

## Re: Linux is not...

**Source:** <http://linux.derkeiler.com/Newsgroups/alt.linux/2005-06/0133.html>

---

**From:** Al Dente (*nobody\_at\_home.com*)

**Date:** 06/12/05

Date: Sun, 12 Jun 2005 16:44:44 GMT

I've been visiting this newsgroup for the last couple of months, mostly trying to find a version of Linux that will free me from the clutches of Microsoft. Mot that I'm saying that MS is all bad... I remember the state of microcomputing before the IBM PC arrived, and it was total chaos. Every company had their own concept of how the software should be written, and there was essentially NO compatibility, no ability to transfer programs from one system to another. The few computer stores that existed had shelves divided into software for this system, software for that system, and software for systems that nobody can even remember now! The MS/PC standard may be mediocre, but at least it is a standard, and I can buy or download software and expect it to run in just about any PC I try it on.

That's what I was hoping for from Linux, but after downloading several LIVE CD versions, I've found that they all do a great job of automatically setting up video and audio (something MS never got right!), but fall short when it comes to modems, USB devices, or just about any other hardware. Yes, I know there are places to go and stuff to download that promises to help me, but I just don't have the time/energy/insight to do it right now.

Like the author of the original post in this thread, I've been wanting a system that just plain WORKS, out of the box, and is reliable, not needing constant attention to the underlying operating system. Something that would allow me to install "applications" that I want or need, update them as necessary, and would work with added hardware that I decide I want to use. Being (relatively) immune to "malware" would be nice, but the biggest attraction would be the LOW MAINTENANCE aspect. I was hoping that the Linux LIVE CD systems would provide this functionality for me, but I've been disappointed so far.

However, I've come to realize that I do, in fact, have such a system already! It's my HP Ipaq 2215 handheld. The operating system is in firmware, which allows me to update it if necessary (already have once), but makes it relatively safe from corruption. It's up and running instantly when I turn it on, no waiting for bootup and stabilization. I can download and install a variety of programs to augment the ones already in place. For example, I have a mapping program installed that allows me to find addresses in my area (Atlanta) while sitting in a meeting, and I've interfaced it to my GPS

alt.linux: Re: Linux is not...

receiver so it can plot my travels. It's not as nice as a built-in GPS would be in a car, but a whole lot cheaper, and I can carry it around in my pocket. I use the built-in media player to play .WMA files, and have installed a few video and .JPG viewers as well. The microphone allows me to record meetings or quick notes to a memory card. I have an 802.11 card that lets me connect to wireless hotspots for checking email or websites. There are some games, and more if I want to download them.

This is not an advertisement for the Ipaq system... I'm sure there are many other equally good products out there, probably even better since mine is getting old by computer standards! The point is, IT WORKS! It doesn't require constant attention, upgrading, updating, purging, restoring, etc.... (I do have a backup image, and periodically blank the software and re-install from the image, but the OS is unchanged and the whole process takes maybe 5 or 6 minutes). If this device was transformed into a larger, full-screen system, perhaps with a little more hardware (CD-DVD drive, dial-up modem, camera), yet retained the software stability, I'd be very happy. I thought the tablet computers would fit this niche, but I'm not sure they are quite the same. They could be, though!

m9876c at yahoo dot com