

Re: The guts of /dev/* ?

Source: <http://linux.derkeiler.com/Newsgroups/comp.os.linux.misc/2004-12/0448.html>

From: Jean-David Beyer (jdbeyer_at_exit109.com)

Date: 12/05/04

Date: Sat, 04 Dec 2004 21:25:21 -0500

Bill Unruh wrote:

> Robert Heller <heller@deepsoft.com> writes:

>

>] not@top-post,

>] In a message on Sat, 04 Dec 2004 10:54:05 -0600, wrote :

>

>]n> Where would I find text explaining the 'innards' of /dev/* ?

>]n> Not at a 'salesClerk level': "try xyz [it worked for me]. ", but

>]n> down at asm, interrupts ...etc. level.

>

> Read the source code. I highly doubt that this is what you want.

> The files in /dev/are links to the device drivers. The input and output

> depend on what the specific device driver will do.

> cat /dev/dsp reads from teh oss audio device, and pushes the stuff out on

> stdout.

> Exactly what is read depends on how the device driver happens to have been

> set by the ioctls for that device. (ioctls are commands sent to the device

> driver with routines which deliver the ioctl codes to the driver).

>

>

While you are not wrong, I would never call them `_links_`, since I use that term mainly for the things the `_ln_` command creates. I think of them as an index to a two-dimensional table inside the kernel that the kernel uses to call the proper driver. (I do not mean to imply that it is actually implemented that way, though it might be: I never looked.)

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```
.~. Jean-David Beyer Registered Linux User 85642.  
/V\ Registered Machine 241939.  
/( )\ Shrewsbury, New Jersey http://counter.li.org  
^^-^^ 21:19:59 up 2 days, 1 min, 3 users, load average: 4.45, 4.29, 4.19
```