

Re: Universal sound card?

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- *From:* mike <spamme9@xxxxxxxxxx>
 - *Date:* Sat, 31 May 2008 03:17:01 GMT
-

Aragorn wrote:

mike wrote:

<big snip – please learn to trim your posts>

Shoulda read this first, cause Ubuntu 8.04 is what I was downloading.
Here's what happened:

Decided to install within windows on a laptop. Seemed to be the lowest risk solution.

Although this is an option, it is definitely one I do not recommend, because installing it into a Windows filesystem requires that an emulation layer is used in between the Linux-native filesystem used by Ubuntu – presumably /ext3/ – and the Windows filesystem.

Believe it or not, but this kind of approach really bogs down your performance as it keeps the kernel busy translating the filesystem I/O all the time.

I believe it, but that's not the issue. I've used Virtual PC running on an XP host to run Windows 2000 in which I run a tor-enabled browser inside a sandbox. I did it just to see if I could and it ran surprisingly well.

Stuck in the Cd and clicked install. Sorry, charlie, you need 256MB of ram...but I HAVE 256 MB of ram.

I don't really know the technicalities of an install to a file in a Windows partition, but as I wrote higher up, this step requires an extra translation layer which may eat up some of the memory seen by the kernel.

On the other hand, the kernel may even presume that there is less memory in

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the system than there physically is, due to some memory addresses possibly being mapped out as bad pages – in this case, the kernel will mark them as "in use" by a dummy process, so that none of the real processes can use those addresses.

You're shooting the messenger. Users don't want conjecture about why linux is not working, they just want it to work.

Mind you that Windows will not report any bad memory addresses until it tries to use them, because Windows does not perform any hardware indexing or hardware sanity checks.

Yes, but memtest86 does...or doesn't in this case. Two computers, tested memory...you're deflecting.

Tried another computer... same problem.

Did you also install it inside a Windows partition there? This is important.

Yes I did. And I've done it many times with earlier distributions.

Fortunately, I had another computer and could google for the answer. Need to use a magic incantation that ignores the memory limit.

This "magic incantation" simply comprises of a kernel boot parameter that tells the kernel how much RAM you have, so that it doesn't try to compute the amount of RAM by itself. Basically, you're overriding the boottime memory detection routine in the kernel.

This is contradictory. I didn't tell it how much memory, if it didn't compute it, it had to just ignore the limit...which is what I expect it did, and what the commandline option implied through it's name.

Now, this is symptomatic of my experiences with linux. Somebody made some arbitrary decision and didn't fully consider the impact of that decision on users.

The main arbitrary decision in this case would be your decision to install

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GNU/Linux in a file in a Windows partition, which does work as a "test run working environment" but is not the intended use of the system and can thus also not be expected to perform fully.

This is BS. The opening screen gives me two options. I chose one. If it doesn't work under those circumstances, don't have the option.

If it REQUIRES 256MB, why won't it install on a system with 256MB of memory and why can I tell it NOT to require 256MB?

See my above explanation. (1) You are not installing it as it should, but instead you are forcing it to be installed in a Windows partition. (2) You /may/ (or may not) have bad memory in your machine.

I'm not forcing anything. I picked an option supplied by the developer. I've tested the RAM, it's not bad.

My laptop does NOT have shared video ram, but I expect that many do and that should have been considered. FWIW, I routinely run win2k in 128MB of ram.

I own a second-hand Toshiba Satellite laptop with a 1.0 GHz Celeron processor, a 10 GB hard disk and 128 MB of RAM, of which 16 MB is shared as video memory. It runs Mandrake 8.2 PowerPack with KDE 2.x – which is several years old already – and despite that it's slow, it runs pretty well.

My preferred course was to install on a 1GHZ laptop with 128MB of ram. Ram expansion costs many times the cost of the laptop, so that ain't gonna happen.

That's one of the reasons why I'm not upgrading that laptop either. I don't even use it all that much – maybe once a year.

Ok, so use the magic incantation and wait almost an hour for Ubuntu to checksum files and load 'em...error, can't read disk, do you want to try again? Well, yes...but Ubuntu's idea of "trying again" is to START OVER.

Ehm... What else did you understand as the meaning of "try again?"

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this is the FIRST time I've experienced "start over". every other time, try again means, "attempt to re-read the failed sector." You can often remove the CD, clean off the fingerprints, put it back in and continue right where you left off.

An hour later, same error. Burned a new CD. An hour later, same error.
Replaced the CD drive. An hour later, same error.
Copied the cd to the hard drive and tried to install from there.
Windows didn't have any problems reading the cd and copying it.
Sorry, Charlie, can't install from hard drive.

Of course that wouldn't work. What were you thinking?

"Of course" assumes you know something. It's OFTEN possible to install stuff by copying the CD contents to the drive and installing from there. Copying the .iso file and installing from the HD worked. Why would you expect that to work instead???

Had it not been for the encouragement in this thread, I'd have said (expletive deleted)—it and gone out to do something more fun than pulling out my hair.

Perhaps if you had started with a *proper* install instead of with a scenario full of potential problems?

Again, shooting the messenger. If there's a box to check and a install button, I expect, no DEMAND, that it work.

More googling.
Gotta copy the .iso file to the hard drive and install.
An hour later, it's installed...well it reboots. Turns out it takes much longer to actually install.

Yes, due to the fact that you're not installing it on a native filesystem but in a file inside another filesystem of a hostile (excuse for an) operating system, of which the specifications are not free and change all the time in order to sabotage interoperability.

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This is crap. Typically, anti-piracy issues have to do with the thing you're installing, not the host. I've had MUCH grief with M\$'s attempts to prevent installs, but never do to the MS host I'm installing on.

I can't complain about the time to install, but I sure can complain about the lack of feedback. Ubuntu gives no clues about what's happening and how long it will take.

Something that looks like a progress bar halts for ten minutes at a time, most of that with no disk activity. And when the "progress bar" gets to the other end, it starts moving backwards. Not a clue as to when it might be done.

There usually is a key combination to override the progress bar and get some real output of what is happening. In fact, it is the same during boot time, but Windows addicts don't like that; they need to see something graphical or they get a heartattack. <grin>

Again, developer decisions that significantly impact the user experience based on (aparently) complete ignorance of that usere experinece.

No, more like a user decision not to Read The /Fine/ Manual and look for trouble where there was none to begin with.

I don't care whether it's an operating system or a lawnmower. You should be able to get basic functionality without reading ANY manual.

Try this...

Average Joe or Jane goes down to the car dealer to buy a new car.

Big sign says, "BEST car you ever had...can't be beat, Better than FORD..." so they stop in.

They open the door and get in. The steering wheel is off to the side.

The footpedals are backwards for better ergonomics. They can't make the radio work.

They go back inside to ask the salesman some questions.

He gives them a stern look and points to a big sign on the wall that says, "RTFM".

Wanna bet the salesman doesn't work on commission? At least not for long.

Haven't linux developers ever heard of alpha testing or focus groups?

Yes they have. However, installing GNU/Linux in a file inside a Windows partition is not an intended focus, and manuals are made to be read.

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One more time, if there are two check boxes on the installation page, they're BOTH an intended focus.

Haven't Windows users ever heard of reading manuals? <grin>

About 14 hours into the project, I finally had linux booted. Horny heron...I thought I was being original with the chicken-egg thing...

Yeah, I don't know where the Debian/Ubuntu guys keep getting those names either. :p

I gotta say, I was impressed. Different user interface than I'm used to with other linuxes, [...

Ubuntu comes with Gnome as its default desktop environment. You've mentioned having used Knoppix before, and Knoppix uses KDE as the default desktop environment.

...] but after poking around, I got some of it to work. It recognized my thumb drive. I could play an mp3. Wireless network wouldn't work and I couldn't figure out how to configure it.

Possibly there wasn't a driver for it in Ubuntu because the driver for your adapter may have been proprietary only. You then have the choice of either fetching such a proprietary driver for that adapter in Linux, or of using the Windows driver with the `/ndiswrapper/` kernel module.

I pulled out the card and stuffed in an old Prism 16-bit card. The network came up and I could surf the web. Cool. Good thing that it came up automatically, cause I couldn't have configured it.

Probably not without looking around and reading manuals, no.

Networking is a thorny issue, cause you can't look around if you can't connect to look around for how to connect.

So, after all that fuss and muss, I'm pretty impressed with the improvements in the last year. One nagging problem that hasn't been fixed is lack of user feedback. Some programs have the linux equivalent of the windows hourglass to tell you it's busy doing something. But many

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actions don't give any feedback at all. I tend to get impatient and click it again. A minute later, several instances pop up. Lack of feedback is unacceptable for actions that take more than a second or so. In general, I find linux feels much slower than windows on the same machine.

All of what you describe above leads me to believe you've got some process hogging away on CPU cycles, and my guess is that it's the I/O translation layer in the kernel, due to the fact that you've installed it in an emulated filesystem environment. Do not underestimate this factor.

I'm not buying that argument.

If I run virtual PC on XP and load linux on top of that, linux is running on EMULATED HARDWARE and will run much slower...although it's pretty snappy in that mode.

The way Ubuntu is loading, it's booting/running native code on native hardware. The hard drive is embedded into the Windows OS file system, but all Windows has to do is mark a bunch of sectors used, unmovable and stay out of it. Linux has the option to create anything it wants inside those disk sectors. There's no reason it HAS to be significantly slower.

Yes, there's some overhead, but it shouldn't have to be a lot.

Now, if I were lazy, I might do it differently and suffer the slowdown. But linux guys are typically anything but lazy.

A second problem may be that – or so I believe – Ubuntu comes with the Compiz Fusion window manager, which uses 3D hardware videoacceleration, and if the 3D acceleration of your video adapter is not supported by the driver – possibly you may need to install the proprietary driver first – then this will be emulated in software (and in RAM, rather than in video memory) and will also yield a very slow user experience similar to what you're describing. 256 MB may then even be a bit too little.

I shoulda been more clear. The system I eventually got it loaded on has 320MB of ram. I've installed many linux variants on many different hardwares over the years. Compared to the contemporary windows version, linux has always "felt" slower. Benchmarks don't mean nothin' if it "feels" slower.

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A related issue is the system not keeping up with typing speed. You bang on the keys and entry into the text box just stops for seconds at a time. Even when it doesn't halt, I can often type faster than the text shows up on the screen. Very disconcerting, 'cause I don't type all that fast.

Yes, all of that agrees with what I wrote above.

The problem with typing should have nothing to do with this. If I need to access anything more than a ram buffer to enter text into a box, something is seriously wrong with the program, or the underlying OS.

I tried installing a different music player. That went without a hitch, although I thought 40MB of stuff downloaded was excessive for a music player.

Perhaps you needed more than just the player, i.e. dependencies, such as video/audio codecs or other shared libraries.

Yep, I understand. But Windows requires the same stuff. Also, there's already codecs on the system, cause the other player worked.

Years ago, I bitched a LOT when the registry replaced win.ini and it's cousins. It was darn difficult to figure out how to fix stuff when it was all jumbled together. I'm shifting back the other way because the registry allows a lot of sharing that would otherwise require multiple instances of basically the same DLL code. If I understand what I'm reading, windows is shifting away from the registry again. It's always something.

I tried installing a basic programming environment. Worked fine until I tried to run the program. Bunch of stuff missing. So much for dependency checking. Haven't tried plugging in a usb webcam.

Bottom line is that the core is getting better. I'm not talking about performance. I'm talking about ability to get something, anything, running. But there are a few implementation decisions made by geeks for geeks that significantly impede adoption by those of us who are not geeks.

I have already commented on this higher up, so I'm not going to make my

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reply any longer than it needs to be. ;~)

I wrote my first computer program in 1967. I've got advanced engineering degrees. I've managed hardware designs for unix workstations. I don't claim to be an ubergeek, but I oughta be able to do this.

Then why are you putting yourself through so much trouble by deliberately blocking your knowledge of how a computer is supposed to work and deliberately choosing non-standard install procedures that hold a recipe for disaster?

Two check boxes, I guess they're actually mutually exclusive radio buttons, one install button == disaster??? The disaster is making it an option if it doesn't work.

Typical reaction from linux users is, "you're an idiot."
That may be, but it's symptomatic of linux.

No, it is not.

"If you can't make it work, it's because you're a windows idiot." A more productive reaction might be to consider that everybody is not a geek and improve the user experience.

From what you write higher up, you're not exactly a computer novice. Yet a lot of what perspires through your attitude is telling me that you are deliberately playing dumb, without being dumb.

One talent I have is to be able to step outside the box and view the world from the perspective of a novice user.

If I thought linux had anything I really needed and couldn't get anywhere else, I'd figure out how to make it work.

I write this crap to expose the linux zealots to problems mere mortals are having when trying to use linux. Blaming the user is a practice best left to the customer support center for your favorite company.

A few changes to make it palatable to the novice user would be a VAST improvement in the user experience. Never push a rock up hill when you can get to the same place going downhill.

Make it user friendly and they will come...

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I consider myself a very good driver, and I've done some pretty wild stuff with my very first car. I am now a more careful driver, and other people also consider me a very good driver. My late father, who used to be a professional driver himself, did not feel quite comfortable being in the passenger's seat of the cars of a lot of people that he himself had taught how to drive, or of his colleagues – all professional drivers as well – but he did feel comfortable with me behind the wheel.

Yet, if I suddenly decide to turn left when on my immediate left there isn't a road but a house, then I will wreck my car and induce some domestic disturbance to the inhabitants of that house. The bottom line: I could drive my car the way I'm supposed to, or I could do something irrational and smack into a house on purpose.

It would be my choice. And you're acting like you're just aching to smack into a house while at the wheel of a very fine car, and then blame it on the car.

Quirks that you "work around" every day can be show stoppers for the uninitiated. How simple the solution is not nearly as important as how widely known the solution. Better yet is NOT to need a solution.

Still better yet is to use the system for what it was designed.

Like it or not, the way Windows works is the way all computers have to work.

You mean they all have to use backwards concepts from single-user personal computers that only had floppy drives, have you running all processes with administrator privileges, be open to any kind of virus infection by the way execute permission is handled, with the concepts of "security", "memory management", "filesystem organization", "interprocess communication" and "stability" all being implemented with the same slack jaw as is expected from the drooling click-addicts looking at the 5000 USD names of simple operating system components and menu items?

I'm gonna say, "EXACTLY"! When are you guys gonna get your heads outa the sand and pay attention to customers.

Customers don't give a damn about interprocess communication. They want youtube, myspace, letters to grandma, webcams, voip, etc.

The less they know about what's under the hood, the better.

If I could figure out how to turn off the password, I would.

And yes, I wanna be administrator.

And that damned popup everytime I want to do something is reminiscent of Vista...but vista at least makes it easy to turn off.

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If I can't make it do what I want, it don't matter how great the interprocess communication. Calling windows users names is not helpful.

Windows surely ain't perfect, but I can stick in the CD, click install, have coffee, input my user name, have some more coffee...when I come back, I'm writing letters to grandma.

Now, if you want to run a webserver, that's a whole other paradigm. Hire yourself a linux guru and get 'er done.

You don't get to change that until AFTER you have significant market share.

The above comment is totally absurd and non sequitur.

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Return address is VALID!

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