

# First impression of Dreamlinux -- a dream come true [long]

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Hi,

If you knew me, then you'd know I've had a long history of trying to find the best (Debian based) Live systems. I've posted my impression on grml before to this mlist. How would I define best?

I need an distro that is reliable (so Federa Core & Debian Unstable is off the list). I also need it to be up to date (so Debian Stable is out). I need a *\*pure\** Debian based system that works out of box from Live CD, while able to do installation from it. Almost all Live CDs can do that. But I also want that I will not be tired up to distro releases -- I want to do my own package updates as I wish, without the fear of breaking my OS. Yet, when the new release is out, I want it can be merged into my existing HD installation painlessly, seamlessly and easily. Further, I need to customize the Live CDs to my own taste, so that my Live CD/USB is exactly as my desktop...

I'm not asking too much, am I? After all, Linux is all about freedom, including the freedom to dream. To put all my requests together, I haven't find one distro can do all this previously, before I found Dreamlinux, a distro that is not even on distro watch.

Dreamlinux has all the features that I've been looking for. Today, it is like a dream come true to me. What impressed me the most are:

– It just works

Nowadays, Linux Live CDs are so advanced that hardware auto-detection is a glory in the past, I mean, all Live CDs can do it, so "it just works" means much more than "it boots!", or hardware auto-detections now. The "it almost works" does not qualify for "it just works" any more. For example, grml, a very good distro that I like most, won't give you an X by default. And for me, it need even an extra step in order to setup my ATI card. Another example, sidux, a rising star with loads of promises, is obsessed with the dfsg free software concept. This means you can't play mp3, flash, or encrypted DVDs by default. Those nuisances come as the philosophy of the distro, if you choose the distro, you have to live with them for the rest of your live because they would never go away.

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For Dreamlinux however, "There was absolutely no additional steps to do in order to get mp3s or a dvd playing. Simply put, this little distro is a Dream and it Works."

<http://knolinux.com/2007/01/04/dreamlinux-multimedia-edition-22--things-just-keep-getting-better-in-brazil.asp>

– Compatibility with the Debian Testing repository

<http://www.dreamlinux.com.br/english/index.html>

So you will have the assurance that all packages are well tested by the pros long enough before they are put in the repositories, and you will not face the risk of breaking your OS every now and then when updating packages.

– A modular system

"Being a modular system Dreamlinux allows you to add new modules comprising your preferred applications and build a new Distro that meet your requirements"

<http://www.dreamlinux.com.br/english/index.html>

This is the niche that most Debian based distros don't have (including grml & sidux). Only DSL comes close.

A modular system can solve a big dilemma of all distros -- in nowadays Linux world there is no "recommended" applications any more, because the existence of rich set of tools you can choose from. For example, if you use vi, then you will hate Emacs, and vice versa. So most distros have to balance the user preferences. Most will throw in 3 or 4 mail clients and window managers or even more than one desktop managers. This is really what I don't like. I just need one, why I have to waste space on the others? With the help of modular system, experienced Linux user who have their preferences already can trim down the editors, mail/news client, window managers, desktop managers down to the ones they prefer. Actually any tools that come with more than one solutions can be trimmed this way. The saved space will allow them to put more of their favorite application on the CD/USB.

None of the Debian based distros have such modular capability. grml doesn't even have a plan to have it. I proposed the idea to sidux, and it was brushed away with "interested in idea yes, willing to muck around and develop the code to support layers at this point in time, no."

– Well published document, including how to customize it to meet your own requirements.

Many distros lack good documentation. Check out Dreamlinux, it is different, especially those nice looking icon/logos to express its features. Most importantly, none of the distros I know officially support customization. Some distros have user contributed articles on how to do customization, eg, Knoppix & grml, but not officially.

– Excellent tool for remastering

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The newest Dreamlinux v2.2 is a Multimedia Edition. It will suites most family need. But with remastering capability, I don't care what's on CD. I'll build one of my own.

Dreamlinux comes with "an excellent tool for building and remastering modules and whole Distros. It is developed by one of our co-founders, nelsongs (Nelson Gomes da Silveira), leveraging the Morphix approach of modules and his previous works on developing the HD remastering scripts for the Kurumin, Knoppix, Kanotix and Beatrix Live CD Distros"  
<http://www.dreamlinux.com.br/english/saiba-tutor.html>

Wow, look at the long list, I bet a tool that evolved from remastering Kurumin, Knoppix, Kanotix and Beatrix Live CD must be an excellent one. I haven't seen one that works on so many Live CD distros!

– Boot with GRUB. "It's GRUB menu presented a lot of options to start the CD"  
<http://cutecomputer.wordpress.com/2006/12/21/review-dreamlinux-21-works-edition/>

Better than most distros (including DSL, grml & sidux) which force you to remember cheat codes and type them.

So, give Dreamlinux a try, whether for yourself, or your wife/kids. Dreamlinux suits programmer need and home entertainment purpose equally well.

<http://www.dreamlinux.com.br/english/index.html>

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Tong (remove underscore(s) to reply)

<http://xpt.sf.net/techdocs/>

<http://xpt.sf.net/tools/>

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