

Re: GPL / Open Source Application

Source:

<http://www.tech-archive.net/Archive/DotNet/microsoft.public.dotnet.framework/2006-09/msg00143.html>

- *From:* Jon Skeet [C# MVP] <skeet@xxxxxxxx>
 - *Date:* Wed, 6 Sep 2006 23:09:10 +0100
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Mehdi <vioccc@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx> wrote:

I want to publish my application under GPL so it is open source and everyone could modify it. How could I prevent my users from installing "unauthorized" versions by fault? Someone might add malicious code and my application is then blamed for it :-(I use already strong names to sign my application, but this is not transparent for the users as they could not easily check the signature.

What is the best way to 'sign' an application so that the user immediately knows it's an 'official' version? Many thanks!!

By definition, if your application is released under an open source license, then anybody can download the source code, modify it and release the modified version. You can add as much signing as you want, it won't change anything since anybody will have to have the whole source code and will therefore be able to do anything they want and make it appear to the user like if it was the original version.

No, that's not true. If the OP signs it with a private key and publishes the public key somewhere, then anyone who wants to can tell that a modified and recompiled version (which can't be signed with the private key, because the OP has kept it safe) isn't from the OP.

Alternatively, the OP could just publish the MD5 sum of the original binary, so people could tell if it's been altered (modulo hacks which give the same sum – I know there have been attacks, but it's unlikely to be feasible in this case, I believe; use a different hash algorithm if necessary).

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If replying to the group, please do not mail me too

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