

Experiences and trouble with Knoppix --evaluating converting from Windows to Linux

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Re: Experiences and trouble with Knoppix --evaluating converting from Windows to Linux

Hello,

I am evaluating converting (at least some) desktops at the office from Windows 2000, to some variety of Linux.

It is a 1.2Ghz AMD Athlon with 128Meg of ram, ATI Wonder Graphics card (modern) and an 80Gig harddisk, with 100Mbps Lincard. Reasonably modern hardware overall.

I evaluated the system, and here is my experience, and problems. Maybe someone can help.

Generally, I liked Linux/Knoppix. I have used Linux a lot before for servers, but never as a workstation/desktop.

Version:

Knoppix: 2003-06-06 English CD

Good: (ie. What I liked)

- CD could boot and Knoppix started
- All hardware was recognised and set up correctly. Linux has come very far in this regard. Video, Sound, Mouse (3rd scroll button too), Lan, CDRom, USB Drive, DVD Drive all got recognized and set up correctly by Knoppix. Lan used DHCP to get on the network and Konquerer could see webpages right away. FTP and ssh to other linux machines on the Lan worked fine. Very very good so far.

Now the issues. Any ideas how to fix these?

Bad:

- The Desktop (KDE) is slow. I mean **really** slow, almost to be

unusable. Various windows (like File explorer) take forever to open. Far slower than MS W2K on the same hardware. This may have been due to the fact it was running from a CD though (can anyone say?)

-Csh fails: opening a Csh Shell immediately crashed with some sort of exec error

-Xine: The Media player:

- It is very slow to open (strange, as this is a fast PC)
- It crashes immediately any time I try to play DIVX/XVID AVIs (just window closes after saying 'xine')
 - MPGs were ok though, played nicely
- it Cannot Play DVD's : 'xine Engine Error - input plugin failed to open mrl 'dvd:/'
 - also crashed when trying to play VOB's from the DVD file system directly
- it couldn't eject DVDs or CDs (just they get stuck 'input_DVD: CDROMEJECT failed: device
- other random crashes at various time when pushing buttons on xine
- Generally this was bad, because one use for the machine is to be a media playing device
- Xine looks sexy, but very flakey. No video formats (XVID, DIVX, AVI, VOB) worked except MPG.

-Open Office

- Takes forever, welcome seagulls screen opens, then crashed on open and windows disappeared. Couldn't evaluate...

-File Explorer, opening JPGs

- Tried to open some JPGs, picture starts to appear in right side window, then file manager crashed and shut down. Couldn't see pictures.

-XATV (or whatever the TV card application is that is in Knoppix)

- Started it, found my TV card (it says), but then searching channels failed. Asked me if I should start anyways, I said OK. An imagine from my webcam appeared instead though.. Hummm.... seems like it got very very confused. I have a webcam and TV card in my PC.

-Windows Networking

- No way (I could find) to browse the windows network (this will be a reality in most offices where Linux is introduced).. ie the SMB windows network, that exists in most offices that run MS Windows LANs via 'network neighborhood'.

-USB Drive

- Knoppix found the USB 120Gig drive, and could read it OK (NTFS). I

decided to make it a linux filesystem, ran Fdisk (ok), rebooted (ok),
ran MK2FS (ran for a while, then the entire OS froze up solid,
CTRL-ALT-DEL failed and had to pull the power and start over..)

Overall impression:

Good:

KDE looks nice. Knoppix is a great idea to introduce Linux to MS Windows users.

Bad:

Lots of stuff doesn't work yet. Overall, Knoppix applications, though in a controlled environment, was very unstable. Oddly, the hard stuff (networking, DVD drive, CDRom, USB hard drive (except formatting), graphics card, sound) all worked correctly. Kernel and OS were very stable and worked just fine. Rather the issues were that the applications were very flaky after the environment was started. This would seem to be easier to fix than kernel/hardware issues (which are OK in Knoppix).

We use the office machines for web browsing and media (AVI, audio, images..etc) and 'Office' word processing/spreadsheet applications. None of this was successful though for the reasons above, which was a big disappointment. Are we stuck with MS-W2K I wonder..

Any thoughts on what I may have done wrong? As I said, all the hard stuff like the graphics/audio..etc all started correctly on the PC, so I dont think it was due to hardware that the programs kept crashing. Funny the kernel and KDE were very stable, but the apps werent stable at all. The CDROM is OK, passed MD5 checking, so that wasn't the problem.

I would like to get the above to work (in Knoppix, it should really). If I can great, I will convert over a few machines, otherwise, probably I will need to stick to Windows 2K and check again in a couple years to see if things have progressed a bit further.

Knoppix is a great idea BTW (once the applications work better).

Thoughts/opinions?

Thank you,

Jack