

Re: looking for a linux live cd that works

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Andy Fraser <andyfraser31@hotmail.com> wrote in message
news:<3cjf62-ei2.ln1@news.linuxuser.org.uk>...

> *In alt.linux, Brian Hughes uttered these immortal words:*

>

> > *Unfortunately, somebody else could add or configure software. I'd beg*

> > *to differ with Andy..Live CDs are the most promising*

> > *development I've seen in a long time. It might sound like heresy, but*

> > *I was never completely at ease with a 20 MB hard drive*

> > *that couldn't be hardware write protected- meaning flicking a switch*

> > *or removing a jumper- never mind 120GB. One malicious*

> > *trojan could potentially land me in prison. A clean machine, with*

> > *system and applications in ROM, and configurations and data*

> > *on a removable pen drive is my way to go.*

>

> *You might be surprised to know that I agree with you up to a point. I can*

> *remember when OSes did come on ROMs. I can remember when upgrading an OS*

> *meant prizing a ROM or two off out of their chip holders and inserting new*

> *ones (the Acorn A3000 or early RISC PC IIRC). But there are problems with*

> *this approach today.*

>

> *If you use ROM chips for the OS and apps then you'd have to have *every* app*

> *that exists on there. You can get most of the way there with Linux but how*

> *would that work for Windows? Everyone would have every app from MS, Adobe,*

> *Macromedia and every other software publisher there is? What happens if*

> *just one app that some people use is missed? I know how stupid this sounds*

> *written down like this but you proposed it. I'm sure you have answers to*

> *these questions. (also see below)*

>

> *I can see software development virtually grinding to a halt. We all moan*

> *about having to patch software but given the complexity of today's apps*

> *making sure they're 100% bug free and secure could take years otherwise*

> *there'd be ROMs flying about in the post like nobody's business (which*

> *wouldn't be as convenient as downloading a patch via the Internet). On the*

> *plus side MS might not ever be able to release another version of Windows,*

> *IE and OE again. ;-)*

>

> *When you said the OS and apps were on ROM maybe you meant one ROM for the OS*

> *and one ROM per app. They'd have to be available without opening the case*

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- > *incase I need more OSes/apps than there are slots. Laptops would be a*
- > *nightmare if I need lots of apps. I could end up spending more time*
- > *swapping chips over than anything else.*
- >
- > *The pen drives for the data would be very costly. Today a 8GB 40x compact*
- > *flash card costs nearly £500. I have more than 16GB of data so I'd have to*
- > *pay more than £1,000 just to store it. I could archive all but ~200MB to*
- > *DVD until I need to change it and use a 512MB card which would only cost me*
- > *£40 but that's hardly as convenient as having it all available on HD.*
- >
- > *And after all that some configuration would have to be in a user writable*
- > *place. My needs for a web server will be different from someone elses.*
- > *Today I can write a httpd.conf file that works for me that will be*
- > *different from other peoples. How will this work with your idea?*
- >
- > *I could think of dozens of other reasons why this wouldn't work but there's*
- > *enough to be going on with here. I know I've over exaggerated this post*
- > *somewhat after a while some of the points would become moot but I'm just*
- > *highlighting how unworkable this idea is today.*

...A belated, but considered reply.... I can remember a simpler world of ZX81s, BBC Model Bs, and Jupiter Aces, with operating systems on 2764 or 27128 eproms with little sticky labels on the windows. These days, I would include in the umbrella of "ROM", DVD-Roms, CD-Roms, and USB dongles, all with a well established distribution structure. I would *not* include a read-only partition on a Hard Drive- that's a challenge to a bored hacker- nor a flash bios rom -there's a lesson unlearned from the Melissa virus- nor a CD-R while it's in a write capable drive. I've never forgotten that computers are pieces of electronic equipment, and the increased reliance on hard drives has generally struck me as a stampede down a road to hell. We seem to have reached a stage where we're expected to take a single 160GB electro-magnetic-mechanical data cauldron, chuck in an incomprehensible Windows registry, add larger and larger virus databases, more and more firewall patches, larger and larger applications, season with adware and trojans, defragment regularly, take regular backups, and then it's ready to entrust valuable data to...

...that's why I'm exploring the Live-CD route, with system and proven applications on a recordable CD, and user configurations, data, and extra applications on a datapen. In fairness to Andy, I've nowhere near 16GB of live data. If a hard drive means convenience, taking into account the input of maintenance, then I won't criticize his choice. To me, though, convenience is about being able to open an .exe file without worrying about premium porno diallers, because I can have a clean machine in seconds. The price of USB pens is plummeting, and no hacker on earth can corrupt them while they're unplugged.

Live-CD or HD installation- it's a choice- to get back to the original post, I'm hopping between DamnSmallLinux and Slax, and gradually

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drifting away from a fragmented and creaking Windows ME.