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Linux on Laptops?

I'd love to see an article covering Linux on laptops. You could review some of the major distributions and describe their support for features such as:

- docking stations
- suspend/hibernate control
- fan control
- CPU throttling
- hotplug CD/floppy drive
- firewire/USB
- hotplug USB/Firewire
- native LCD resolution
- WIFI, including WPA

Would it be possible to provide more coverage of laptop issues?

Ray Rizzuto

LM Thanks for the suggestion. We agree that issues related to portable PCs are extremely important. We have reviewed Linux laptops in the past, and previous issues have also covered topics such as hot plugging and hibernation. One of the problems is that all laptops are different, and there is rarely a single solution that fixes them all. One useful source of information on portables is our Ask Klaus! column. Klaus often addresses specific laptop problems with an emphasis on building a deeper understanding of Linux.

Converting from XP to Vista

As an addition to your articles about Vista (Issue 78/May 2007), I would like to add that when you upgrade to Vista from a previous version of XP, W2000, or another Windows OS, even when you use professional versions, the cost of the conversion is often more than the cost of converting to GNU/Linux – even if you include training sessions for users and developers. This point is of utmost importance to financial managers and decision makers, who often don't have a clear idea of the hidden costs. The price of upgrading your Windows system to Vista includes expenses such as the following:

1. You may need more high-performance hardware due to the video card and memory requirements of Vista.
2. Every program you use must be rewritten and recompiled from scratch due to internal changes of user id and video handling. As a result, you need to buy new development tools, and you need to reeducate your developers. All your internal programs need to be rewritten, tested, and brought back into production.

3. You will need to provide additional education for your personnel to learn to use Vista.
4. You will see a number of conflicts with the applications you are currently using (see Visio and Visual Studio, for example).



5. The basic office applications aren't ready yet, so sometime next year, you will have to spend more money to upgrade MS Office. When you take all these factors into account, it is cheaper to change to GNU/Linux than to stay with Microsoft and use Vista.

Patrick Op de Beeck

LM Most of our readers probably already agree with you, but it still helps to see the details. Yes, Microsoft would lose a lot of money if you could just buy one product and be finished with them forever.

Please send your comments and suggestions to letters@linux-magazine.com