WRITE ACCESS

alexwhite, 123RF

Why Not Use Linux?

I want to write a few comments regarding the "Why Not To Use Linux" column by Steven J. Vaughan-Nichols in Issue 123 (February 2011). *[ed note: The column states some typical arguments for "not" using Linux and then gives responses to those arguments.]* I agree with your response to Point 1 (Linux is Too Hard To Use). People do think computers are complicated – Windows as well as Linux. I also agree somewhat with your response to Point 4 (Linux Isn't as Safe as Windows). But the reality is that the security level of a patched Windows system is good, and the updates happen almost without user intervention. MS even offers one of the best antivirus tools on the market for free. Most of the latest big issues have come from Adobe (Reader and Flash), not Microsoft.

Your response to Point 2 (Linux is a Pain to Set Up) is written like an advertisement. The truth is that one would probably have the same problems [you associate with Windows] (such as data migration and old peripherals) with any OS migration. I have a few web cameras that work in Slackware 11 but not in Slackware 13 (newer kernels get a null pointer when the camera is plugged), and I have seen differences in bluetooth support in modern distributions, ranging from full support to not even recognizing the bluetooth adapter.

But the point with which I truly disagree is your response to Point 3 (Linux Doesn't have Enough Applications). Both Linux and Windows have a zillion applications available, the difference only being the way of getting them. One may argue that the Linux way of distributing applications is bet-

ter than having to browse the web and install manually, but that is not the point in discussion.

Tell me where is Photoshop for Linux, Adobe CS, OVI suite, or a Windows Live client that can do videoconferencing? Don't lead the users to half-working apps, or the hundreds of apps that have a fraction of the functionality of their commercial counterparts.

OK, MS does not provide an Office suite, but in Windows you get the same suite you get in Linux. And that same thing happens with almost all good quality FOSS: it is available for Windows.

My intention with this mail is just to explain my position, which is that we as Linux advocates can only succeed if we know the reality, and know the defects and virtues of both Windows and Linux. Misinforming people will only hurt Linux adoption.

Álvaro G. Martínez

LM: We do tend to give the view from the Linux corner. Thanks for your effort to keep these important issues in the discussion.

The appearance of a free virus protection tool from Microsoft is indeed a good sign, but note that Microsoft's Security Essentials antivirus tool is only available for free to individual users of companies with fewer than 10 computers. Also, many experts argue that the reason why all this antivirus software is necessary in the first place is due to flaws in Windows security. You have to ask Adobe and Nokia

where are the Linux versions of Photoshop, CS, and OVI. Nothing on the Linux side is preventing them from releasing Linux versions of their tools. The Linux equivalents are gradually getting better and more competitive. In some cases, they might lack certain features, but they are much more than "half-working apps."

Having said that, we do agree with your point that the open source community should bear down on the task of creating tools that are 100% equivalent or better than the commercial counterparts available for other systems.

GIMP Script

Sometime ago, I adapted one of your perl scripts to do some photo printing. The script worked fine in Ubuntu 8.10, but after I upgraded to Ubuntu 10.4, it failed.

I believe I have the right packages installed, so I am at a loss. Any help would be much appreciated.
Bob Ackermann

LM: The Perlmeister writes:
Yes, unfortunately, I'm familiar with this problem. After upgrading Ubuntu, you get a version of GIMP that's no longer compatible with Gimp.pm, and therefore it is not offered with Ubuntu. The CPAN-Version doesn't work either, so it's broken for good. I wish I had better news – sorry about that!
Mike Schilli

> Please send your comments and suggestions to
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