

The Key Ideas (Continued)



Open-Source Development

Just as anyone may contribute to or modify the code of an open-source program, any member of an Efficasync group may contribute to or modify their group's governing statements. These contributions and modifications are not automatically accepted, but are considered proposals to be rationally and critically debated by the membership, who may enact them. Developing a governance with Efficasync is meant to be somewhat analogously to the way open-source programmers develop a piece of software. A programmer's environment provides the tools to write, update, and debug pieces of digital logic. Likewise, Efficasync's environment describes tools used by a more-general type of programmer called a 'citizen,' to write, update, and debug democracies.

Quotes

"Democracy is a device that ensures we shall be governed no better than we deserve."

- George Bernard Shaw

"If liberty and equality, as is thought by some are chiefly to be found in democracy, they will be best attained when all persons alike share in the government to the utmost."

- Aristotle, Politics

"Many forms of Government have been tried, and will be tried in this world of sin and woe. No one pretends that democracy is perfect or all-wise. Indeed, it has been said that democracy is the worst form of government except all those other forms that have been tried from time to time."

- Winston Churchill

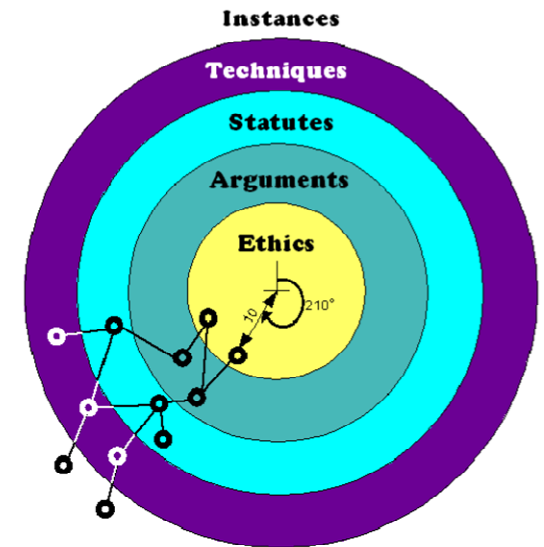
Read the full paper at
<http://efficasync.blogspot.com>

Download it at
www.geocities.com/mikemussman

Talk about it at
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Efficasync/>

Efficasync

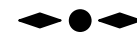
A Method of Open-Source Self-Governance



Efficacy: capacity to produce a desired result.

Synchronized: operating in unison.

How ideas of open-source software development can be used to make a direct-democracy



<http://efficasync.blogspot.com>

How Efficasync Works

The Key Ideas



Overview

Efficasync, a compound of the words 'efficacy' and 'synchronous,' is a way for a group's members to create and maintain their group's governance using a programmer's paradigm. This method of organizations is premised on a belief in the people's ability to solve many of their own problems. Efficasync may further democratize local governments and cooperative businesses by offering a coherent way for multiple people to collectively control their organizations. At its core, Efficasync is a combination of many ideas including the Nomic, the wiki, and the open-source method of software development. Each of these ideas will now be explored with greater detail.

The Nomic

Peter Suber invented a game called Nomic, where "changing the rules is a move.*" Nomic illustrates two central aspects of governance. First, governments and businesses operate with a set of rules, which Efficasync calls 'governing statements' or 'nodepages.' Suber provided an initial set of rules for Nomic and, accordingly, Efficasync suggest an initial set of governing statements. Second, these rules may be changed. Representative governments are structured so that professional politicians make and change rules in the name of other people, their constituents. In contrast, direct-democracies are arranged so that the people affected by the rules are the same people able to make and change the rules. An Efficasync group is a nomic that begins, and hopefully endures, as a direct-democracy.

The Wiki

A wiki webpage is a document whose content can be changed by anyone. Often, a wiki has a community of regular contributors who add or update relevant content and review the content added or updated by others. A wiki may keep an archive of its previous versions so that it can be restored to an earlier state by anyone who feels the wiki has undergone undesirable changes. Wikis are

somewhat like the concurrent version systems (CVS) used by software developers to keep track of changes made by different programmers upon a shared piece of code. Like a wiki or a CVS, Efficasync allows multiple versions of a governing statement to be generated. However, unlike how a wiki assigns 'active' status to the most recent version, the membership of an Efficasync group decides which version of a governing statement is considered active by voting. An Efficasync group's governing statements are arranged along a wiki-like continuum that runs from abstract ethics to concrete embodiments derived from those ethics. Each statement on this continuum is justified by linking it to more abstract statements, which creates a web of integrated ideas that is constantly scrutinized and periodically altered by the group's members.

