

[SLE] Maintenance Nightmare -- new thread from Gigabyte -- Compatibility

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From: Ted Hilts (thilts_at_help-for-you.com)

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To: suse-linux-e@suse.com, suse-linux-e@suse.com, hansdp@newingtoncs.co.za

Ted Hilts wrote:

I have tried several times to email you back but the list has been rejecting my email thinking it to be much larger than it is. Here goes again with all previous correspondence dropped.

Hans

Thank you so very much for your very informative and detailed reply.

Can you make a specific recommendation from the most recent Gigabyte boards (including processor choice, memory choice, on board "Chip Set", etc.). If you feel safe in your recommendation I would appreciate hearing back from you on your recommendation. I don't want an older Gigabyte board?

I have 2 CICERO computers (one XP, the other XP Pro, manufactured for Future Store, a computer and appliance super store here in Canada) I mention this only because the XP machine CPU board died and the extended warranty applied. The service company wanted to put a different board in because the original was no longer manufactured. I guess this must be a problem with big retail chains -- they constantly shop around for the best deal from a money standpoint rather than a quality standpoint. Anyway, I insisted that the repair service find a board with the same chipset (so I could use my backup if required) and hopefully so we could bring the system back up from the disk boot on. It went well except some applications reinitialized. The new board was a Gigabyte P4 Titan socket 478 mother board with a Pentium 4 processor running a little less than about 2 Gig (or so I understand). The model was GA-8SIMLH-P SIS651/962I/AGP4X/Socket478 for Pentium 4/2 DDR DIMM/Micro ATX/LAN/6-CH Codec/USB 2.0/. As a result of this board switch the graphic card misfunctions using HotMetal Pro 6 web authoring too and I had to use the built in on board graphics function (at lower resolution) which steals memory to operate. BUT I have never used a Gigabyte CPU board for Linux let alone one with an AMD chip.

Yes, you have somewhat relieved my concerns but I would feel better if you or someone else could come up with a recent or the same board along with all the components in the system. That graphics board which I cannot use was costly. The other day I began to experiment around with a refurbished unit (Pentium 4 at 450M -- would have preferred at least 1 gig) unit and had installed Linux SuSe 9.0 from a CD-Rom kit that came with a magazine. It came with 2 CDs, desktop and server. I could not install TELNET, FTP and other servers as both CDs seemed to be identical and desktop. The desktop was nice but I did this towards getting a SuSe based server centric gateway/router system up and running. The first problem other than no servers to speak of was the LAN NIC card was not detected. I put in a 3 Com card (my maintenance spare) and it was immediately detected. By this time I am getting upset as I spent an entire day fighting with the Magazine special (full distribution, they claimed) SuSe 9.0. The other day my wife and I made a 63 mile one way trip to Edmonton (Alberta, Canada) from our farm location where I have my home and development LAN (some 15 computers, Linux, XP, and Win95) to Compuserve where I paid \$129.00 CDN dollars for SuSe 9.1 Pro and I am hoping the Box set will give me all the servers I want. It costs about \$20.00 to \$30.00 dollars to drive round trip to the city and shop around plus meals. So now I have the SuSe User and Reference Manual and I don't have to go blind (my eyes are very sensitive) reading an PDF file from a bright glaring screen. I decided that the price was close enough to the large money difference between USA and CDN dollars plus shipping and other charges to buy the box set from the store rather than have it shipped to me by courier from the USA.

Also I notice that Linux now has more than ext2. My current Linux machines all run ext2 and they were put together using SuSe 6.4 and 6.2. One of my concerns is that almost all these computers are unique with most having a different CPU board than the other. I could not afford the Enterprise version and am having a hard time understanding the difference between the 9.1 Pro and the Enterprise version other than the enterprise version comes with a special server (s) that do MORE of what I don't know but do it from a central network location and somehow bridge the differences between machines . So I am gambling that 9.1 Pro will at least give me what I've got with 6.4 Suse but more recent. Another concern, and I thought I had it solved with 6.4 SuSe was the ability to make transparent upgrades including the kernel. But SuSe has told me by email (from the pre purchase sales department) that I will have to install their SuSe 9.1 distribution from scratch on all my SuSe machines. I am hoping that 9.1 will allow me to install the latest browsers as they evolve and other things. I CANNOT do this now with SuSe 6.4. I tried installing Netscape (again using the binary from one of these Magazine CDs) and the first problem was I was lacking certain libraries and even if I went out and got them there was probably some incompatibilities between the kernel calls of my present kernel and what the binary for Netscape would be calling and expecting as results. And it turns out that with 9.1 Pro I have obtained the latest KDE.

So I am beginning to wonder how best to put a system together when it is possible it could go obsolete hardware and software wise over night. I was going to ask some of these questions in a separate email to the list. I notice a lot of people are having problems of various sorts with SuSe 9.1 (mine is PRO and not yet installed until I have thoroughly read the manuals), So, as you probably recognized, and am trying to get as educated as possible on my next few Linux projects in and effort to thwart my LAN from turning into a monstrosity to maintain -- although I think it has come close to that state already. I need a 60 hour day to keep up with the problems.

So that's why I am trying to get a dependable and maintainable set up. That involves being able to upgrade on a continuous basis and do it transparently to the existing system, including the kernel.

I notice on this list (I subscribe to 14 SuSe lists) a lot of hype about Red Carpet which appears by the e-mail to be some kind of upgrade/installation facility based on RPMs. For a week now I have seen e-mail on this subject but have had time only to read a few. I would like to read them all. I don't think this facility comes with the SuSe 9.1 Pro distribution BUT I am looking for an application that will allow me to make "seamless" upgrades" to my Linux systems once I wipe them of the hard drives and install SuSe 9.1 Pro on the works.

What I am going to do, and this really hurts financially, is simply save the old hard drives and put in new hard drives . That way I can go back to the original system and data by putting back the original drives (about 3 per unit, although one has 7). That is one of the reasons why I have another email on backups. I want to make a single backup of the first SuSe 9.1 installation and then use that backup (if possible) regardless of the difference in computers (CPU, graphics boards, sound boards, LAN NIC, etc.) . If this is even possible and no one on the list has yet been able to demonstrate it is possible, then there is still the task of identifying each LINUX computer with its own (original) name and original static IP address which involves numerous config (hosts, smb.conf, httpd.conf, and many others) and other locations within the distribution.

Can't see the screen very well any more so I will generate more information if you get back to me on what I have already written. ANYONE else is also welcome to join in.

Bye to all, thanks, TED

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