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[eyeOS Interview](#)

...with main developer Pau Garcia-Milà

eyeOS is something quite new and exciting and many people have never heard of it yet, so, I thought it will be interesting to talk with the developers of eyeOS so we could learn more about this project. I dropped an e-mail to the main developer, Pau Garcia-Milà, and last night, we were ready for the interview. Enjoy!

M. Nestor, Softpedia: *Please introduce yourself!***Pau:** I am Pau Garcia-Milà, 19, and I live in Olesa de Montserrat, a town near to Barcelona (Spain). I work with four friends developing the eyeOS Project. Two of them, Marc Cercós and David Plaza, are the designers of eyeOS and live in the same town as I do. Eduardo Pérez (42, Bilbao, Spain) is the Business Developer and Hans B. Pufal, (52, Grenoble, France) is a great programmer.

M. Nestor, Softpedia: *Tell us, please, what is eyeOS and what it does.***Pau:** eyeOS is an Open Source Web Desktop Environment (commonly known as WebOS - with a WebOffice -). The base of the project is that, with eyeOS, you can have your desktop - with the applications and files - everywhere, since all you do is connect to the eyeOS server, where the applications and data are, without having to install anything on the computer you are at. There are two ways to use it: Through a private server (the best for experienced users or companies, who want to have all users and files controlled) and through our public server (<http://eyeos.info>) where everyone can create and use their eyeOS account.

M. Nestor, Softpedia: *eyeOS is the first of its kind, right? Who's idea was it and why?***Pau:** Well, the idea of a webOS was developed some years ago as a technology concept in a university of US. We started eyeOS as the combination of the things we thought would be nice to have when we -Marc and I- went from his home to my home and vice versa, working for other projects we had, about 2 years ago, when we were 17 :). When we started it, we didn't have the idea of developing the actual eyeOS. We wanted it as a web-based simple service to place the files we needed. After that, we thought that it would be good to add there some other tools. And finally, one day, we noticed that it was very useful, and decided to publish it in SourceForge and continue from that point on. And this is how eyeOS was published, on the 1st of August of 2005.

Answering to the first part of the question, after we published eyeOS, many other modern "WebOSes" were started (some with very similar names), but all of them - at least the ones we know of - aren't open source, and we think this is completely necessary in a project of this type. Trying to free the user from the hard drive, but closing a lot of users into your own server, we think that that breaks the concept of freedom that we try to develop with eyeOS.

M. Nestor, Softpedia: *Very interesting. I've always wanted to know why eyeOS? What does the name mean?***Pau:** We tried to find a simple name, easy to remember, and easy to pronounce in different languages. We wanted it to finish with "OS" because, even without being a "real" or "classic" Operating System - those which connect hardware with software - that was the idea we wanted to transmit with our project. So, having the last part of the name, we looked for the first part. We tried to make the project simple to use and intuitive so people would have to look over it in order to learn how to use it. And this is how we decided to name it "eyeOS".

M. Nestor, Softpedia: *I've made a review for version 0.8.11 some time ago, but I've watched recently, on your website (www.eyeos.org), the Live Demo of the new version 0.9 (Iris) and I saw a lot of new features and improvements. Please tell us what novelty does Iris bring.***Pau:** Well, there are big differences between 0.8 and 0.9 (actual stable version, "Iris") and what will be eyeOS 1.0. eyeOS 0.8 was done primarily by four people, and had lots of things to be improved (like using AJAX technology for common actions). eyeOS 0.9 development was a bit more extended, with some users of the eyeOS community developing external applications, and writing documentation for all the base

apps, for example, eyeOS 0.9 solved many of the 0.8 problems, introducing the first version of the eyeOS API, and with a much more powerful kernel, which uses AJAX for some of the common actions of the system. Iris also introduced the user-customizable apps. An eyeOS user can customize a lot the base applications, adapting them to his/her needs from simple things like changing the first day of the week in eyeCalendar to being able to change the way the apps work completely. Also, Iris unifies the design of all the apps and the desktop, introducing the new "GreenIris" and "BlueIris" default themes, made by David and Marc. So, we could say that Iris is the first version of eyeOS which leaves the "Alpha" and brings "Beta": it can be used daily, but must be improved to be the future eyeOS 1.0.

M. Nestor, Softpedia: *You said earlier that some other Web Operating Systems started to appear after eyeOS was published, but they don't represent a threat to eyeOS because they cost, but do you fear that maybe, someday, someone will release something similar to eyeOS? After all, a little competition doesn't hurt anyone, right?*

Pau: Well, competition makes us try to make eyeOS better and better, so it's not bad at all. About the fear of a similar or better webOS, well, some months ago, this was one of the biggest worries of the team, because the project was not so known as nowadays. But actually, we're very happy with all the people who know the project, and the visits' number is increasing with every month that passes by. I think that eyeOS has positioned itself (maybe not as the best) as the first modern webOS. And, as said before, the real competition would be the Open Source similar projects, but really, Open Source projects help between them, because they can benefit from the other ones. A closed source webOS can be very good, even much better than eyeOS, but I don't think people will trust someone to give away their entire digital life, at least if they can't check the code and be sure that it's secure. This is the reason why the webOS need to be decentralized, giving anyone the choice of installing and hacking it in their own homes.

M. Nestor, Softpedia: *I saw that it has a Mac OS X style. Why?*

Pau: Well, there are some different themes for eyeOS, which can be downloaded from eyeLook.org. All of them have been done by the users in the eyeOS community, who decided to make them available to everyone in eyeLook. I personally think it's good to have the widest variety, including existent platforms (Like Mac OS X) styles, so the users from those platforms can work better when using eyeOS, since it will be more similar with their actual system. But I can't answer "why" a Mac theme, since I didn't do it :). Personally, I work with a Mac, but use BlueIris. The best is to allow the user to choose, I think.

M. Nestor, Softpedia: *Did you think at a terminal emulator? Maybe someone needs a console to enter a ssh server or type some commands he needs; can one do that using eyeOS?*

Pau: Well, like some other applications, it's under development right now. We're working on a terminal for eyeOS 1.0, which interacts with the eyeOS system and can interact with the eyeOS server if it's Unix-based. There is also a SSH app for eyeOS which is under development by two users of the community. The project process can be seen in the eyeOS forums, and I think it will be finished in some weeks' time. There has been a long discussion about what was better, to do it with PHP or with Java. Finally, there will be two SSH apps, both of them with their good things and bad things.

M. Nestor, Softpedia: *As far as I can see, eyeOS is not so known; correct me if I'm wrong. Did you think of more publicity?*

Pau: You aren't wrong at all. We would love to put a big ad on TV, or just buy Ad-words, or place ads in newspapers... But, we have two problems (I hate to say the second one, but it's true) - We're 19 and we live in Spain. And this means that there aren't subventions, companies or prizes for innovation that we can grab. So we don't have money to pay the servers - just donations and the new sponsors program. And if we lose the money we win working in other places in servers, just imagine all the publicity we can buy. However, we have seen from the beginning of the project that many, many people that visit the project and like it, help us spread the word, by talking about it in their blogs or websites, placing eyeOS buttons (available at <http://eyeos.org/artwork>) and talking about it to more people. Again, I think that the fact that eyeOS is Open Source helps a lot. We make eyeOS because we love it, and people want to help our project to be bigger, so talk about it. But, thinking about

it, when we started it, we would have never thought that, someday, we would be receiving 4-5 million page views per month, and that we would be thinking about ways to spread the project even more. We're very happy with the actual status of the project!

M. Nestor, Softpedia: *Talking about money, I saw you are raising funds for your project, did you ever think that you can sell eyeOS to Internet Cafe owners or small companies, so anyone can come to a station, log-in to eyeOS and do his/her daily tasks? Keeping it FREE for home users, of course?*

Pau: Mhhh, it's a good idea!! Seriously, Eduardo (our Business Manager) has been developing the eyeOS Business Plan. eyeOS is and will always be an Open Source project for everyone, but we will offer solutions for different types of groups. Support for companies, adaptations of the system to internet cafes or companies, or support for school/universities. We're also talking about adding "PRO" accounts to our public server, offering a complete solution for companies who don't want to buy and manage servers, and just want to use eyeOS. We will make the documents public soon, when they will be finished.

M. Nestor, Softpedia: *You talked earlier about some websites, eyeos.info and eyeLook.org. I've noticed recently that you have acquired multiple domains. Can you please explain what each one of them is for, so people would know which one to visit and for what?*

Pau: Of course. eyeOS.org is the main website of the project, the central point. From that site, you can access all the resources of the project: the forums, the future developers' wiki, the public server, and all the websites. eyeOS.info is our public server, where everyone can have his/her eyeOS account and use it whenever they want. eyeApps.org is the Software Database for eyeOS, where all apps and games can be downloaded for being installed with the eyeOS Application Manager, bundled with the system. eyeLook.org is the themes' and wallpapers' database for eyeOS, with some themes and eyeOS wallpapers that people can download and install on their eyeOS servers to customize its look. Finally, eyeOS.net is the start page for eyeNav, the eyeOS Bookmarks Manager, which loads eyeOS.net each time that is opened with the last world news and updated information about the project and its community. However, the two important sites are eyeOS.org and eyeOS.info. We recommend eyeOS.info for new users who want to start using eyeOS easily, since it's translated into a wide variety of languages and provides information to start using eyeOS in a few minutes.

M. Nestor, Softpedia: *How much time do you invest in the development of eyeOS? Do you have other projects or are you splitting the development of eyeOS with your school?*

Pau: We are actually starting our web development company, and dividing our work. We work 50% of our time for eyeOS, and 50% for other projects, like web services or sites for companies, and researching new ways to present data in projects like zolow - <http://zolow.com>- or fresaTV -<http://fresa.tv>-. These projects help us improve the eyeOS platform, and allow us to work on eyeOS everyday.

M. Nestor, Softpedia: *What will be the future of eyeOS? What's the next step in eyeOS's evolution and what can people expect from it?*

Pau: The next step for the project is the eyeOS 1.0 milestone, and for reaching it, some small steps, like finishing the new developer platform and improving the actual 0.9 series, must be made. We think that eyeOS 1.0 must be a complete system for a wide variety of groups: Companies, Schools, Home users... For everyone who would like to be able to access its digital life from many different places. And this is, I think, all of us, so eyeOS 1.0 must have lots of improvements, in both the system and the base applications, with some new base apps (that may be released also for actual 0.9 series) like a default Mail Reader, a better File Manager and Import/Export functions for all the base apps. Also, a function to synchronize the eyeOS with the local PC and vice versa will be added to eyeOS 1.0.

M. Nestor, Softpedia: *What would you like transmit our readers and the Open Source Software Community?*

Pau: Mhhh... What I'm personally trying to transmit when I explain what is eyeOS, is to invite people to test it, and find how eyeOS can be useful for them. People don't like changing the way they work on a daily basis, and it's difficult to adopt a new system. So, I just invite people to use it for a few days, and to understand why we love it. I think there is a very important thing in eyeOS development: we make it because it's very useful for ourselves. And this is, I think, the most important thing in the development

of a project: that it's useful for you. And if it's Open Source, even better :). **M. Nestor,**
Softpedia: *Thank you for the interview and for your time spent with me. I wish you success in life and with your project!* **Pau:** Not at all, thanks to you. Seriously, Softpedia is one of the best helpers of eyeOS. MANY people discover it through your website. You can download now eyeOS from [Softpedia](#).