

Re: Are there motherboards Linux can't use?

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Moritz Franosch wrote:

>

> *"Steve Wolfe" <unt@codon.com> writes:*

>

>> *Someone told me she bought a new computer and found its motherboard was
>> incompatible with Linux.*

>

>> *The most common reason is that their version of Linux doesn't have
>> drivers for necessary hardware.*

>

>> *That's why Windows and most all distros of Linux provide a
>> way for you to load a third-party driver during the installation process.*

>> ;)

>

> *I have never seen a way for loading a third-party driver during the
> installation process, be it Linux or Windows. With (Suse) Linux, you
> can load network and SCSI drivers that may be needed for the
> installation process, but these are only drivers that come on the
> installation CDs/floppies.*

>

> *To load a driver, the system must run already, even if its early in
> the installation process. So the board should at least boot
> Linux. Whether you then get the best performance (e.g. IDE DMA can be
> enabled) or whether all on-board hardware (e.g. sound) works is
> another thing.*

The Debian installation system permits loading of third-party drivers. You need some way of booting of course (e.g. CD, floppy, or network). With floppies for example, as long as the boot floppy supports your CPU and floppy drive controller you're good to go. Once the kernel is loaded, it'll ask for a root floppy with ramdisk image. After that's loaded the installer starts, but Alt-F2 will take you to another VC as usual. From there you can mount any floppy you like and insmod any module it contains.

RedHat must offer something similar. Adaptec provides driver disks and installation instructions for installing RedHat on Adaptec controllers which RH doesn't support natively. (For example, the `aic79xx`

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controllers before that driver made it into the mainstream kernel.)

You may not get *prompted* to install third party drivers (at least some installers do, though) but the lack of prompting does not mean that you can't do it.