

Re: How stable is SiD ?

Source: <http://linux.derkeiler.com/Mailing-Lists/Debian/2003-09/1192.html>

From: Karsten M. Self (*kmsself_at_ix.netcom.com*)

Date: 09/07/03

Date: Sun, 7 Sep 2003 02:12:17 +0100

To: debian-user@lists.debian.org

on Sat, Sep 06, 2003 at 01:23:43PM -0400, Johan Kullstam (kullstj-ml@comcast.net) wrote:

> *Paul Johnson* <baloo@ursine.ca> writes:

>

> > *On Fri, Sep 05, 2003 at 03:27:47PM +0200, Joris Lambrecht* wrote:

> > > *Can anyone advise on starting to use SiD as resource for my Debian*

> > > *Workstation ? Doesn't it have to many issues left open, broken*

> > > *dependencies etc.*

> >

> > *If you have to ask, sid is not stable enough for you.*

>

> *Perhaps his video card isn't supported with the woody shipped xfree86?*

> *That's why I went straight for sid last August. (ATI Radeon 8500*

> *needs 4.2.1.) At work I just got some crap corporate box with i845g*

> *graphics. I need xfree86 4.3. Please advise.*

1. Report this problem to your video card vendor. I don't care if you're CTO of IBM or a one-week-temp and Spam-R-Us or Joe's Internet Taco Cafe. Vendors need to know that their customers are using their products with GNU/Linux, and demand XFree86 support. Do this regardless of any subsequent steps you take to resolve your problem.
2. Consider the option of using a supported card. It's not going to cost much -- last time I tried this trick, it consisted of walking into CompUSA and asking for the lowest-end video card they had (suitable for most office work; who are you kidding about your Gnumeric FPS score), cost was on the order of \$25. Submit the receipt for reimbursement, and pass along `_this_` request to your internal purchase manager or whitebox vendor. Cannibalizing an existing dead box might get you the card for free.
3. Go ahead and use 'testing'. You're insulated from most of the borkeness of unstable. Using 'pinning' and apt preferences, you can include unstable and testing sources, pull from testing by preference, but install selected unstable packages on an as-needed basis. This is what I do. It works most of the time. Note that using pinning to bridge the testing/unstable gap works pretty well

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(they're relatively close), but bridging stable to either testing or unstable is a real mess. In the latter case, you're trying to bridge 1–2 years of software development, often with large changes in basic foundations.

Based on two minutes' hunting through Google and Google Groups, you're going to need XF86 v 4.3, which may not yet be in testing, but is available via unofficial deps from <http://www.apt-get.org>

<http://tinyurl.com/mhvh>

The general answer is this:

GNU/Linux remains disadvantaged by hardware support policies, many of which have been historically shown to be influenced improperly by Microsoft. Free software is a powerful tool for circumventing this situation, but it requires a positive response on your part: telling the vendor that you want support, researching whether and how support is available, and taking necessary steps to configure your system. If you're not willing to do this, then you're better off sticking to known supported hardware, or accepting the rule of an illegal software monopoly over your computing platform. Resistance isn't painless. It has its rewards.

If you're going to pioneer Debian GNU/Linux at your workplace, you'll have to balance:

- Accepting supplied HW and current levels of support.
- Risking the slightly less stable world of testing or unstable releases of Debian.
- Learning something about your tools.
- Using alternative hardware where necessary.

Inflexibility on all four points on your part isn't a problem on ours.

Peace.

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Karsten M. Self <kmsself@ix.netcom.com> <http://kmsself.home.netcom.com/>
What Part of "Gestalt" don't you understand?
Hollings: bought, paid for, but couldn't deliver the CBDTPA:
<http://www.politechbot.com/docs/cbdtpa/hollings.s2048.032102.html>

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