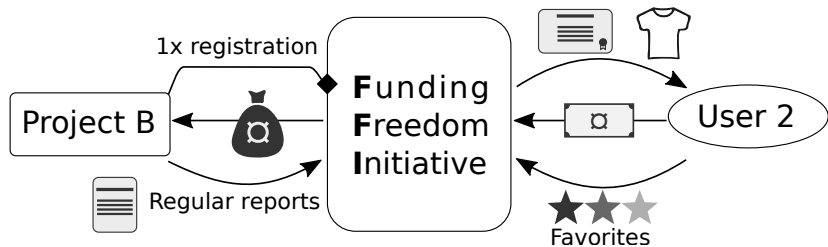
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Combination Model (Overview)



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- ▶ Users (optionally) state their preferred projects
→ Funds can be distributed accordingly

Combination Model (Overview)



- ▶ Interested projects register once and regularly publish activity reports

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Imagine picture of 35c3 t-shirt queue here.

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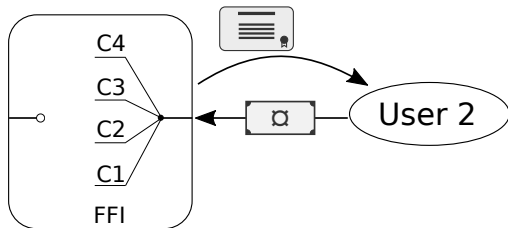


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(Might be controversial → up to discussion)

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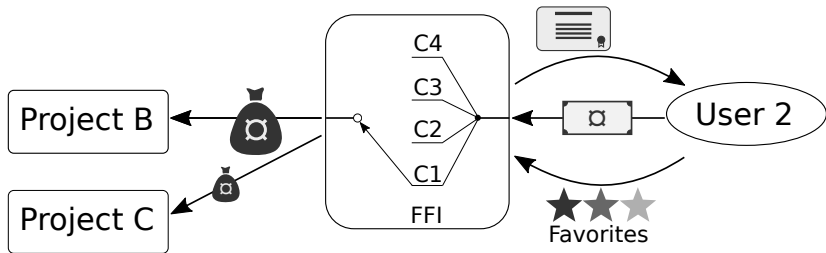


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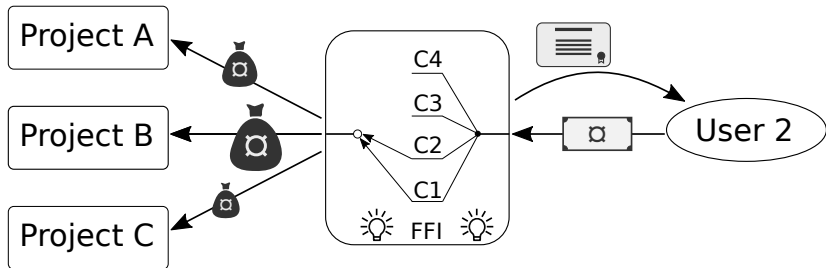
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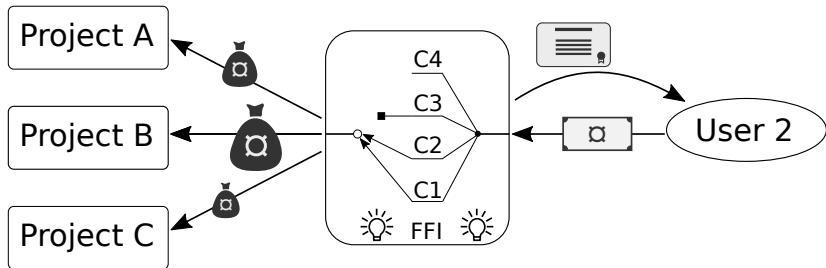
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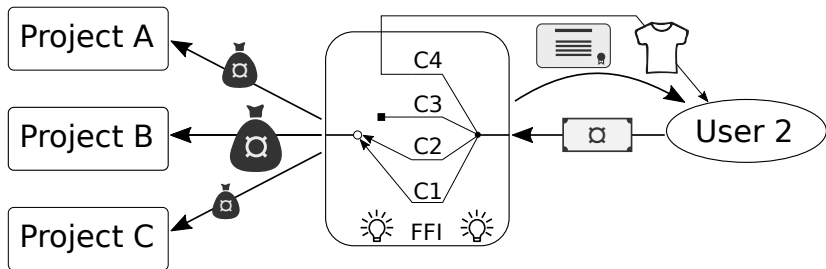
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- ▶ C4 (extra): material cost (merchandise)

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- ▶ Complete transparency of money streams
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→ **More details: see [blog post](#)**

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Projects can

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- ▶ *“Thanks to the money we were able to integrate two employees from our usability team to the project, each with 20% full time. Additionally, a student assistant has updated the documentary.”*

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- ▶ *“In the last quarter, issues were mainly addressed that were highly valued by donors. Details: see release notes.”* (reverse bounty model)

Potential points of criticisms



- ▶ There are already similar attempts (e. g. [patreon.com](https://www.patreon.com), liberapay.com).
- ▶ A critical mass is needed.
- ▶ Commercialization harms the FOSS development.
- ▶ Registration and payment process are too time-consuming.
- ▶ The concept relies too much on trust and voluntariness → risk of low acceptance.
- ▶ The central role of the FFI could, in the long term, lead to an unwanted dependence of certain projects on the FFI.
- ▶ Positive feedback loops could lead to a crowding-out effect of smaller projects and thus reduce the diversity of active projects.
- ▶ It is unclear how to deal with projects that already have other funding resource sources (Mozilla, Linux kernel, ...)

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→ **Possible counterarguments: see [blog post](#)**

Potential positive effects



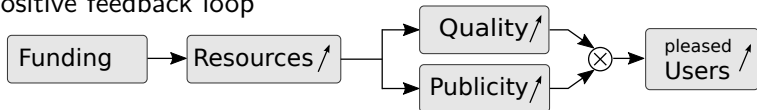
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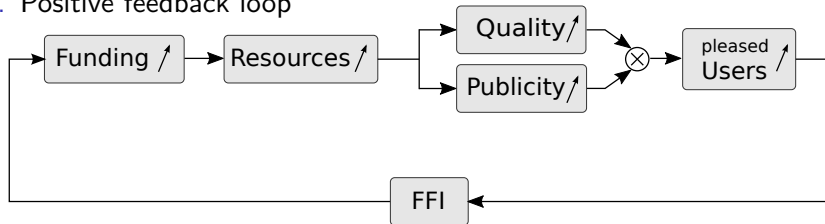
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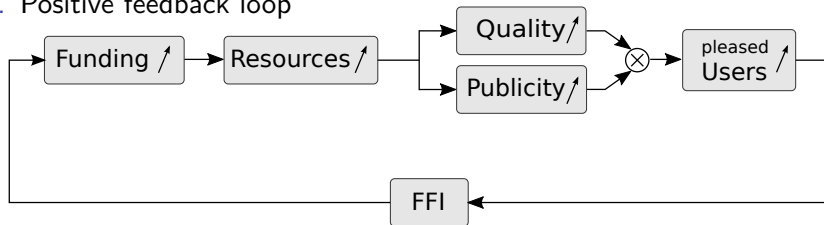
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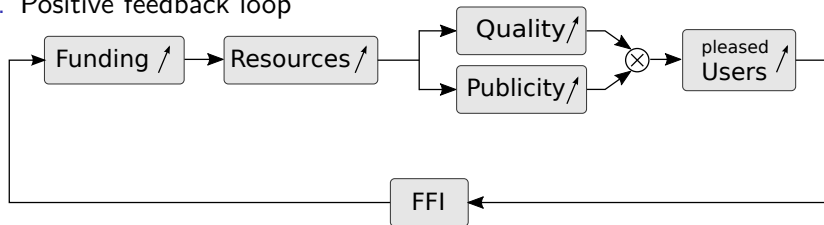


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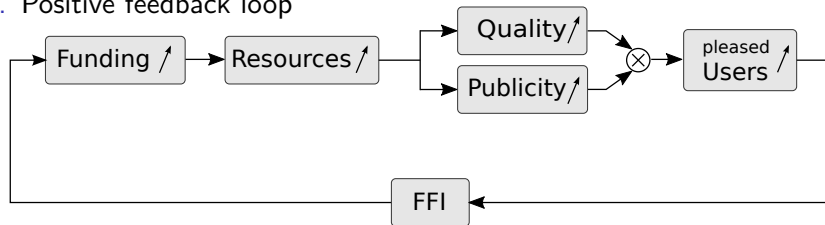


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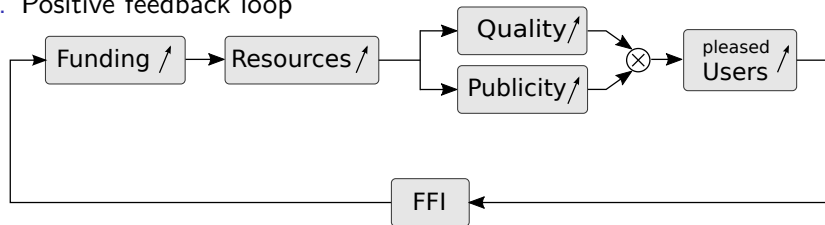
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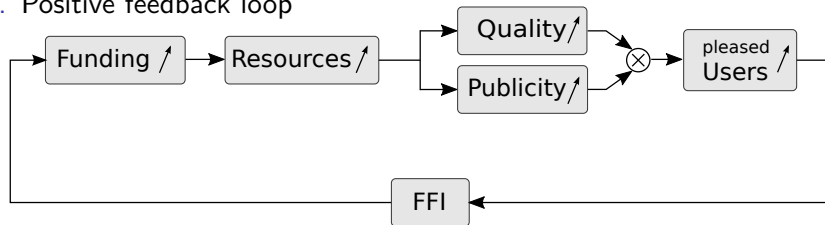
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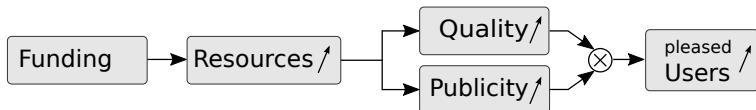
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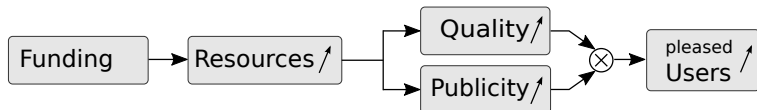
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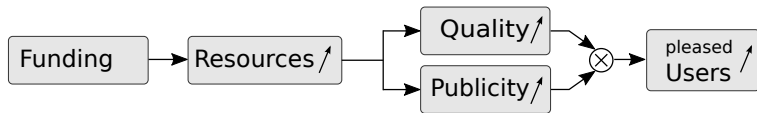
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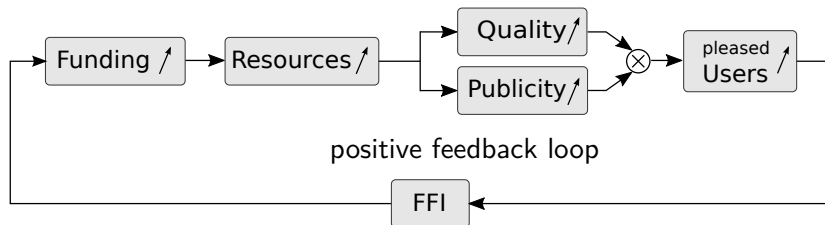
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4. There exists a huge funding potential
5. Currently, this potential is poorly used
6. Proposal: organization (“FFI”) to collect and distribute money



How to continue?



Discussion of the general concept

- ▶ Realistic?
- ▶ Existing approaches?
- ▶ Opinion from “flagship projects”?

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- ▶ Specify concept details
- ▶ Integration with packaging services?
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