

## Re: Linux, the final decision

**Source:** <http://linux.derkeiler.com/Newsgroups/comp.os.linux.misc/2004-02/0169.html>

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**From:** The Ghost In The Machine (*ewill\_at\_sirius.athghost7038suus.net*)

**Date:** 02/02/04

Date: Mon, 02 Feb 2004 01:00:20 GMT

In comp.os.linux.advocacy, Kadaitcha Man

<nospam@rainx.cjb.net>

wrote

on Sat, 31 Jan 2004 18:34:10 -0800 (PST)

<NhcdqXtqaIP9E5BEF635zpeoFjUbNZNf@internet.hapra.at>:

> *The Ghost In The Machine* wrote:

>> *In comp.os.linux.advocacy, Kadaitcha Man*

>> <nospam@rainx.cjb.net>

>> wrote

>> on Fri, 30 Jan 2004 22:29:56 -0800 (PST)

>> <klPHUr2xDNtv7E285182pk77cDrx1G8h@nsa.silentsky.com>:

>>

>>> *The Ghost In The Machine* wrote:

>>>

>>>> *In comp.os.linux.advocacy, Kadaitcha Man*

>>>>

>>>> *Actually, a GUI restart is worse for the workstation sitter.*

>>>> *With a reboot, it's simple: CTRL-ALT-DEL and that's it.*

>>>> *A GUI restart can be initiated on Linux by one of the following.*

>>>>

>>>> *[1] The X server crashes on its own. This is somewhat akin to*

>>>> *a Windows spontaneous reboot except that the rest of the*

>>>> *server doesn't notice. Under normal circumstances the user*

>>>> *will just see his screen vanish, to be replaced by an*

>>>> *authentication widget, unless he used 'startx' in which case*

>>>> *he might get a message. The apps will die. If the session*

>>>> *manager's smart enough they might restart when he next logs in*

>>>> *but I've discovered that, at least for xterms, they're not too*

>>>> *bright about it; if you have a chance try setting up a*

>>>> *multiworkspace Gnome/sawfish desktop, fire up a bunch of*

>>>> *of Xterms, then log out and log back in. The results are amusing*

>>>> *to a person of a certain mindbent but hardly useful.*

>>>>

>>>> *For its part Galeon fares somewhat better but one has to be careful*

>>>> *when restarting it to start it from the same workspace/window where*

>>>> *it died or its session was saved; otherwise it shifts.*

>>>>

>>>> *SHOCK! HORROR! And to listen to the vast majority of the cola posters,*

>>>that is an out and out lie that simply does not happen in linux.

>>

>>

>> Well, it may depend on what one defines as "Linux"; kernel crashes  
>> are rather rare.

>

> Indeed, but being as I'm a bastard troll, I won't let that distinction  
> get in the way of healthy debate.

OK.

>

>>>BWAHAHAHAHAH!!! I tried it whilst reading that. I lost the lot – no

>>>prompts to save my work, nothing – POOF! BWAHAHAHAHAHA!! Thank you for

>>>that \*eg\*

>

> [snip]

>

>> That most editors don't bother indicates that we have a challenge  
>> in the Linux community – a challenge that should be met if  
>> we ever are going to compete with a buggy but omnipresent  
>> competitor.

>

> Indeed, but windows does go POOF! without warning. That cannot be  
> denied. Of course, the scenario we are discussing is avoidable.

>

>> (HINT HINT, guys. I know you're out there. :-)

>

> LOL

>

> [snip]

>

>>>Yes, I understood most of that already.

>>

>>

>> Good. :-)

>

> Well, if I'm going to succeed at being a linux troll instead of a  
> win troll, I'm going to have to know my stuff.

>

> [snip]

>

>> Welcome to Fundamental Philosophical Incompatibility Land. :-)

>>

>> As you might have noticed, there are (at least) two general  
>> possibilities for design that are possible.

>>

>> [1] The system pretends the crash didn't happen and waits for  
>> the remote box to restart, then continues where it left off.

>>

>> [2] The system notifies the app that something went wrong, which

>> *the app then decides to notify the user, confusing him*  
>> *to some extent, then the app terminates.*  
>>  
>> *With NFS, one can get either option. :-) (I'd have to look to see*  
>> *how Windows deals with an analogous situation. One advantage*  
>> *of course is that Windows drivers have access to the GUI, which*  
>> *might be of some assistance for notification if a remote node*  
>> *decides to go down.)*  
>  
> *That drivers have access to the gui is not a hard and fast rule. See the*  
> *common object model.*

No, but many drivers presumably do. Ideally, they all would, if only through some sort of interface that would prompt the user and ask "Hey, I'm having a problem here; what should I do?"

Or at least indicate through the application instigating an action that there's an issue.

>  
>>> *I didn't mean first time at that age, but you're right. I was going to*  
>>> *mention that I cannot give linux to my kids because the software they*  
>>> *use, and you mention Jumpstart, which the 3yr old uses here, is simply*  
>>> *not available. The older kids are into very heavy graphics games and*  
>>> *they will not play under XO.*  
>>  
>>  
>> *Correct, although it may depend on the engine; both Quake and*  
>> *Unreal engines can run under Linux. (Of course it depends on*  
>> *the mods the gamedevelopers did on the games, and there are*  
>> *many many other game engines -- Build comes to mind [Duke Nukem,*  
>> *Max Payne, etc.] -- which haven't been ported yet.)*  
>  
> *Hopefully the developers will get on the bandwagon when XOO/Wine et al*  
> *are stable enough and start to build apps that support that environment.*

Or simply port from Windows to Linux using XOO/Wine. In fact, they may have to do absolutely *\*nothing\**, in an ideal sense; Unreal (an old copy) for instance works fine under Linux *\*as is\**. (Linux + Wine, that is.)

The main problem appears to be the installer.

>  
> *[snip]*  
>  
>> *Linux does \*not\* work out of the box. You take a Linux kernel*  
>> *(any kernel), compressed, uncompiled, and make it work without*  
>> *any utilities.*  
>  
> *There's the kernel distinction again. So, what is the correct term for*

- > *what I'm talking about? Is the whole package, including the GUIs, the OS*
- > *or not? Is it something else? What is the collective term for all the*
- > *things I have installed that are currently called Xandros?*

A distribution. Or one can refer to a specific distro:  
Debian, RedHat, Fedora, Gentoo, Xandros, Mandrake, Thiz (or ThizLinux),  
etc.

There's a lot of them out there; [www.distrowatch.com](http://www.distrowatch.com) may be  
of some interest, listing over a hundred.

(And people wonder why Linux appears fragmented, disjointed,  
and confused.)

- >
- > *[snip]*
- >
- >> *I'd have to look up the details.)*
- >
- > *No need.*
- >
- >> *And Windows has exactly the same problem, although Windows*
- >> *sidesteps it through the Magic Of Microsoft Marketing(tm).*
- >> *Simply put, no one has to install Windows because the*
- >> *vendors of prebuilt x86 machines have done all of the*
- >> *schlogging for you; just plug it in and go.*
- >
- > *Not true in most cases. You have over-generalised.*

That I have, but the naive user will want to purchase  
something he can *\*use\**, not something he has to fuss with  
and install 2,714 drivers, utilities, and patches to get  
it to work the way he — or at least the way the vendor —  
wants it.

Hence, bundling.

There are Linux distros out there selling preinstalled  
equipment (ThizLinux comes to mind, although I forget  
who's selling it; I've seen it in Fry's Electronics, though,  
on equipment running for display), but they're few.

Of course, you're a power user, who will probably customize  
the hell out of a box. (*\*I\** would, too. :-) )

- >
- >> *If one does have to install Windows from scratch (a*
- >> *full XP install, that is), one has a little work ahead,*
- >> *judging from the posts I've seen thus far, with perhaps*
- >> *three or four reboots — including the one that starts*
- >> *reading from the CD. (I suspect most of these are't all*

>> *that necessary, though.*)

>

> *I can get my machine installed with XP, all upto date drivers*

> *and SP1 in two reboots.*

I'm assuming that's not including the power-on slap-in-CD one?

That's sort of a reboot. If I don't count that most Linux distros can do it in one, and it sounds like XP can, too, under many conditions.

> *It's a matter of knowing WTF you're doing.*

That *\*always\** helps. :-)

> *I could do it in one, but it's risky because the SP might have  
> unmet driver dependencies and could be waiting for the drivers to  
> be updated by the reboot. But windows actually tells you that you  
> cannot proceed without a reboot when the dependency issue occurs.*

>

> *[major snippage]*

>

>>>> *I take it you've read the Deuglification Howto?*

>>>>

>>>> *The what? oh – de–uglification. No. But I just found it*

>>>> *on google. Thank you. At least I'm not the only one*

>>>> *complaining about linux' font rendering.*

>>>

>>>

>>> *You're hardly the first. :-)*

>

> *The problem ended up being mozilla. Ttfont support is good.*

> *It worked out of the box in Xandros. All I had to do was*

> *install the fonts. Even OpenOffice picked them up to use.*

> *It turns out mozilla is a piece of shit. It wants to control*

> *the fonts and refuses to recognise your system settings.*

> *I'm a happy linuxfuck at the moment.*

Should we worry? :-)

>

>>>> *If you're a masochist you can of course design your own fonts... :-)*

>>>> *I might consider such at some point (for other reasons).*

>>>>

>>>> *I used to do that many years ago as a postscript programmer. Oh joy!*

>>>

>>> *Like I said...if you're a masochist. :-)*

>

> *I installed linux, didn't I?*

That you did, confusing the issue quite a bit. :-)

>  
>> *Personally, I'd try to do something with BDF, were I all that*  
>> *interested in the problem. Of course, BDF is ancient tech*  
>> *nowadays; I probably should find info on TrueType.*  
>  
> *It's worth the effort.*

Indeed, especially since I have the Three Magic Books on PostScript.  
(Red, green, blue). Of course, actually finding them in my  
demesnes might be an interesting problem.

(Organized? What's that?)

[.sigsnip]

--  
#191, ewill13@earthlink.net  
It's still legal to go .sigless.