

WRITE ACCESS

Meeting the Panel

Not that I want to sound grumpy, but ... should it be possible, please ask Joe Casad to stop writing the sort of meanness found on the April 2007 Linux Magazine, Page 3 ..."

Excerpt from a letter to Klaus

LM We received remarkably few messages on the wholly improbable sci-fi vignette that appeared on Page 3 of the April issue, but we knew that "Meeting the Panel" was bound to arouse controversy. Some readers found the column utterly incoherent. Others recognized the piece as a satire on the intellectual property phenomenon and a parody of the paranormal. Far fewer readers noticed the alternative interpretation of the article as a statement on inane panel discussions at trade shows. As for the grand purpose of it all, Joe Casad writes, "I needed a break from the news, and I wanted to try something different."

Vista

I noticed a couple of glaring inaccuracies in the May 2007 "Living with Vista" issue that I thought should be corrected.

On Page 22, the article says, "Vista includes a tool for automatic update, however, you won't be able to use this

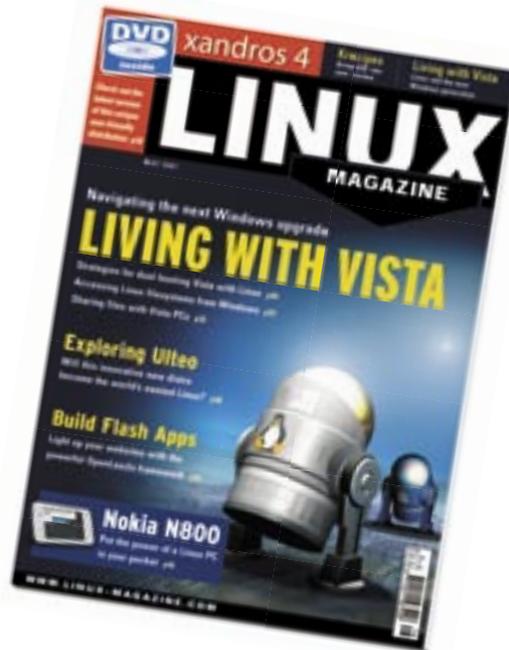
auto-update tool unless you're running Internet Explorer." This is wrong on two counts. The tool to check for updates is run by clicking the Windows button, which launches *wuapp.exe*, allowing the user to check for updates. In fact, if you try to use Internet Explorer to check for updates via the Windows Update site at <http://windowsupdate.microsoft.com>, you get a web page that tells you not to use the website but to use the tool instead. The same is true if you use Firefox, and it even launches the application for you.

The second problem is that you are not referring to automatic updates at all. What you are talking about are manual updates. The Microsoft Automatic Update feature relies on two services that run in the background and don't require the user to open IE at all. And the service is as hands off as the background updaters for any Linux distro. Not quite "[t]he closed source practice of punishing users for exercising choice" that your reviewers make it out to be.

If "it is worth remembering that one reason Microsoft is always in trouble with open source users is because they [Microsoft] seem to go out of their way to alienate open source users," then the reverse is also true. Open source users must be completely accurate and dispassionate in their reviews of Microsoft products.

Bob Ramsey

LM We are happy to print the correction. We really are interested in dispassionate discussions of Vista. In fact, we received letters from several other readers who thought we were being too nice



to Microsoft. The confusion about the update feature could easily have been cleared up if Microsoft had sent us the review copy they promised us. As we stated on Page 3 of the issue, they continually told us our review copy was "in shipping" until it was too late to obtain a copy elsewhere. We were therefore forced to base parts of the report on web documents.

If the explanation is that you're not supposed to perform updates through the "Microsoft Update" website, maybe Microsoft should clarify this point. The screenshot on page 22 of the May issue really does say you need IE. You can argue that we misinterpreted the context, but the very fact that any website anywhere is still designing for a single browser does indeed reflect a willingness to punish users for exercising choice.

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and suggestions to
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