

Find Your Fit – SaaS

One of the topics in Systems Analysis and Design course is Software as a service (SaaS). SaaS is a licensing model where the users pay to access a set of cloud-based software over the Internet. For this activity, I explored the “referatories” and repositories listed to find Open Educational Resources (OER) related to SaaS. I found that the Mason OER Metafinder (MOM) was easy to use. Searching for “software as a service” returned over a thousand references.

Here are my key findings:

- Some resources are not entirely free. The “Software as a Service (SaaS) - Focus on sales and marketing” eTextbook found in the Merlot repository requires an email address for a free trial access for up to a month (<https://www.merlot.org/merlot/viewMaterial.htm?id=1375977>).
- It is not always easy to find the most appropriate OER for the latest topics in information technology. For example, I found some System Architecture and Cloud Computing slides from the Fall 2013 MIT Open Courseware (OCW) (https://ocw.mit.edu/courses/civil-and-environmental-engineering/1-264j-database-internet-and-systems-integration-technologies-fall-2013/lecture-notes-exercises/MIT1_264JF13_lect_31.pdf). The slides also provided some questions for students to practice. Although the slides are still relevant, it did not mention some of the new popular SaaS applications such as Microsoft’s Office 365.
- After exploring the repositories such as the CORE repository (e.g., <https://core.ac.uk/search?q=software%2Bas%2Ba%2Bservice>), I found an International Journal of Computer Science & Network Solutions paper dated November 2013. The “Software as a Service, Platform as a Service, and Infrastructure as a Service – A Review” paper defined the SaaS, PaaS and IaaS terminologies and provided the pros and cons of each license models (<https://core.ac.uk/reader/25814213>).
- There are many ways to find the most relevant OER. By looking at the list of references of an MIT Open Courseware, I found a SaaS reference that was relevant (<https://ocw.mit.edu/courses/electrical-engineering-and-computer-science/6-170-software-studio-spring-2013/related-resources/>). This led me to find an “Engineering Software as a Service: An Agile Approach Using Cloud Computing” textbook that is free for personal use (<http://www.saasbook.info/>). From the SaaS book website, I found that the author taught the CS 169 course at University of California (Berkeley) and it led me to find additional free videos such as SaaS and Service Oriented Architecture: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cqBrm3AJuWc>.

Finding relevant OER requires some skill and some exploration work. At the start of my search, it looked like there were no relevant OER to support my chosen topic (i.e., SaaS). After some exploration, I was able to find relevant OER items. The SaaS and Service Oriented Architecture video (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cqBrm3AJuWc>) is relevant for my students and it is up-to-date (i.e., posted on July 30, 2020). I can supplement this video with the other OER:

- “Engineering Software as a Service: An Agile Approach Using Cloud Computing” textbook (<http://www.saasbook.info/>)
- “Software as a Service, Platform as a Service, and Infrastructure as a Service – A Review” paper (<https://core.ac.uk/reader/25814213>)