

The **NEW** PCLinuxOS Magazine

Volume 40

May, 2010

THE PCLinuxOS FLAVORS



KDE

GNOME

LXDE

XFCE

E-17

OPENBOX

coming soon...

PCLinuxOS 2010 Released!

9 Live CD ISOs ... 6 Desktop Environments

KDE 4: Panel Keeps Pace & Place

KDE 4: Widgets Galore

Command Line Interface Intro: Part 8

A Taste Test Of The PCLinuxOS Flavors

Behind The Scenes: PCLinuxOS.NL

Forum Etiquette: How To Be a Good Citizen

PCLinuxOS Folding Team

Forum Foibles

Computer Languages A to Z: Korn Shell

NibiruET

And much more!

Welcome From The Chief Editor

I hate to say "I told ya so," but I told ya so. April did end up being a very busy month! April saw the release of nine new ISO's, covering 6 desktop environments. Yep, count them ... six desktop environments and nine ISO's: KDE 4, MiniMe (also KDE 4), Gnome, Zen Mini (also Gnome), Phoenix (XFCE), PCLXDE, PCLXDE Mini, Enlightenment e17, and OpenBox (still in beta, but VERY near its final release).

So April became the month where many PCLinuxOS users were reinstalling. The sheer number of upgraded components forced a temporary break from the rolling distribution model. But in the end, it was worth it. Users ended up with a much more stable installation, and the new version was able to come out faster than if an upgrade path that would have worked with all the countless computer configurations were attempted. KDE was upgraded to the most recent release. We saw the latest kernels being rolled out. The xorg server saw a significant upgrade. The upgraded toolchain necessitated the rebuilding of virtually every package in the PCLinuxOS repository.

And when it was all said and done, the users of PCLinuxOS benefited, by having a stable system (regardless of the desktop environment used), that has the best hardware recognition of any Linux distribution, and that runs faster and better than most any Linux distribution out there. Am I bashing the other Linux distributions? Absolutely not, but it is

simply a comparison. And, it's a testament to the ability of Texstar to produce what many PCLinuxOS users already know: the best version of Linux out there. It's now only up to the rest of the world to discover the thrill of running the most stable, fastest version of Linux – or of any operating system – available.

The magazine staff have been just as busy over the last month, preparing the May issue for the



community. Of course, we have an article on the new releases, in **April Showers Bring ... 9 New ISO's!** We also take a more detailed look at the different versions released, in Stricktoo's **Taste Test Of The PCLinuxOS Flavors**, in an effort to help you make the decision of which version may be right for you, based on a) the equipment you have on hand, and b) how you work with your computer. I continue a look at the new features of KDE 4 this month, with **KDE 4: Panel Keeps Pace & Place** and **KDE 4: Widgets Galore**, taking a look at the options in setting these up on your KDE 4 desktop.

Leiche take us on the first part of a journey that not only explains one of the newer original programs in the PCLinuxOS repository, Zip-Player, but also the process he went through in creating it, with his article **Zip-Player Plays Music Archives: Part 1**. Critter continues his series of articles, **Command Line Interface Intro: Part 8**, taking you farther into a greater understanding of the command line and scripting. Eronstuc continues his exploration of

computer programming languages, with his article series, **Computer Languages A to Z: Korn Shell**. Meanwhile, Meemaw explores what it takes to be a good citizen in the PCLinuxOS forum, with her **Forum Etiquette: Being A Good Citizen** article.

Ms_meme continues to entertain us with **Forum Foibles: Forum Book Reviews** and **ms_meme's Nook**, where she dedicates her song, Quiet Nights, to her PCLinuxOS experiences. Georgetoon is back with another installment of **Double Take & Mark's Quick Gimp Tip**. We also pay tribute to a recently departed PCLinuxOS family member, NibiruET, in **The Loss Of A PCLinuxOS Family Member**. We also take a **Behind The Scenes** look at **Wamukota** and the **PCLinuxOS.nl** users. Linuxera shares some fascinating information about the **PCLinuxOS Folding Team**.

And, to round things out, we have **four** separate **Testimonials** this month, from PCLinuxOS users. We also have 10 more user screen shots to highlight and share, with **Screenshot Showcase**.

As we start to move from Spring into Summer, and experience summer vacations and holidays, things continue to move forward for PCLinuxOS. So, until next month, I wish each and every one of you peace, happiness, and tranquility.

**Paul Arnote [parnote]
Chief Editor
PCLinuxOS Magazine**

April Showers Bring..... 9 New ISO's!!!

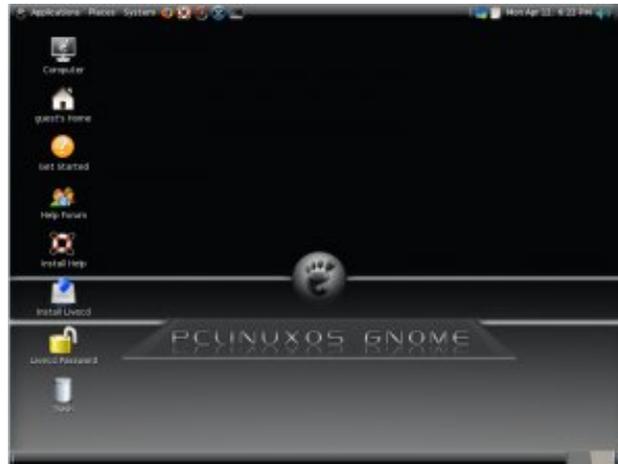
by Paul Arnote (parnote)

April has been a very, very busy month. For those involved in the PCLinuxOS community, it's not news that PCLinuxOS 2010 has been released. But for those who may not be quite so involved in the PCLinuxOS community, PCLinuxOS 2010 has not only been released, but multiple versions supporting all the major desktop environments have also been simultaneously released.



There are currently nine ISO's covering six different desktop environments. All are built using a stable core, developed by Texstar and the Packaging Crew. Currently, the 2010 release of PCLinuxOS covers the following six desktop environments: KDE 4.4.2, Gnome 2.30, XFCE, LXDE, Enlightenment e17, and OpenBox. Added into this mix are bare bones versions of KDE 4 (MiniMe 2010), Gnome (Zen Mini), and LXDE (PCLXDE Mini).

While Texstar is largely responsible for working his



magic on KDE 4 (both the main release and MiniMe), slick50 has assembled the Gnome release, siamer has created the Zen Mini release, Linuxera created the Enlightenment e17 release, Sproggy made the Phoenix XFCE release, Neal created the PCLXDE releases, and melodie has created the OpenBox version.



Built upon a common core, each of the 2010 releases of PCLinuxOS run on the 2.6.32.10-bfs kernel. The 2.6.33.5 kernel is also available for installation via Synaptic. There are also multiple versions of each kernel, including the "plain vanilla" kernel, the a64 kernel for AMD 64 bit processors, and a legacy kernel for older hardware.



Gnome and Zen Mini have a similar appearance, while all the other desktop environments share a common theme and appearance.

The KDE and Gnome releases are most suited for more recent hardware, while Phoenix, PCLXDE, Enlightenment e17, and OpenBox are capable of running on older, legacy hardware. The minimum recommended RAM for running KDE and Gnome are 512 MB, the other, lighter weight desktops are capable of running on hardware with 256 MB RAM, or in some cases, even less.

The simultaneous release of nine ISOs, featuring six of the most popular desktop environments, based

Screenshot Showcase



upon a common core is virtually unheard of among Linux distros. Now, PCLinuxOS users, and users giving PCLinuxOS a try for the first time, have a real choice to match, first, the way they interact with the computer, and second, the wide assortment of hardware they may have on hand.



Posted by BubbaBlues on April 8, 2010 using KDE 4

Dear PCLinuxOS: A Letter To Texstar

Dear PCLinuxOS,

Wow! Is the word describing your operating system.

Hi! my name is Richard better known as rskit2002 on the internet.

I was born with a brain disorder and declared mentally handicapped at the age of six. Since then, all of my life was dictated for me, from the clothes I wore to the food I ate. I have never lived alone and did not know what independence was, that is, till my government came up with a program that would free the "not so severely" handicapped and give us some part of our independence back.

Through this program I was able to obtain an apartment, decide what I am going to eat, wear, and what time I am going to sleep. I still have staff come to my home and see if I am doing things correctly.

The government gives me an allowance every month which I never see, because I am not able to handle money. I don't think it is a lot because when the staff take me to the store, I am often turned down for the things I ask for. I would love one of those new computers they have at the store because mine is slow, "turtle slow" but I would never complain because someone gave me this computer and I am forever grateful, which takes my story to you.

How does PCLinuxOS help me? (Well), let me count the ways!

What most people take for granted, I take as a gift. I program my Linux to remind me of every thing, from cleaning my house, to taking out the garbage, washing my dishes, time to take a shower, brush my teeth, getting dressed, time to eat, time for bed, make the bed, make a grocery list, make appointments with doctors, keep

appointments, which staff member is coming over each day ... and the list is endless.

On the entertainment side: I use my Linux for watching movies, playing music, surfing the net, checking email, writing letters, looking up information, playing games, and chatting with friends.



I love my Linux because it lets me do all of these things and make it look the way I want.

I am trying to convince the staff to let Linux handle my finances. So far, they did not say (no).

So again ... Thank you PCLinux and the community for this great and I mean GREAT operating system.

I LOVE YOU ALL!

The Loss Of A PCLinuxOS Family Member

by Paul Arnote (parnote)

On April 28, 2010, the PCLinuxOS received the sad news that NibiruET, a hero member in the PCLinuxOS forum, had passed away on April 12, 2010. His wife had contacted Loyed230, who made the announcement in the PCLinuxOS forum:



I have been asked to pass on the sad news that NibiruET passed away on April 12th and was cremated in a private ceremony according to his wishes.

I'm sure that he will be missed by many.

NibiruET had been a member of the PCLinuxOS forum for just over three years, and had 793 posts to his credit. He registered on March 17, 2007, and made his last visit to the PCLinuxOS forum on November 13, 2009, at 8:05:56 a.m.

His last post in the forum was March 20, 2008, and read as follows:

Good post ElCuervo.

I think this should be a sticky and de rigueur for all newcomers; it will lessen frustration and the need for "first search the forum" responses to posts.

Regards!

The screen shot below shows a summary of NibiruET's involvement with PCLinuxOS.

Summary - NibiruET		Picture/Text
Name:	NibiruET	 Conceive, Believe, Achieve !
Posts:	793 (0.696 per day)	
Position:	Hero Member	
Date Registered:	March 17, 2007, 16:27:47	
Last Active:	November 13, 2009, 08:05:56	
ICQ:		
AIM:		
MSN:		
YIM:		
Email:		
Website:		
Current Status:	<input type="checkbox"/> Offline	
Gender:	Male	
Age:	62	
Location:	U.S.A & Sri Lanka	
Local Time:	May 01, 2010, 07:31:17	
Language:	English	
Signature:	<i>The way to see by faith is to shut the eye of reasonBenjamin Franklin</i> Linux User: 416878 PCLinuxOS 2009.1	
Additional Information:		

PCLinuxOS forum members remember him as being enthusiastic, friendly, and helpful ... a good dude ... a friend ... a great member of the PCLinuxOS family.

Rest in peace, NibiruET. You will be missed. And the condolences of the entire PCLinuxOS community go out to his wife and family. May your faith guide you well through the troubled waters you now tread.

PCLinuxOnline

PCLinuxOS News and Information



Double Take & Mark's Quick Gimp Tip

Double Take

by Mark Szorady



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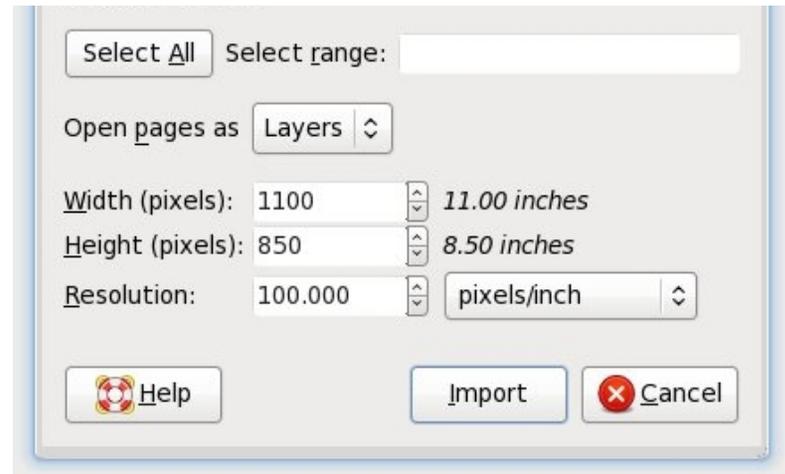
Find at least seven differences between cartoons.

Answers On Page 20

Mark's Quick Gimp Tip

The PDF file format is used for web publications, like this one, and all over the internet. And for whatever reason, you may want to edit a PDF file. Well, [Gimp](#) can handle that! From the file menu select File>Open and navigate to the directory containing your PDF. A dialog window will pop up and you'll be given a thumbnail of the PDF. Below this, you'll be given options (see the screen shot at right) as to how you want this file opened/handled. You can select a resolution, choose to open pages as

layers or individual files, or select a specific page. Once the PDF opens in Gimp, it gets treated as a large image file. You can then use Gimp's various tools to make your changes. You can then save as any image format. To save again as a PDF, save the file in Gimp as a Postscript (.ps) file. When this .ps file is opened in a PDF viewer (like Evince or Okular), you simply "print to file" (.pdf) to make the conversion from .ps back to .pdf!



-Mark Szorady is a nationally syndicated cartoonist. His work is distributed by [georgetoon.com](#). Email Mark at georgetoon@gmail.com.

KDE 4: Widgets Galore

by Paul Arnote (parnote)

Under KDE 4, we've heard a lot about widgets, also known as plasmoids (but we'll stick with calling them widgets here, for clarity). The panel is a widget. The system notification area is a widget. The clock is a widget. The PC menu is a widget. The desktop pager is a widget. You can even display special widgets on your desktop, to help monitor the status of various aspects of your computer, to display weather forecasts, to display news feeds, to whimsically bounce a ball around your desktop or have "eyes" follow your mouse cursor around the screen. There are, literally, widgets galore in KDE 4.

Before you can add widgets to your desktop, you must first unlock the widgets on your desktop. You do this by selecting "Unlock Widgets" from the cashew's menu in the upper right corner of the screen, or from the pop-up context menu by right clicking on the desktop. Then click on the cashew at the far right of the panel, and select "Add Widgets." When you do, you will be presented with a selection of widgets that you can choose to add to your desktop.



There are a lot of widgets to choose from in the default installation of KDE 4 in PCLinuxOS. Here is an alphabetical list of those widgets, with a (very) brief explanation of what each does. The explanation

comes from the widget itself, whenever possible. Widgets that are active in a default installation of PCLinuxOS 2010 are in red text.

Activity Bar: Tab bar to switch between activities.

Analog Clock: Displays a clock with hands.

Application Launcher: Launcher to start applications.

Application Launcher Menu: Traditional menu based application launcher (the "PC" menu).

Battery Monitor: See the power status of your battery.

Binary Clock: Time displayed in binary format.

Black Board: [the function of this is unclear, as it is not running properly]

Bouncy Ball: A bouncy ball for Plasma.

Bubblemon: A pretty bubble that monitors your system.

Calculator: Calculate simple sums.

Calendar: View and pick dates from the calendar.

Character Selector: View, select, and copy characters from a font collection.

Color Picker: Pick a color from the desktop.

Comic Strip: View comic strips from the internet.

Current Application Control: Controls for the active window.

Device Notifier: Notifications and access for new devices.

Dictionary: Look up the meaning of words and their translation into different languages.

Digital Clock: Time displayed in a digital format.

Eyes: XEyes clone.

Fifteen Puzzle: Put the pieces in order.

File Watcher: Watch for changes in specified files.

Folder View: Display the contents of folders. (User's /home folder displayed by default)

Fuzzy Clock: Time displayed in a less precise format.

Incoming Message: Notifications of new messages.

Keyboard: A virtual, on-screen keyboard.

KGet Bar Chart Applet: (no description available)

KGet Pie Chart Applet: (no description available)

Knowledge Base: Opendesktop Knowledge Base.

Konqueror Profiles: List and launch Konqueror profiles.

Konsole Profiles: List and launch Konsole profiles.

KTorrent: Plasmoid to keep track of a single torrent.

Lancelot Launcher: Launcher to start applications.

Lancelot Part: Parts of Lancelot menu on the desktop.

LCD Weather Station: Weather reports with an LCD display style.

Leave A Note: Leave notes for others while they are away.

Life: Conway's Game of Life applet.

Lock/Logout: Lock the screen or logout.

Luna: Display moon phases for your location.

Magnifique: A magnifying glass for the Plasma desktop.

Media Player: Widget that can play video and sound.

Microblogging: Update and view your microblog status.

News: Show notes from various sources (like the iluvpclipinuxos Twitter feed!).

Notes: Desktop sticky notes.

Now Playing: Displays currently playing audio.

opendesktop - Common: Using the social desktop.

opendesktop Activities: Stay informed with the social desktop.

Pager: Switch between virtual desktops.

Pastebin: Paste text/images to a remote server.

Paste: Paste text snippets.

Picture Frame: Display our favorite pictures.

Qalculate: A powerful mathematical equation solver.

Quicklaunch: Launch your favorite applications.

Remember The Milk: Remember The Milk to-do list applet.

RSSNOW: Show news from various sources.

Search Box: Search box for a given Runner Manager.

Show Desktop: Show the Plasma desktop.

Show Widget Dashboard: Show the Plasma Widget Dashboard above other windows.

Smooth Tasks: Switch between running applications.

Spell Check: Fast spell checking.

System Load Viewer: Tiny CPU/RAM/Swap monitor.

System Monitor: System monitoring applet.

System Monitor - CPU: A CPU usage monitor.

System Monitor - Hard Disk: A hard disk usage monitor.

System Monitor - Hardware Info: Show hardware information.

System Monitor - Network: A network usage monitor.

System Monitor - RAM: A RAM usage monitor.

System Monitor - Temperature: A system temperature monitor.

System Tray: Access hidden applications minimized in the system tray.

Task Manager: Switch between running applications.

Timer: Countdown over a specified time period.

Trashcan: Access to deleted items.

Unit Converter: Plasmoid for converting units.

Weather Forecast: Displays weather information.

Web Browser: A simple web browser.

Web Slice: Show a part of a web page.

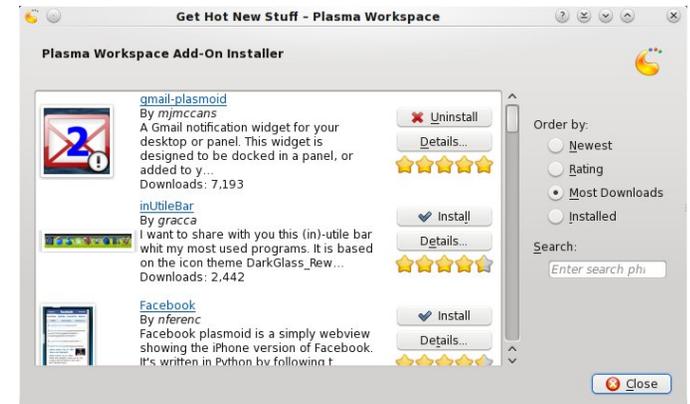
Window List: Plasmoid to show a list of opened windows.

yaWP: Yet Another Weather Plasmoid.

If you can't find the widget you are looking for in the default installation of KDE 4 in PCLinuxOS, or if you are wondering what's new in the world of widgets, you can download and install additional widgets from the KDE web site. Download the widget you want, and select "Install from local file..." from the menu that pops up when you click the "Get New Widgets" button along the top of the widget window that opens when you attempt to add new widgets. You will

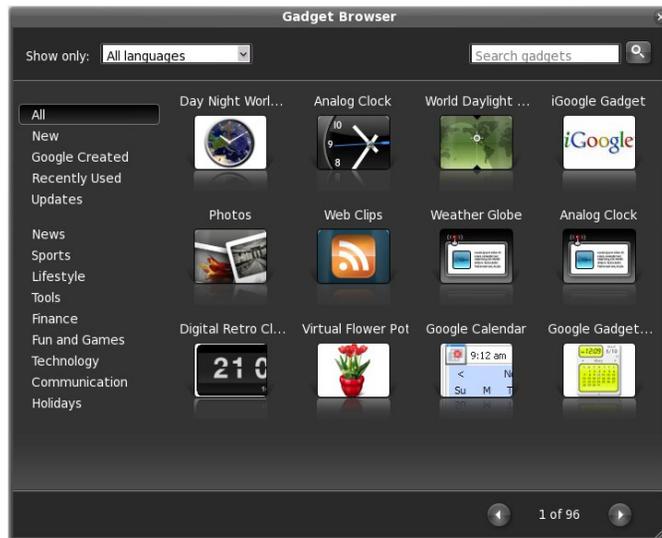
notice that you can choose between five different widget styles to install: Plasma, QEdge, Google Gadgets, Mac OS-X Dashboard widgets, or Web Widgets. Just follow the prompts and select the file you downloaded. It is highly recommended that you save any widgets you download from the KDE site to a special folder in your /home directory, perhaps one named "widgets."

Or, you can just select the "Get New Widgets" button, and select "Download New Plasma Widgets" from the pop-up menu. When you do, you will get a window similar to the one below.



Once you find the widget you want to install in the list, simply click on the "Install" button to the right of the widget description. If you have already installed a particular widget, the button will change to "Uninstall" to allow you to uninstall that widget. Don't expect all widgets you find listed to work properly, however. In the screen shot, you will notice that the button to the right of the description for "gmail-plasmoid" says "Uninstall." This particular widget would never work for me on my PCLinuxOS 2010 Beta installation (neither Beta 1 or Beta 2).

Your third choice when you select the "Get New Widgets" button is to "Install New Google Gadget." The KDE 4 Plasma desktop has been designed to easily incorporate Google Gadget widgets, along with all the ones created and shared on the KDE site. When you select "Install New Google Gadget" from the menu, you will get a window similar to the following screen shot.



This will give you access to over 1,000 additional widgets, created for Google Gadgets. They work the same as the KDE widgets on your desktop. And, just as with the KDE widgets, don't be surprised if you occasionally encounter a widget that does not work as expected, or at all. Yet I do have to admit that I've had fewer issues with the Google Gadgets than the ones from KDE. Once installed, they generally run without any noticed problems. One problem that I did notice was that there were occasional plasma crashes on my computer when attempting to add

Google Gadgets. However, much to the KDE 4 developers credit, plasma recovered and was fully functional after the crash. It's more like a "hiccup."

In this screen shot, you can see the four widgets that I have placed on my desktop. From top to bottom: System Monitor - Network, System Monitor - Temperature, yaWP, and News. All four are KDE widgets. In the "News" widget, I have the RSS feed from the "iluvpclinuxos" Twitter page.



As you can see, it's easy to customize your desktop experience with the addition of widgets in KDE 4. And, it's nice that the KDE development team embraced the other "widget platforms" that are currently available by allowing the use of those other widgets on your KDE 4 desktop. They are incorporated rather seamlessly, so that it's difficult to differentiate one platform from another. They just work, for the most part, with only a few hiccups here and there.




Radically Simple

A magazine just isn't a magazine without articles to fill the pages.

If you have article ideas, or if you would like to contribute articles to the PCLinuxOS Magazine, send an email to:
pclinuxos.mag@gmail.com

We are interested in general articles about Linux, and (of course), articles specific to PCLinuxOS.

Screenshot Showcase



Posted by Thorper on April 9, 2010, running LXDE



Come
Join Us!

Visit Us On IRC

- Launch your favorite IRC Chat Client software (xchat, pidgin, kopete, etc.)
- Go to freenode.net
- Type `/join #pclinuxos-mag` (without the quotes)

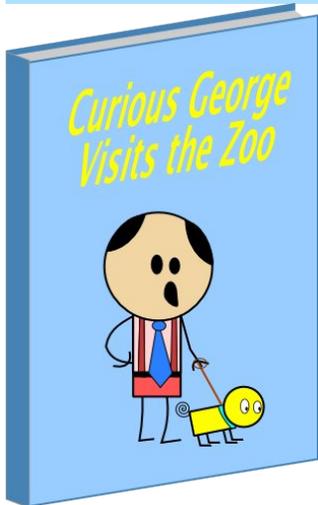
Want To Help?

Would you like to help with the PCLinuxOS Magazine? Opportunities abound. So get involved!

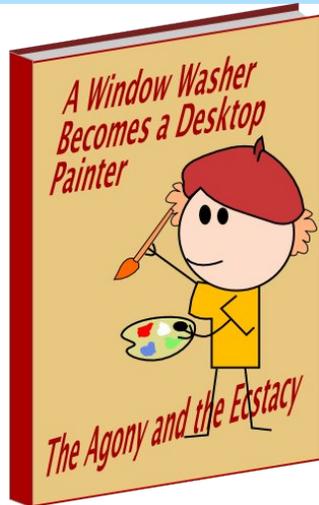
You can write articles, help edit articles, serve as a "technical advisor" to insure articles are correct, create artwork, or help with the magazine's layout.

Join us on our [Google Group mailing list](#).

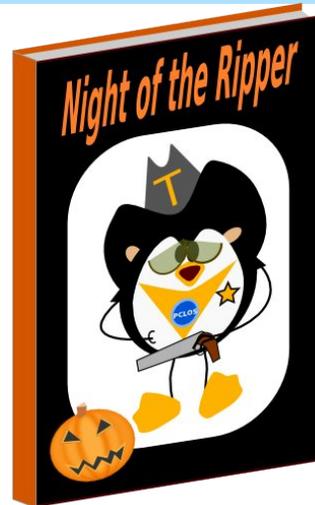
Forum Foibles: Forum Book Reviews



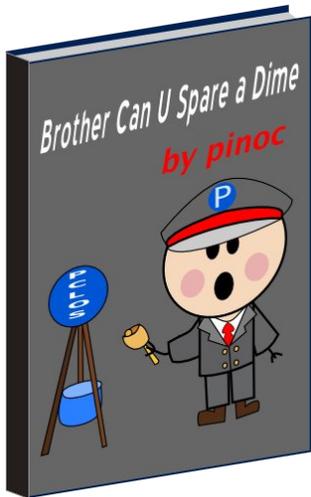
Georgetoon visits the Sandbox to find material for his popular cartoon.



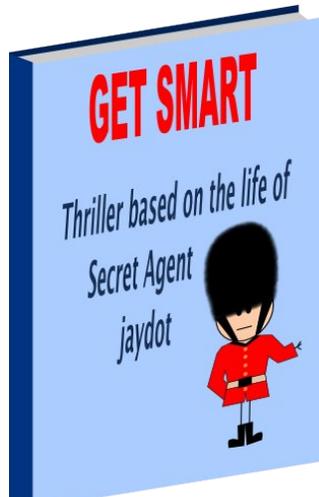
In the sequel Lust for Linux Kori goes mad and changes his name to Sproggy.



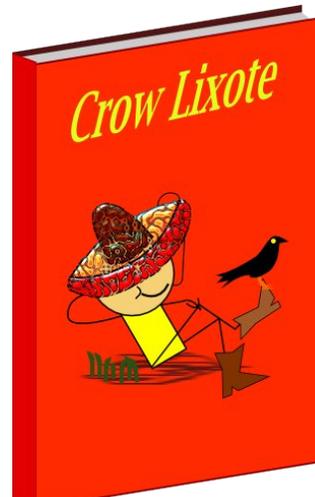
Texstar dresses up like Tux and says, "TWITTER TWEET".



This book never goes out of print. Get your hanky out.



The dashing dot remembers the secret words: **Get It Got It Good!**



Crow 's adventures in Vistaland. He is attacked by giant **WINDowMILLS**.

Hitchhiker's Guide to Linux

Critter finds himself zipped up in a terminal. Our hero messes around in a console and tries to get everyone else to mess in there too. He finally discovers that the ultimate answer to Life is Linux.

Tale of Two Systems

The protagonists are Win and Lin in this tale of revolution. They battle for the souls of fellow users. Freedom and choice are victorious.

House of Tux

A picture book of forum members....in wax of course.

The Linuxman Cometh

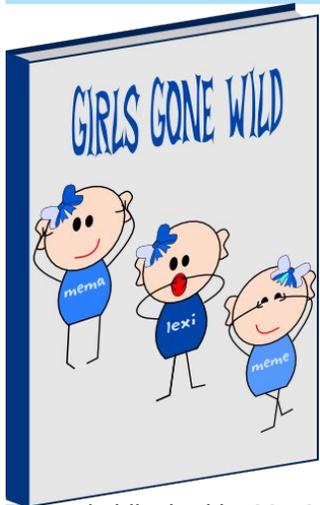
Self help book of vision and hope

A Few Good Men

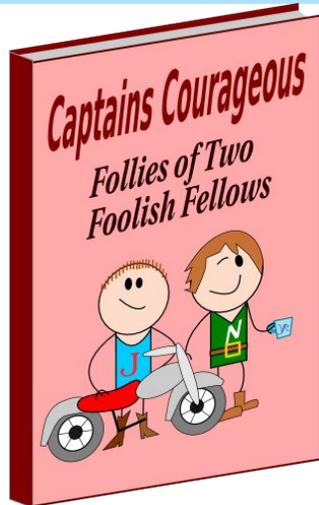
A salute to Texstar and his dedicated team

Buried Treasure

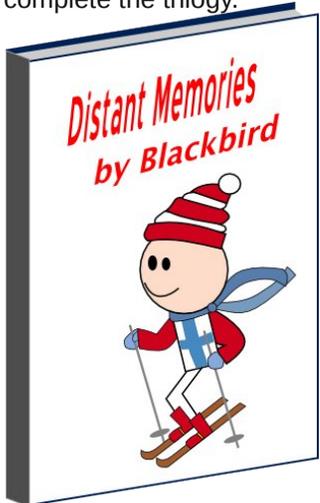
A comprehensive review of the Linux Directories



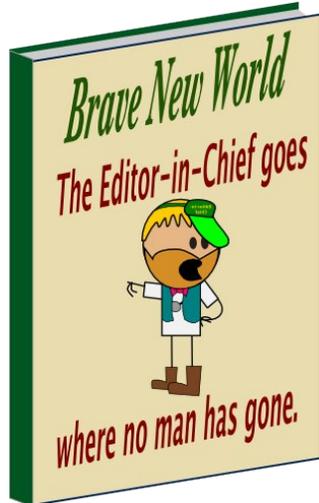
Forum is hijacked by MeeMaw, Linuxera and ms_meme. Girls Get Even and Girls' Revenge complete the trilogy.



Mods joble and Neal are pursued by the Wild Girls. Their only defense is safety in numbers.



True confessions about the slippery slopes of forum life.



Parnote is working on a sequel...Brain Drain.

A is for Archie B is for Bones

C is for Crow

A neat little series that goes through the alphabet removing any trace of mystery about Linux.

The Bug

This collection includes Bug-Getter, Bug Off and Bug Wars. davecs reveals secrets of the PCLinuxOS underground.

Age of Reason

Ten best reasons to use Linux

Little Book of Horrors

Ten best reasons not to use brand W

les Miserables

More reasons not to use brand W

The Penguin Who Knew Too Much

A mystery? No, a comedy about a bunch of retirees in the Sandbox competing for the forum's most ridiculous post.

In Like Flux

Xenaflux is all a flutter and a flip over the new 2010 PCLinuxOS release.

King Tex and the Golden Tux

After being fleeced out of his gold, King Tex grabs the Golden Tux and changes his name to The Golden Geek.

Fall of the House of MS

Science Fiction? No! A vision of the future! A good read with lots of evidence.

As Good as It Gets

A collection of essays of appreciation by forum members

Around the World in 80 Days

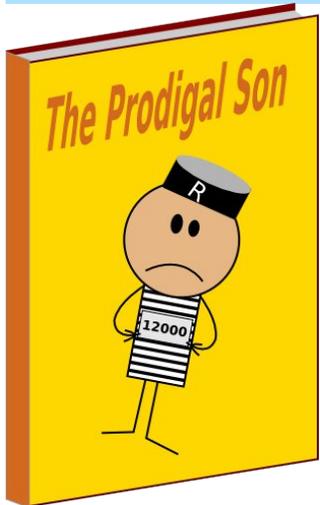
Statistics showing PCLinuxOS users to be of many ages, many countries and many genders

Linux Chronicles

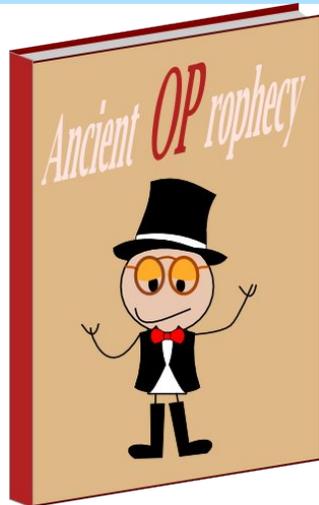
An anthology of PMs between PCLinuxOS users. Found in the adult section in a plain brown paper wrapper

Big Bad Wolf

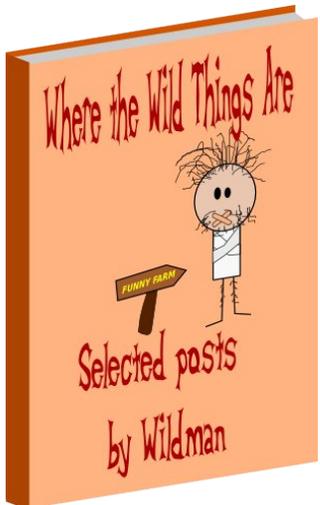
Little ms_meme turns the Big Bad WeirdWolf into a Big Bag of hot air.



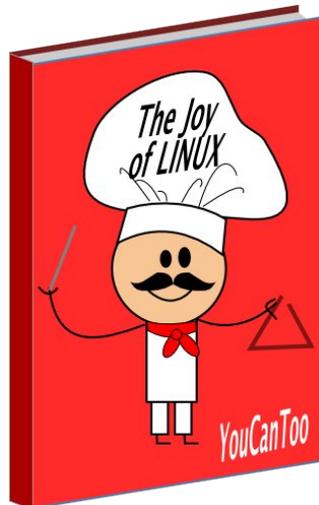
Rudge wanders from distro to distro before finding his way home. A real tear jerker.



In his ramblings old-polack recalls how many times he said, "I told you so."



By the same author: Call of the Wild and Born to Be Wild



YouCanToo's recipes for the discerning snobbish Linux user.

Fahrenheit 2010

The temperature in the forum keeps rising as members clamor for an updated PCLinuxOS. Over 10,000 messages fuel the fire in anticipation of The Big Bang. Will Texstar be able to take the heat?

Bring It On! Vols. I II III and IV

The collective clamorings for 2010. Authored by thousands.

MeeMaw's Aventures in Linuxland

MeeMaw falls down a mouse hole and meets the grinning SmileyB. Neal in a shocking turn about serves her tea instead of coffee. Sproggy shows her his Looking Glassy tutorials and Coffeetime suggests a flash 3D Croquet game. Andy makes a video of it all starring ms_meme as the Queen of His Heart. And that's just the first chapter.

Best Kept Secret

I have no idea what this is about, but it's rumored to be about the release date of 2010.

The Big Chill

Hordes of forum members are stranded together in the **Brrrrrrrrr** topic and bore each other to death while waiting for The Big Thaw.

The Games Penguin People Play

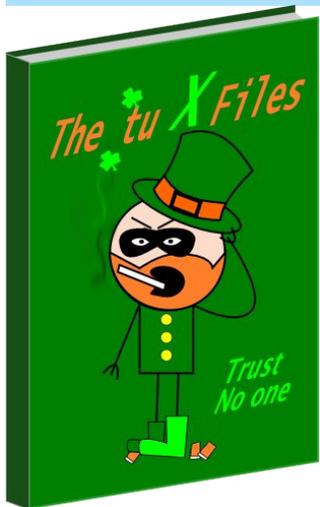
Linuxera's 10 exotic steps on how to play Game of 2nd Life. This book is kept under the counter. They don't call her **SINDy** for nuttin'.

The Great Books

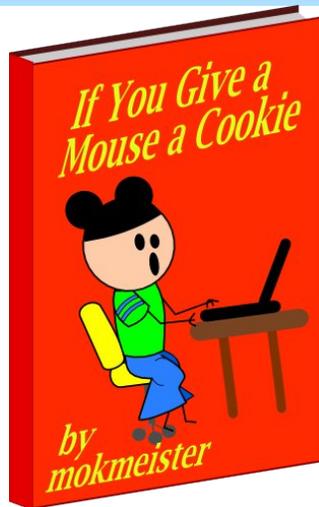
Great Expectations .. XP
Great Disappointment .. Vista
Great Escape .. PCLinuxOS

The Pathfinder

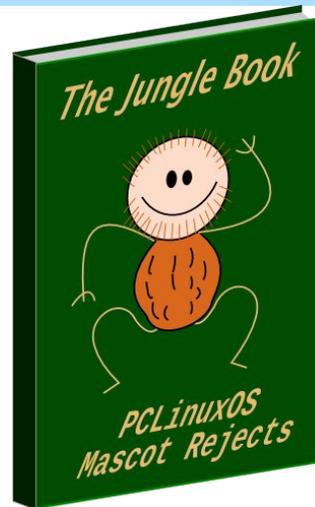
An intensive tutorial with case studies. Skills are taught through interactive text, illustrations, descriptions, questions and problems. A CD with self paced learning exercises is also included. This 100 page book is designed for the mastery of one thing and one thing only....the difference between / and \ .



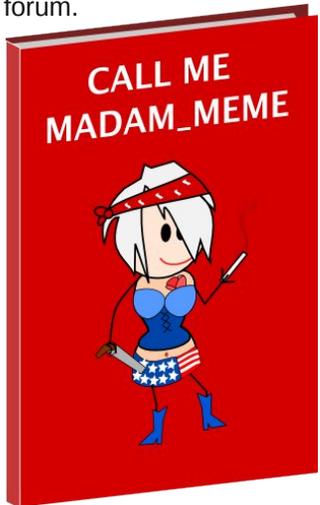
johnboy goes behind enemy lines, seeks out clandestine info and reports his strange findings to the forum.



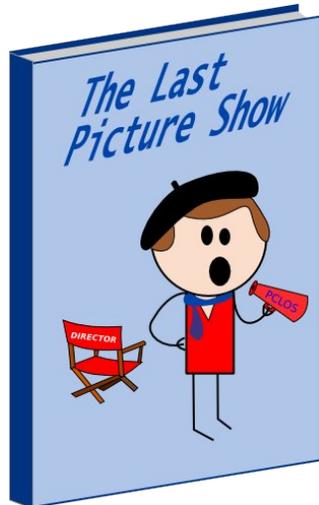
Fairy tales of the internet. Required reading for kids of all ages.



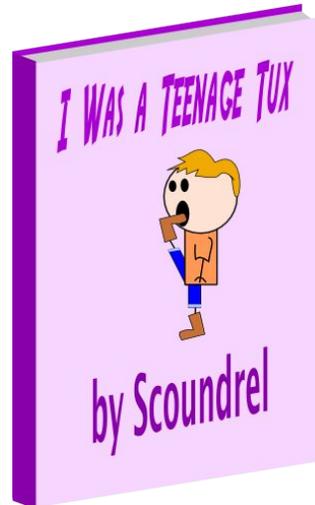
Here's one for the gals. All the pictures are of Hot Hootie Gibbon.



Lyrics and chords of ms_meme's forum songs. Live CD is extra.



Andy enters rehab for video makers.



Found in the horror section of the bookstore.

Roots

Official handbook of sacred rites, rituals and procedures for the Linux cult. The sayings of Root are artistically highlighted in red calligraphy. Whether you choose the standard or the leather bound edition, both are designed to be a multifunctional paperweight and high quality dust catcher.

Discriminating users will want to display the coffee table version. It has a beautiful cover with gold embossed styling and a green ribbon bookmark. The perfect gift for a graduate or that special someone.

If you are among the first 100 to order you will receive a copy autographed by Root himself. But wait there's more. Call within the next 20 minutes and you will receive absolutely free your own unabridged MAN reference guide. And as a courtesy to those who cannot afford the phone call, you can pick up your free copy at any motel room.

Anthropologists will be studying the Root phenomenon for years to come.

Command Line Interface Intro: Part 8

by Peter Kelly (critter)

Shell Scripting Part 2

One of the reasons for writing a script is because we need to perform the same operation on many objects. To do this, we take the first object and subject it to a sequence of commands which examine, transform, copy, delete or otherwise act upon the object. When we have finished with that object, then we loop back to where we started, take another object and repeat the exercise. We do this until all the objects have been dealt with. We use a flow control statement known as a loop to achieve this.

Loops

By far the most commonly used loop construct in scripts is the **For** loop, which I used to rename a batch of files when discussing shell expansion. Now I can explain how it works.

The syntax of a for loop is:

```
for {variable} in {set}
do
command 1
:
:
command N
done
```

variable can be any unused variable name and a single character. i or x is often used.

set is the set of values that you want to assign to variable at each iteration.

An example will explain this better.

```
jane@daisy > ~ $ for i in apples oranges grapes
> do
> echo $i are fruit
> done
apples are fruit
oranges are fruit
grapes are fruit
```

You can type in these constructs at the command line and the shell will keep prompting for more input until the closing keyword of the construct is entered, the word “done” in this example.

Each of the values in the set of values after the word in are successively assigned to the variable i and then all of the commands between do and done are executed. There is only one command here, and the \$i is expanded to its current value when the loop runs. While this example is of no practical use, other than to demonstrate the use of the for loop, a more common practical use is to loop through a list of file names, performing tests or actions on each file.

The following code loops through the contents of a directory and checks at each iteration if the current object is a regular file. If so, it echoes the file name to screen.

```
#!/bin/bash
for i in ~/*
do
    if [ -f "$i" ].
    then
        echo `basename $i`
    fi
done
```

The if – then loop is needed to exclude objects, such as directories. The basename command is used to strip away any leading directory names that make up the path to the file. Used in this way, it is possible to run through large lists of objects and to then select only the ones that you want to work with.

We can put almost anything in the list of objects to loop through. When using numbers we can use a range.

{5..10} will give the integer set (5 6 7 8 9 10), and we can include a step value.

{5..20..3} gives the set of integers (5 8 11 14 17 20)

You may occasionally come across an older script that uses the external command **seq** to handle sequences of numbers like this:

for i in \$(seq start end step)

rather than the bash notation **{start..end..step}**. Both work, but the bash way is faster.

The bash variable \$@ contains a list of the arguments passed to the script on the command line, and this can be put to good use to loop through those arguments. However this is not necessary, as simply omitting the list completely has the same effect.

```
#!/bin/bash
for i
do
    echo "$i"
done
```

```
jane@daisy > ~ $ ./for.sh first second last
first
second
last
```

The next two looping constructs, while & until, are very much alike.

```
while [test condition]
do
commands
done
```

and

```
until [test condition]
do
commands
done
```

The difference is that while loops as long as the test is successful and until carries on until the test is unsuccessful.

```
#!/bin/bash
while [ "$s" != "exit" ]
do
    echo "Type exit to quit, anything else to continue"
    read s
done
```

This keeps looping as long as the statement "string s does not have the value 'exit'" is true whereas,

```
#!/bin/bash
until [ "$s" = "exit" ]
do
    echo "Type exit to quit, anything else to continue"
    read s
done
```

keeps looping as long as the statement "string s has the value 'exit'" is false.

You will find that while loops are used more than until loops, and are often used to repeat an operation a fixed number of times.

```
#!/bin/bash
x=1
while [ $x -le 5 ]
do
    echo $x
    x=$(( $x+1 ))
done
```

All of the bash looping constructs can be nested and may contain other constructs.

Occasionally, you may find that during the execution of a loop a condition arises that requires the loop be exited, and execution of the rest of the script be resumed. For those occasions, bash provides the break command. In this example, we use another method of indexing the loop, using a three-parameter loop control expression.

```
#!/bin/bash
for (( i=1; i<=5; i++ ))
do
    if [ "$i" -eq 4 ]
    then
        break
    fi
    echo $i
done

echo "the loop has terminated "
echo "but the script continues"
```

The first expression, **i=1**, initializes the count, **i<=5** sets the maximal count and **i++** increases the count by one for each iteration. The second expression can be any valid test, and the third expression could be **i--** for a decreasing count or something like **i+=3** to increase the count by three for each iteration. In this script only, the values 1, 2 and 3 are printed to the screen.

If you want only to stop the current iteration of the loop before the end of the loop body, and then to continue the next iteration of the loop, then the command **continue** will do just that. This example loops through the contents of a directory, discarding all sub-directories.

```
#!/bin/bash
for i in *
do
    if [ -d "$i" ]
    then
        continue
    fi
    echo $i
done
```

Both of these commands take an optional numeric argument that allows you to specify the number of levels of enclosing loops to get out of, e.g. **break 2**, to back out of two nested loops.

In the previous examples, all output to the screen has been done using the **echo** command, which is easy to use but rather limited. A more useful tool is the bash builtin **printf**, which provides us with the means to format the text.

printf {format-string} {arguments}

The format-string part of the syntax is a mixture of ordinary text to be printed literally, escape sequences (such as `\n` to print a newline character) and format specifications like `%s` to denote a character string, or `%d` for a decimal integer. The arguments are what you actually want to print.

The most useful escape sequences are:

- `\b` backspace
- `\f` formfeed
- `\n` newline
- `\t` tab
- `\v` vertical tab

The format specifiers cater for character strings, signed and unsigned decimal integers and floating point numbers, with or without the exponent, as well as octal and hexadecimal numbers. If you don't know what some of these are, don't worry. Chances are that you won't need them.

You can, of course, just supply text to the command without any of the fancy escape sequences, or format specifications. But if, at a command prompt, you type:

printf "Hello World"

You will find that your command prompt is placed at the end of the text. Unlike the `echo` command, the `printf` command does not automatically supply a newline character, and so the text insertion point remains immediately after the printed text.

printf "Hello World\n" behaves as is normally expected.

While this may at first seem a burden, it actually enhances the usability of the function, allowing more precise control over the output.

```
1 #!/bin/bash
2
3 x=0
4 for i in *
5 do
6 x=$((x+1))
7 done
8
9 printf "You are currently in %s\nwhich holds %d files\n" $PWD $x
```

```
jane@daisy > ~ $ cd /bin
jane@daisy > bin $ ~/printf-demo.sh
You are currently in /bin
which holds 118 files
```

Line 3 initializes a variable, named `x`, to zero. This is not really necessary but it is good practice to precisely control variables.

The loop in lines 4 to 7 simply counts the number of entries in the directory.

Finally line 9 does the business starting with some literal text and then adding the first of the supplied arguments, the environment variable `$PWD`, which holds your current directory. The `%s` tells the command to treat the argument as a character string. Next is a newline character, followed by some literal text. The newline ensures that the following text is put on the next line down. Note that there is no space between the newline and the text. Had there been a space it would have been the first character at the beginning of the line, indenting the text. `%d` gets the next argument, `$x`, the file count, and treats it as an integer number when printing it.

The format string is ended with another newline and the whole of the format string is enclosed in double quotes.

Treating the variable `$x` as an integer had no effect in the previous example. I could have achieved the same result if I had used `$s` and output it as a string.

The format specifiers are able to accept optional modifying flags, which are inserted between the `%` and the format specifier `%` flags width.precision.

width is the total number of spaces that the inserted value will occupy. If the value is smaller than the specified width then it is padded out from the left (right justified)

precision is the number of digits or characters to output. This varies depending on the format specifier. For a string it is the maximum number of characters. For integers it is the minimum number of digits, default 1. For floating point numbers it is the number of decimal places.

Flags can be one or more of the following:

space prefix positive numbers with a space and negative ones with a minus sign

- left justify the inserted value
- + prefix numbers with a + or - sign
- 0 pad out numbers with zeroes instead of spaces
- # change the form of the output

If you need to use the last one, then you certainly don't need me to tell you how to use it.

A few examples to get you started:

```
#!/bin/bash
PI=3.14159265
S=supercalifragilisticexpialidocious

#pad the string to 15 character spaces wide
printf "The value of pi is %15s approximately\n" $PI
#left justified
printf "The value of pi is %-15s approximately\n" $PI
#15 spaces wide, 6 dec. place precision
printf "The value of pi is %15.6f approximately\n" $PI
# 2 flags - left justify & show sign
printf "The value of pi is %~+15.3f approximately\n" $PI
#truncate the string
printf "%.15s...\n" $S
```

```
jane@daisy > ~ $ ./printf-demo2.sh
The value of pi is      3.14159265 approximately
The value of pi is 3.14159265 approximately
The value of pi is      3.141593 approximately
The value of pi is +3.142 approximately
supercalifragil...
```

If there are more arguments than format specifiers, then the format string is reused, treating missing arguments as zero or an empty string. For example, if we modify the first script:

```
#!/bin/bash

x=0
for i in *
do
x=$((x+1))
done

printf "Directory is %s containing %d files\n" $PWD $x /bin
```

The first time around, all is fine, but there is still the unused “/bin” argument, so the format string is reused. However, it expects a string and an integer, so it inserts a zero for the missing argument.

```
jane@daisy > ~ $ ~/printf-demo.sh
Directory is /home/jane containing 20 files
Directory is /bin containing 0 files
```

If the second line of output was true we would have a major problem.

Functions

You can think of a function as a sub-script. It is a block of code that is executed by calling its name, along with any arguments that you want the function to process, and the function must be defined before it is called. For this reason, it is usual to define functions at the beginning of the script, but they may also be called from a separate file. When the same code is used in several places in a script, then you should consider using a function definition.

As the shell moves through the script, it recognizes function definitions and stores the commands in memory for later use. This makes the use of functions in a script an extremely efficient way of coding. A function can be called from within a function.

This example script exits if the user is root, but a user who has used the su command to get temporary root privileges will not be detected. You

```
#!/bin/bash
checkroot ()
{
if [ $1 = "root" ]
then
echo "You are not permitted to run this script as root"
return 1 #false
else
return 0 #true
fi
}

if !( checkroot $USER )
then
exit
fi
```

need to also check the environment variable \$USERNAME to catch those users.

The arguments passed to the function use the same notation as arguments passed to the script on the command line, known as positional parameters. The command line arguments are temporarily stored in memory during the execution of the function. Here the first (and only) argument passed to the function is \$USER, and is referenced by the function as \$1. The return value can be examined to determine the outcome of the function. Zero is always considered to be true, and any positive integer is taken to be false. A function may be as simple or as complex as you like, but it may not be empty.

When processing the arguments passed to a script or a function, it is often useful to use the shift command. What this does is to shift all the arguments one or more places to the left, so that the contents of \$1 are replaced by the contents of \$2, \$3 goes into \$2 and so on. We can use this to hand down arguments, one at a time, to a loop, process it and then get the next argument. If the argument \$1 has its own qualifying argument, say a file name to be used with that argument, then this will be found in \$2, Then after processing, this argument pair can use an extra shift command or supply the shift command with an optional count parameter shift 2 to move the arguments the required places to the left.

Answers to Mark Szorady's Double Take:

- (1) Shirt stripes different;
- (2) Word balloon different;
- (3) Table moved;
- (4) Stars missing from hat;
- (5) Computer screen wider;
- (6) Woman's hair different;
- (7) Seat back missing

```
#!/bin/bash
```

```
while [ $# -ne 0 ]
do
  if [ $1 = "filename" ]
  then
    echo "file is $2"
    shift 2
  fi
  echo $1
  shift
done
```

```
jane@daisy > ~ $ ./shift-demo.sh two four filename testfile six eight
two
four
file is testfile
six
eight
```

Useful as this command is for passing consecutive arguments in \$1 to a portion of code in a script or function for processing, the need to scan a set of options and arguments passed to a script has resulted in the **getopts** command. This command greatly simplifies the parsing of command lines. The **getopts** command accepts a list of options valid in the script or function, and recognizes that any options followed by a colon require an additional argument, which is placed in the variable **\$OPTARG**, each supplied option being stripped of a leading – before being placed in a variable supplied to the command **getopts {options} {var} {arguments}**.

If we were to write a script with the syntax

myscript -cnh

```
-c [destination] copy a file to directory destination
-n print a count of files processed
-h print a help message and exit
```

which we might use to count or backup a set of files provided in the arguments section of the command line. To process the command, we could use code similar to the following:

```
COUNTING=0
```

```
while getopts c:nh options
```

```
do
```

```
case $options in
```

```
  1. DEST=$OPTARG
```

```
;;
```

```
  n)COUNTING=1
```

```
;;
```

```
  h)echo "For usage please see the
  accompanying documentation."
```

```
  exit 0
```

```
;;
```

```
esac
```

```
done
```

This sets up the script functionality so that testing the contents of the variable **\$COUNTING** tells us if we need to provide a count of the files, and if the **-c** option was specified, then the variable **\$DEST**, if it is defined, tells us to perform the copy operation on the files in the argument list and contains the path to where we wish to copy the files.

The command **getopt** does not remove the options from the command line, but maintains an index to the next option in the variable **\$OPTIND**. If we use the shift command after the while loop, as

```
shift $(( OPTIND - 1 ))
```

then all the options and their required options are removed, leaving only the arguments (file list to be processed) in the positional parameters \$1, \$2 ...

If you are using the **getopt** command to process arguments to both the script and to functions within that script, then you should be aware that the variable **OPTIND** is not automatically reset and should therefore be reset at the beginning of the function, to ensure that the first argument retrieved is, in fact, the first argument passed to the function.

Zenity

We now have a nice set of tools to start building our scripts, and these few routines are sufficient to get started on the coding of some fairly sophisticated utilities. You just need to provide logic, intuition and patience. What we have in our toolbox so far is fine when we are writing scripts that only we shall be using, but if we want to provide a solution for more general use, then we need to make the scripts a little more user friendly. Some of the potential users may not be as command line savvy as you now are.

Fortunately, there are some excellent utilities in the repositories to help here, and more than likely, one or more will already be installed if you are using PCLinuxOS. The command dialog can be used to provide simple pop up boxes in the terminal:

```
dialog --msgbox 'Hello World!' 8 20
```

displays a simple message box 8 lines high by 20 characters wide, with a mouse click-able OK button and the message "Hello World!"

KDE provides `kdial` to provide a similar capability using dialog boxes directly on the KDE desktop and returning results to the running script.

There are others, and they all have their virtues and vices, but a very popular one that is extremely simple to use is called `Zenity`. PCLinuxOS users can see this in action if they run the excellent `Repo Speed Test` utility by `travisn000`. Reading the text of the script is highly recommended to better understand how a lot of the topics we have recently covered fit together to produce a useful utility, and you'll learn a few more tricks as well. The script can be found as `/usr/bin/apt-sources-update.sh`.

All of these dialog utilities are quite comprehensive, but easy to implement and a good overview of the capabilities can be had by typing the command name followed by `--help`. I shall demonstrate some of the ways that `zenity` can be used to spice up your scripts and provide a professional look.

The syntax of the `zenity` command is simple

zenity options

The options determine the type of dialog to display, along with any options relative to that particular dialog. The types of dialog available and the option to call them include:

```
--calendar  calendar dialog
--entry     text entry dialog
--error     error dialog
--file-selection  file selection dialog
--info      info dialog
--list      list dialog
```

```
--notification  notification icon
--progress      progress indication dialog
--question      question dialog
--text-info     text information dialog
--warning       warning dialog
--scale         sliding scale dialog
```

Calendar

The calendar dialog displays a nice monthly calendar in a window, from which you can select a date. You may specify some text and a title to be displayed on the dialog, as well as the day, month and year to be shown when the dialog is shown. The width and height of the dialog may also be specified. The command can get to be quite long, so I have used the line continuation character `\` to save space, but it is all treated as a single line by the shell.

```
zenity --calendar --title="Janes Calendar" \
--text="pick a date" \
--day=15 \
--month=6 \
--year=2020 \
--width=300
```



The selected date is returned by default in the format `06/15/2020`, but there is another option that allows you to completely control what you get.

--date-option=STRING

where `STRING` conforms to the specification of the `strftime` function. There is far too much to cover here (Google is your friend) but briefly:

`"%A %d/%m/%Y"` produces `Monday 15/06/2020` and

`"%a %d %B %Y"` changes it to `Mon 15 June 2020`. Get the idea?

The returned date can be simply captured in a variable by enclosing the entire command in backticks:

```
MYDATE=`zenity --calendar`
```

Clicking the cancel button returns an empty string.

Text Entry

The text entry dialog provides a simple way to read data into a script. The `--entry-text` option provides the default text when the dialog is shown.

```
zenity --entry --text="Please enter your name" --
entry-text="name"
```



A rather useful feature is the `--hide-text` option. This is useful for entering passwords.

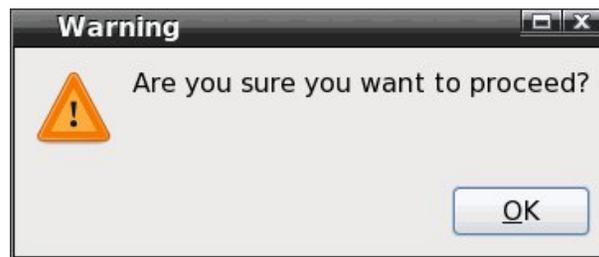


Beware though that this returns an unencrypted plain text string.

Error, Warning, Question and Information

These four dialog boxes are very simple text boxes and are shown below with their default text and icons.

Of course the text, width and height can be changed with the corresponding `--text`, `--width` & `--height` options to suit the application.

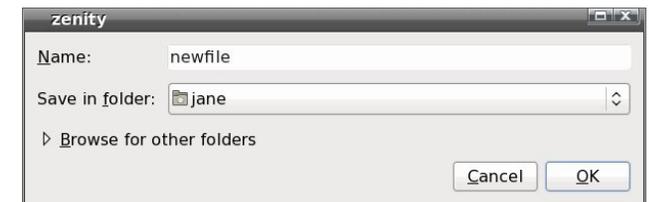


File Selection

The file selection dialog sets up file reading and writing through a nice interface. It doesn't actually do the read or write operation, as that must be done in the script, but it does make things easier for both the user and the script writer.

The dialog defaults to read mode and returns the selected file name and its full path. If the `--multiple` option is specified, then multiple files may be selected and are returned separated by a vertical bar character `|`. This separator character can be changed with the `--separator=SEPARATOR_CHARACTER` option. The `--directory` option restricts the selection to directories only. The `--save` option adds a text entry box which prompts for the file name, which may be preset with the `--filename=FILENAME` option. This allows you to select the name and directory to save the file through a graphical method, and this file name and path are returned by the command. If the `--confirm-overwrite` option is used then a warning dialog prompt will pop up if the file already exists.

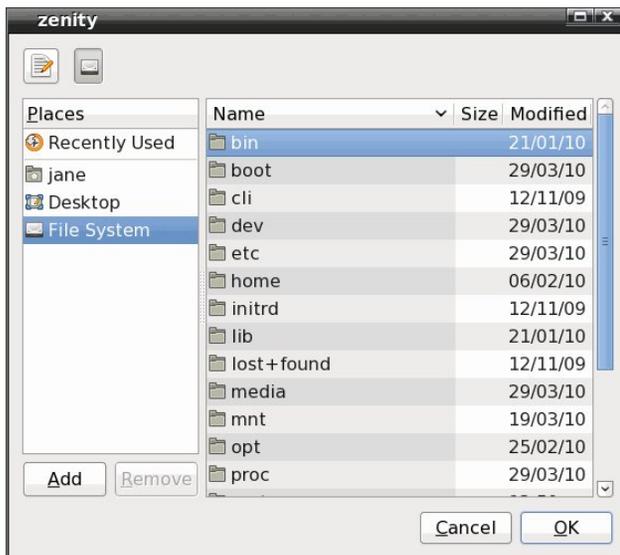
zenity --file-selection --save --confirm-overwrite brings up this dialog:



And typing in the name of an existing file warns the user with this.



Clicking on "Browse for other folders" or opening the dialog in the default read mode by not issuing the --save option brings up a fully search-able file dialog that most GUI users would be comfortable with.



Notification

The --notification option puts a tiny icon in the system tray which will display a tooltip when the mouse hovers over it. The text of the tooltip you can specify with the --text=TEXT option.



This command takes one more option, --listen, which listens for data on stdin. Using this option is a little more difficult. stdin usually uses file descriptor 0, but we can send data through another file descriptor, using echo. The listen option expects one of three option-commands - tooltip, icon and visible - allowing us to dynamically control the displayed text, the icon in the system tray and the visibility of the icon, which is a useful way of getting feedback from the script to the user.

zenity --notification --text="PCLinuxOS"

will place the triangular warning icon in the system tray, as in the graphic above, with a tooltip announcing "PCLinuxOS."

When we use the --listen option, we can write

exec 3> >(zenity --notification --text="PCLinuxOS" --listen)

which sends all data using file descriptor 3 to the zenity command. File descriptor 3 has been used, as 0, 1 & 2 are already used by stdin, stdout and stderr, but I could have used, for example, 7 or even 27, with the same effect.

To change the icon to the "info-icon," we can echo that information through file descriptor 3:

echo "icon: info" >&3

which changes the icon like this:

To change the tooltip we would issue



echo "tooltip: Radically Simple" >&3

and we can keep on sending new information to the command in this way.

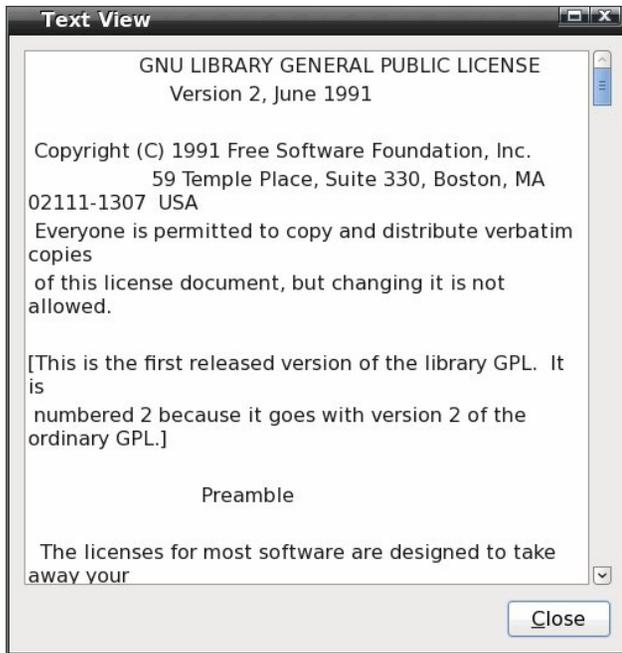
To end the notification command we simply need to close the file descriptor:

exec 3>&-

Text Information

The text information dialog allows you to display text from a file to the user. The text can also be piped to the command from another command.

zenity --text-info --filename=FILENAME



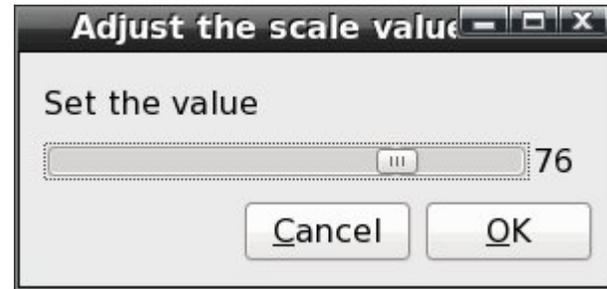
You may make the displayed text editable with the `--editable` option. The edited text is returned by the command as text which must be captured, as it is not written to the source file.

Scale

The scale dialog displays a sliding scale for which you can specify the maximum, minimum and starting value, the step by which it increases and whether or not to display the current value. With the `--print-partial` option, you can echo the current value back to the calling program as to move the slider. Clicking

the OK button closes the dialog and returns the current value. The slider may be moved by the keyboard arrow keys or by the mouse, although in the latter case the step value is ignored.

zenity --scale --min-value=0 --max-value=100 --value=76 --text="Set The Value"



List

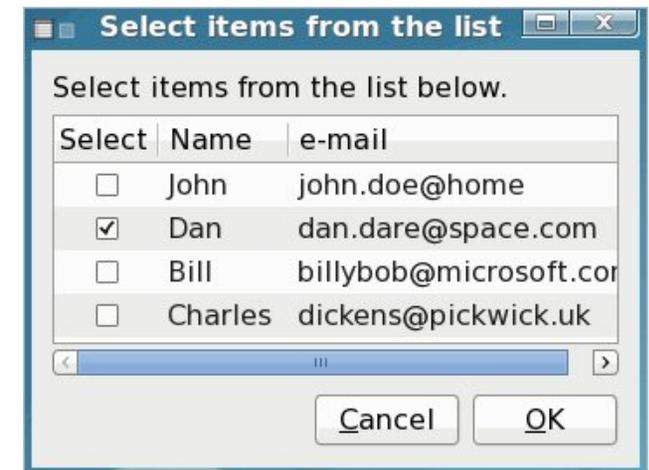
The list dialog has lots of options. You can set up a number of named columns, and supply data to be displayed under them, in rows. The user can select one or more rows and click the OK button to return the selected data to the script. By using the `--checklist` option, the first column of each row will contain a check box, which the user can click to select the row. All checked boxes return data to the script. The first item of data sent to each row should be either TRUE or FALSE to set the initial state of the box. The `--radiolist` option works in the same way and provides radio buttons.

By default, the command returns data from the first data column, but this can be changed with the `--print-column` option, since a value here of ALL

returns the entire row. Returned data is separated by the vertical bar character | but this can be changed with the `--separator` option. The `--editable` option enables the user to edit the data before returning it to the script with a click of the OK button.

I think an example is in order.

```
zenity --list --column="Select" \  
--column="Name" --column="e-mail" \  
FALSE "John" "john.doe@home" \  
TRUE "Dan" "dan.dare@space.com" \  
FALSE "Bill" "billybob@microsoft.com" \  
FALSE "Charles" "dickens@pickwick.uk" \  
--print-column=ALL \  
--separator="|" \  
--checklist \  
--height=240 \  
--width=350
```



Progress

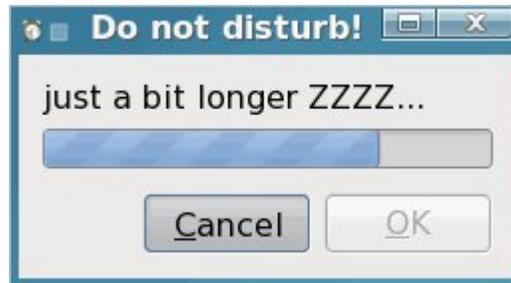
You can see a very good example of a progress dialog when you run the Synaptic package manager. At first glance the available options don't seem to offer a very wide choice but this little dialog can be quite impressive.

These are the options:

```
--text=STRING  Set the dialog text
--percentage=INT Set initial percentage
--auto-close  Close dialog when 100% has been reached
--auto-kill  Kill parent process if cancel button is pressed
--pulsate  Pulsate progress bar
```

And of course, all of the general options like width, height are also available. The data to the command is probably most easily piped in through a previous command, but you may also wish to feed it in through a file descriptor, as in the previous notification example.

```
#!/bin/sh
{
  echo "20" ; sleep 1
  echo "# ZZZZ..." ; sleep 1
  echo "50" ; sleep 1
  echo "# Not ready yet ZZZZ..." ; sleep 1
  echo "75" ; sleep 1
  echo "# just a bit longer ZZZZ..." ; sleep 1
  echo "75" ; sleep 1
  echo "# OK! I'm ready now" ; sleep 1
  echo "99" ; sleep 1
} |
zenity --progress \
  --title="Do not disturb!" \
  --text="Taking a nap..." \
  --percentage=0 \
  --auto-close \
  --width=250
```



This echoes text into the command, updating the progress bar as new data is sent in. Text prefixed with a # updates the --title option while the numbers update the --progress option. The sleep n command does nothing for n seconds so that you can see what's going on, but normally you would actually do something useful here. Another option is --pulsate, which causes the progress bar to slide back and forth for the duration of the command or an end of file character is received. The --auto-close option is used to automatically close the dialog when progress reaches 100% without requiring any user interaction.

When you use redirection to feed information to a dialog with a command like

```
ls /bin | (zenity --text-info)
```

then that information is absorbed by the zenity command. To overcome this, we can use the tee command. tee duplicates the data, sending it to multiple pipes.

```
ls /bin | tee >(zenity --text-info) >bin.txt
```

This will put the output of the ls command into the dialog, and also send it to the file bin.txt.



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Main PCLinuxOS Forum:

<http://www.pclinuxos.com/forum/index.php?board=34.0>

MyPCLinuxOS Forum:

<http://mypclinuxos.com/forum/index.php?board=157.0>

PCLinuxOS Folding Team

by Linuxera

I thought I would make a contribution by sharing some information about a not so very well known part of the PCLinuxOS community, The Folding Team.

What is the folding team, you ask? Well, it's a group of community members that are allowing their

computers to be used by Stanford University instead of Stanford having to buy one large super computer. Each member downloads a small Linux application that runs from a terminal. A little program is run inside the terminal that does mathematical calculations all day and night, or for as long as the CPU is alive and kicking. What these mathematical calculations represent are the folding and unfolding of proteins in the human body. Research is being carried out on the computer while you are busy doing whatever task you enjoy without you ever being interrupted or slowed down, since the folding project uses only what spare CPU power is available. I joined the team some time after getting acquainted with PCLinuxOS. I was, and still am awed at what our team is doing. Let me share with you a bit about it.

To quote directly from the informational page at Stanford University's site:

"The Folding@home project (FAH) is dedicated to understanding protein folding, the diseases that result from protein misfolding and aggregation, and novel computational ways to develop new drugs in general. Here, we briefly describe our goals, what we are doing, and some highlights so far. We feel strongly that a Distributed Computing project must not just run calculations on millions of PC's, but DC projects must produce results, especially in the form of peer reviewed publications, public lectures, and other ways to disseminate the results from FAH to the greater scientific community."

The PCLinuxOS Team is currently (As of 26 April 2010) in 157th place out of 179,774 teams that are

folding for Stanford University. That in itself is an accomplishment. They have completed 118,877 units of work successfully since starting.

The team only has 19 active members at the moment, but they are still producing an awesome quantity of units daily.

Users are color coded based on 24 hour average production. Color codes are as follows: 0 / 1+ / 100+ / 200+ / 400+ / 800+ / 1.5k+ / 3k+ / 6k+

Top 20 Producers				Team User Info	
Rank	User Name	Points 24hr Avg	Points Total	New	
1	ikerekes	68,870	18,010,324	Active	19 (+2 ▲)
2	markovicing	26,024	9,752,173	Inactive	119
3	glenn4uk	4,610	2,101,576	Total	138
4	grgilchrist	3,850	4,468,420	Avg PPD	5,568.3
5	djohnston	819	544,535	Production Group Totals	
6	ed	319	411,549	6k+	2
7	rustynail	225	611,439	3k+	2
8	SmileeeM	225	326,695	1.5k+	0
9	finman	192	14,988	800+	1
10	stompinround	181	249,225	400+	0
12	Kallethen	73	20,264	200+	3
13	XoneDaGnome	72	131,580	100+	3
14	khorjak	64	212,945	1+	8
15	Scooter	64	197,107		
16	Xipher_Zero	37	101,167		
17	Del	30	105,803		
18	p^h	21	53,880		
19	madreaper	15	232		
20	graemeharrison	0	3,198,480		

Over at Overclockers, they are kicking some serious hiney as well, as you can see in this next image. Notice on the same day (26 April 2010), the team was in 155th place and had just moved up a notch in the last 7 days. Woot!! Go Team.

The PCLinuxOS Folding Team

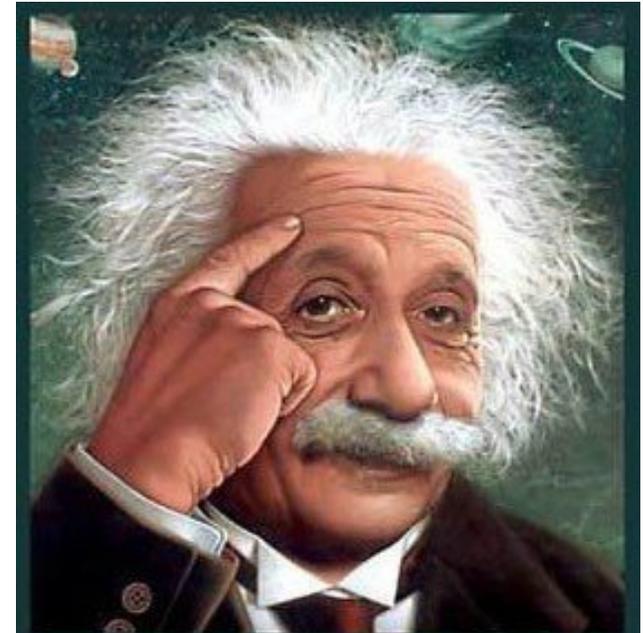
Rank Overall	Change 24hr	Change 7days	Points 24hr Avg	Points Last 24hr	Points Last 7days	Points Update	Points Today	Points Week	Points Total	WUs Total
155		+1 ▲	105,797	103,581	740,579	9,246	84,202	193,674	46,023,706	118,868

Top 5 Conquests and Threats!

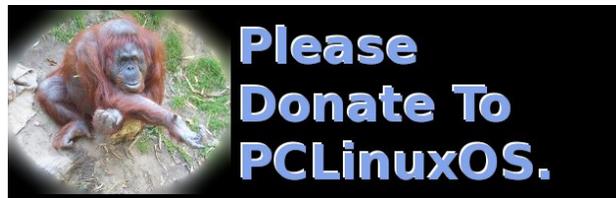
Team Name	Rank Diff	Points Diff	Gain Daily	Date Overtake
NeoGAF	9	-2,750,183	94,884	05.25.10, 6pm / 4.1 Weeks
Userbase.be	7	-2,667,639	101,834	05.22.10, 11pm / 3.7 Weeks
AVS Forum	6	-2,082,920	95,000	05.18.10, 5pm / 3.1 Weeks
Shippensburg University Computer Science Department	2	-516,015	103,782	05.01.10, 6pm / 5 Days
nForcersHQ	1	-326,422	79,911	04.30.10, 9pm / 4.1 Days
The PCLinuxOS Folding Team	0	0	0	--
Folding@BRASIL	-9	2,781,294	-154,305	05.14.10, 7pm / 2.6 Weeks
Clube do Hardware	-14	3,382,369	-130,450	05.22.10, 5pm / 3.7 Weeks
Team 60148 - about us: YouTube search *60148 GPU*	-17	4,208,342	-34,914	08.25.10, 7am / 4 Months
Folding@NASIOC	-13	3,279,476	-22,642	09.18.10, 3pm / 4.8 Months
Atheists, Skeptics, & Humanists - ASH Folding	-175	29,407,226	-162,914	10.24.10, 7am / 6 Months

Our team is something to be seriously proud of. They are small but mighty, and not very well known by the community at large, but deserve the recognition. I'm proud to have my name listed as a team member. When I get my servers set back up and running, you can bet your booties I'll be back in the fray, adding a few units every day to the total. Yeah, Team PCLinuxOS. You are the greatest!!

To find out more about folding @ home, there is a section in the PCLinuxOS forum entitled PCLinuxOS Folding at home in 3rd party support. If you have a machine you can dedicate to folding, or just want to learn more, check it out by going to <http://www.pclinuxos.com/forum/index.php/board,43.0.html>.



It's easier than $e=mc^2$
 It's elemental
 It's light years ahead
 It's a wise choice
 It's Radically Simple
 It's ...



Behind the Scenes: Wamukota & PCLinuxOS.nl

by Paul Arnote (parnote)

Let me thank you for the opportunity to express myself through the Behind the Scenes series. As a community is more than just one person, this article also covers 'The Making Of PCLinuxOS.nl' and has inputs from other PCLinuxOS.nl members (as indicated by their [alias]). - Alain J. Baudrez



Can you start us off by introducing yourself, and by telling us a bit about you (where you live, age, full name, marital status, children, hobbies, etc.)?

In cyberspace I am known as Wamukota - an African male name meaning 'left-handed' in the Abaluhya

language (Kenya) - while in meatspace I listen to the name of Alain J. Baudrez. I am a 53 years old retired sysadmin/programmer from the Belgian Navy. I am married to Brigitte. Having no children our common hobby are our pets (2 dogs and 3 cats), while I have taken up photography (again) as I have plenty of time now ;-). I live in Brugge

(<http://www.brugge.be/internet/en/index.htm>) a small semi-medieval town in the North-Western part of Belgium. In the Northern part of Belgium (Flanders) we speak Flemish which is a dialect of the Dutch language. In the Southern part of Belgium French is the main language. The written language is the same in both the Netherlands and in Flanders which comes in handy when setting up a multinational community.

In 2001 I was diagnosed with ESRD (End Stage Renal Disease) which resulted in both my kidneys shutting down in March 2002. I had to go to the hospital three times a week to have my blood filtered using dialysis. Luckily I got a donor kidney on April 23, 2003. I can not express how grateful I am towards the unknown donor who saved my life.

When did you first get started with computers, and what were you running?

It all started somewhere in 1976 when I received a portable calculator (Texas TI SR-56) from a cousin who preferred the HP series as they were using the RPN (Reverse Polish Notation) method of entering data. The SR-56 was programmable (100 steps and 8 memory registers) and I made my first programs on it. The next major step was the Tandy TRS-80 Model I where I learned how to program in a kind of Basic language. From there the usual evolution followed such as the first SS/SD floppy drives for the model I, and consequently learning TRS-DOS. I did work with the CP/M based Schneider 6128 and enjoyed IBM OS/2 2.0.

As an autodidact, my 'wizardry' with computers did not go by unnoticed on board the frigates I was assigned to. I had a portable Tandy Model 100 with me at that time, and my CO suggested that I apply for an ICT job in our Navy. So, in 1986 I stopped sailing and became one of the first programmers/sysadmins of the Belgian Navy running Microsoft products, and it has remained Microsoft for the rest of my professional career. My first encounter with Linux was S.u.S.E Linux 4.2 (around 1996-97), where a colleague used it to run a kind of gateway between our intranet and our ISP to collect and distribute POP3 mails.

I switched from Microsoft being my main OS at home to Linux with Suse Linux 9.2

When did you switch to running PCLinuxOS, and what attracted you to PCLinuxOS?

I started using PCLinuxOS with version 0.93 and the first TRs of the 2007. At that time, I was still using openSUSE, but problems getting wireless up and running (ndiswrapper through console) and multimedia woes made me look for a snappier and more complete distro. It didn't take long to find PCLinuxOS which, even in its 2007 Beta state, was just what I was looking for. It was simple, complete, fast and it was the first distro where productivity was the focus, not 'making the thing work.' Moreover, there was already a nice and fresh Dutch community emerging.

As an administrator of PCLinuxOS.nl, can you please tell us about the Dutch community using PCLinuxOS? (how many members, when it was

formed, who are the moderators and administrators there, forum activity, etc.).

The Dutch PCLinuxOS community was founded by Mike Bing (NewMikey) and Jos Wolfkamp (DutchWolfie) who had met on the Dutch language forum at pclinuxos.com. NewMikey was a PCLinuxOS "convert" from then-Mandrake as far back as PCLinuxOS Preview 81a. The website in its actual form was brought online November 30, 2005, but it took until Xmas of 2006 before we saw any other members besides our little group and some family and friends (NewMikey's son, Rayman has been using PCLinuxOS since age 9 and became a contributor to the forums as well).

[NewMikey] We would be amiss if we would not recognize the help and support of Lars of PCLinuxOS.de, the German site. One of the very first emails said:

On Wednesday 30 november 2005 17:03, Mike Bing wrote:

Lars,

Thanks for your speedy reply. Just a few questions: in order to register pclinuxos.de did you get authorization from Tex first? How do you finance it? Instead of registering pclinuxos.nl would it be possible to join forces on pclinuxos.org and make it truly multilingual? (a bit like the Mandrake Club site)

I would not want to host packages because of the risk of losing compatibility with the main PCLOS, what is your opinion? Could there be a "PCLOS Club"?

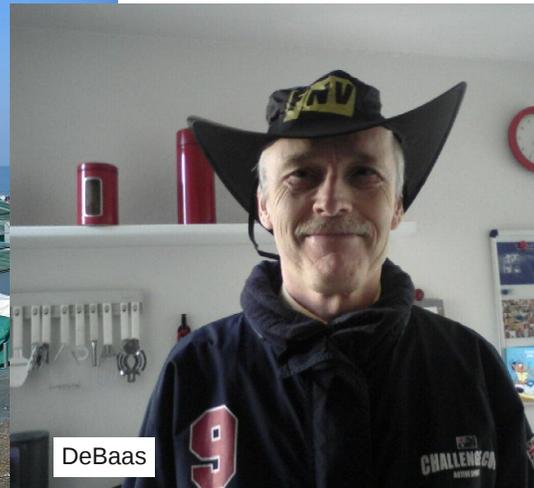
Jos, I know you are interested in the distro from our exchanges on the PCLOS Dutch language forum



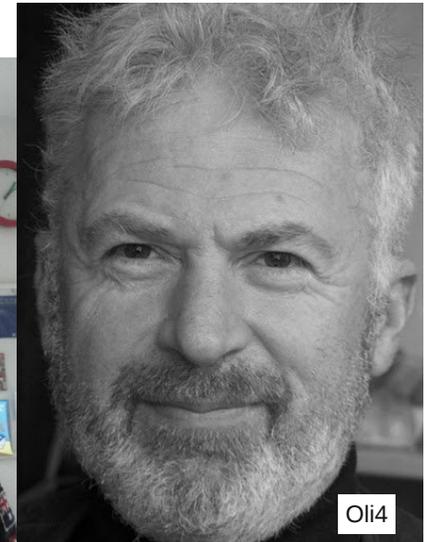
NewMikey



JohnW



DeBaas



Oli4

(the .com), would you be interested to join up to accomplish something like that?

To both of you: thanks for thinking (meedenken) Mike

We went straight to Tex for his permission/approval as we felt very strong about not using the name PCLinuxOS unless Tex liked the idea. We received our reply a few days late as Tex turned out to have been very busy with P.A.S.S.

His elaborate reply, on December 4th, 2005, after being asked whether he was OK with us setting up pclinuxos.nl, was:

Subject: Re: Dutch website Tex?
From: Texstar
Yes, its fine with me.

[Wamukota] There are currently four admins being both founders NewMikey and DutchWolfie, Ed M. Berntsen (DeBaas) and me. The moderators are Jan T'Jaecx (Smurfslover), Wim Willemsen (JohnW) and Oliver van Praag (Oli4). As of today we count just over 600 names on our member list.

Another unique fact is that PCLinuxOS.nl, is a pure bi-national team effort. Admins, mods and members come from the Netherlands, as well as from Flanders in Belgium. It is actually a bonus, as both cultures are slightly different; the vocabulary differs slightly; the Dutch are more outgoing while the Flemish are more conservative. We even type on two different keyboards: the Dutch use the standard QWERTY, while in Flanders we use the French AZERTY keyboard. We even differ on religious and political ideas, but that has never been an issue. It is

just the other way round. We learn much about our neighbors.

The activity on the forum cannot be compared with what you have on the US forum. First, the number of Dutch speaking people (population 16,500,000 for the Netherlands and 6,100,000 for Flanders) running Linux is small. Secondly, many of those speak/read/write English fluently, so we won't see them very often.

How would you describe the average Dutch PCLinuxOS user?

[DeBaas] I'd like to jump in, as Linux started for me as PCLinuxOS .93. It was the first one that changed my view on Linux from 'impossible to get working' to 'easy and one time install.'

From here, 2007, I found PCLinuxOS as the OS that demonstrated the power of Linux at PC clubs, even family parties and other reunions, with help of only a CD or USB stick.

So in my opinion, the average Dutch PCLinuxOS user is caught by surprise, overwhelmed by the easiness of PCLinuxOS and never looks back.

What particular challenges face Dutch PCLinuxOS users that English-speaking users don't have to face?

[DeBaas] The use of Pinoc's addlocale and the getopenoffice scripts, including the install of different dictionaries, are the only challenging options to be included for the Dutch users. (Side-note to the Dutch magazine readers: Your help with program translations still appreciated).

How has Pinoc's addlocale impacted the adoption of PCLinuxOS among Dutch users?

As NewMikey had already made a localized (Dutch) remaster of PCLinuxOS .93 and PCLinuxOS 2007, most PCLinuxOS users never did experience the 'manual' way of changing the default English language to Dutch. We also provided an extensive how-to on our forum - just in case.

Today, Pinoc's tool is a great way to let non-English users change the localization of PCLinuxOS to any given language. A largely unknown fact is that study of foreign languages is very popular over here. Pinoc's tool now provides users with an easy way to create a extra user for whatever foreign language they study. On my box, I have 3 separate users, one for Dutch, one English and one French. As I intend to study Russian from September onwards, I will create a extra user with the Russian localization. Pinoc's tool is just super for it.

Two versions of PCLinuxOS DPE (Digital Photography Edition) have come out of the efforts of the Dutch community. First, can you give us a little history on the DPE version, and second, what special enhancements are made to the base installation to make the DPE version?

First of all, the two DPE's weren't the only thing to come out of this community, we had a fully Dutch localized mainstream PCLinuxOS ISO on our servers for some years now (see previous paragraph), which was renewed upon every fresh release. We have discontinued the habit because Pinoc's excellent work now makes it possible for everybody to localize his/her install in minutes.

The first DPE was actually a snapshot of NewMikey's running installation. Being a die-hard photography addict, this install had a lot of stuff floating around that came out of this photography hobby, such as color profiles, contrast curves, RAW development scripts in Bash and Kommander and a great collection of scripts and plugins for GIMP. There even was a Konqueror service menu dedicated to RAW development. As this install was only used for image editing, gradually the collection of graphical programs expanded.

At one point in time, the standard updates of certain packages through the repos did not keep up with the rapid technical progress in Linux-photography land and some software packages were either built from source, or old SPEC files were used with new(er) source tarballs to create customized RPMs. This was done particularly with DCRAW and UFRAW, to keep up with new camera models that were not recognized in the older versions, but also with LuminanceHDR (formerly known as QTPFSGUI) and the Hugin panorama editor, due to their rapid rate of development.

There was also a stage where we received approval from Gábor Horváth, the author of RawTherapee (back then not yet open-sourced) to include his excellent package, and we went through some close cooperation with David Tschumperlee - author of the GreyCstoration (now GMIC) noise reduction and image manipulation package - on making the software more accepting of large images and small memory spaces by a process called tiling.

Eventually, the install had become so photography-specific and the collection of tools such a great showcase of what was available for photo-editing in

Linux. It became obvious that it would be a great idea to provide an ISO, website and forum to promote the software and drive more users directly to the authors' websites, as well as promoting and popularizing PCLinuxOS as a distro. We always stressed that DPE was not a distro, but merely a remaster showcasing the versatility of PCLinuxOS. For that particular reason, the donation links on the Dutch website always pointed one way only...to Tex's donation page.



As the versions of PCLinuxOS progressed, we trusted that DPE would upgrade as any PCLinuxOS install would, through the repos, until it became obvious about a year ago that certain tools (like RawTherapee) would need a more invasive upgrade of core libraries like libstdc++, as well as a newer C compiler version. When Linuxera and the rest of the team started on a major overhaul of the whole toolchain, that opportunity seemed to come closer and work began on DPE2.

At the same time, NewMikey upgraded his camera yet again (an illness also known as CBA: Camera Buying Addiction - somewhat related to LBA: Lens Buying Addiction - both incurable) and this time the 14.6 megapixel files resulting from this new and wonderful camera began slowing down the 1GB Dell laptop with external USB drive that DPE was running on. A memory upgrade was out of the question on

the aging Dell laptop and therefore, sacrifices had to be made.

This resulted in a switch to LXDE as a lightweight low-memory, yet functional and esthetically pleasing desktop environment as a basis for DPE2. Ever since, a release candidate has been available for download on <http://hamsta.net/pclinuxos/>, web-space donated by a very friendly Linux-fan.

As for now, the waiting for PCLinuxOS2010 is over and the final version of DPE2 will be available just as soon as we can update.

What are the plans for a new DPE version based on the upcoming releases, and upon which version will the DPE version be built?

[NewMikey] The new version of DPE, DPE2 Final will be built upon PCLinuxOS 2010 LXDE, which seems all set to become a rock-solid platform.

Is there an anticipated release date for a new DPE version?

[NewMikey] Well, I am tempted to say that it will be ready when it's ready. I am waiting for Gabor to release RawTherapee 3, which is a major upgrade, but I'm willing to consider doing a DPE 2 as soon as 2010 final is out end then DPE 2.5 when Gabor releases. Again, between a busy job with international travel and a family with 2 teen age kids, things do tend to get sidetracked now and then, so YMMV.

What closing words of advice or wisdom would you like to leave us with?

I would like to end with a tribute to and quote of Bruno Knaapen (Amsterdam 28 November 1950 - 20 February 2010), one of the great open-source and Linux advocates, a friend and Linux mentor to many in the Linux Community.

"We try to avoid the word "newbie", it does no justice to the efforts we, also the beginners, put in to learn a new operating system. I think the wish to learn Linux shows a brave attitude and deserves a better qualification."



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Screenshot Showcase



Posted by Rudge on April 1, 2010, running KDE 4

KDE 4: Panel Keeps Pace & Place

by Paul Arnote (parnote)

Windows users call it the "taskbar." To Linux users, it's called the "panel." The panel has been around for a long time. Many of us are accustomed to how the panel worked under previous versions of KDE, such as KDE 3.5.x. Most of the functionality we had become used to in previous versions of KDE is still there, with some new features added in to improve functionality.

Under the previous versions of KDE, the panel was under control of a separate module that ran in the background and managed the panel. Under KDE 4, the panel is simply another widget/plasmoid running on the KDE 4 Plasma desktop. Since it is a widget, you must first unlock the widgets, by selecting the cashew in the upper right corner of the screen, and selecting "Unlock Widgets" from the cashew's menu that pops up. Alternatively, you can right click your mouse anywhere on the desktop, and select "Unlock Widgets" from there.

Once your desktop widgets are unlocked, you will then see the cashew on the panel, in the lower right corner of your screen (provided your panel occupies the default position, at the bottom of the screen).



Clicking on the cashew on the panel (previous column, right lower corner) will reveal the more common settings for the panel widget, and allow you to change the way the panel is laid out.

Before we start changing things around, it's probably a good idea to learn where things are placed, by default.



Starting with the first one-third of the panel, the first item (from the left) is the KMenu, which as in previous versions of KDE, gives you access to the GUI versions of the programs installed on your system. The next seven icons represent launchers and other widgets installed on your copy of KDE 4. The first of those is the Device Notifier, which provides access to the various storage devices you may choose to use with your computer. These may be USB Flash Drives, USB External Hard Disk Drives, or even blank, recordable optical media. The next icon, from left to right, is the "Show Desktop" widget. Clicking on this will cause any and all open windows on your workspace to be minimized to the panel. The larger wrench and screwdriver icon represents "Configure Your Desktop" (previously known as KDE Control Center, or KCC), where you would go to make changes in the behavior of your desktop. The next icon, with the wrench and screwdriver in the blue circle, brings up PCLinuxOS Control Center, a.k.a. PCC, which is where you would go to configure various things related to your computer's configuration, and how PCLinuxOS runs. The box, CD and floppy disk icon launches Synaptic, for installing/removing items from your installation of

PCLinuxOS. The "file cabinet" will launch the Dolphin, the default file manager for KDE 4. The last icon launches Firefox, and is not there by default. I added it to the panel, since I use it so often.

Lastly, at the far right of the first one third of the panel, is the pager widget. This represents the various workspaces, or desktops, available on your installation of KDE 4.

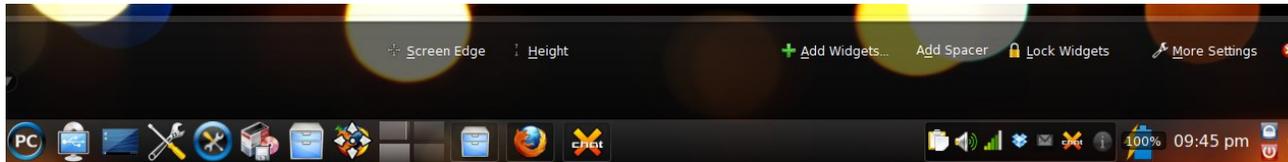


The middle one third of the panel holds the icons of your currently running programs. Here, I have Dolphin, Firefox and XChat running. The icons are arranged alphabetically on the panel, making it easier to find the program you want to switch to.



The last one third of the panel holds, first, the system notification area. This area is where you will find the Klipper Clipboard Tool, your KMix volume control, net applet notification of your network connection, and notifications from select other programs you may have running. Here, I have Dropbox, checkgmail and XChat running in the system notification area. The icon with the lower case "i" in it will inform you of system messages as they occur.

The next item in the last one third of the default panel is the battery monitor widget, so I can monitor the charge status of the battery in my laptop. To the right, is the clock display. To the right of the clock, is the Lock/Logout widget. The top (blue) button allows



KDE 4 Panel Configuration Options

you to lock your screen, while the bottom (red) button provides all the options for shutting down your system, when selected. Finally, at the far right is the cashew that, when selected, will pop up the common configuration options for the panel widget.

The first configuration option (from the left) is which screen edge you want your panel displayed on. Simply click on "Screen Edge," and while holding down the mouse button, drag the panel to the screen edge you want it on.

Clicking on the "Height" button allows you to change the height of the panel. Just click on "Height" and drag your mouse (while still holding down the mouse button) to set the height of the panel.

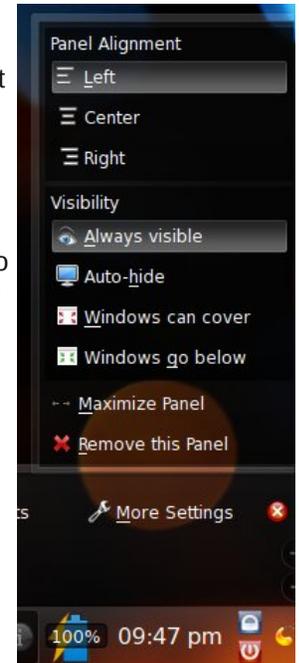
If you would like to add some widgets to either the desktop or the panel, click on the "Add Widgets..." button. When you do, all the currently installed widgets will be listed in a horizontally-scrolling list,

just above the panel. Double click your mouse on the widget you would like to install, and that widget will be added to either your desktop or panel. You can close the "Add Widgets" bar by clicking on the x at top right. We'll talk more about widgets in greater detail in another article that deals only with widgets.

Back in the configuration bar, the "Add Spacer" button will add space between elements that are placed on the panel. The "Lock Widgets" button will lock the widgets to their current position, and not allow the addition or deletion of those widgets until widgets are (again) unlocked, as mentioned near the beginning of this article.

When you click on the "More Settings" button, you will get a pop-up menu. From this menu, you can tune the appearance of your panel. At the top of this menu, you can determine if the panel is aligned with the left or right side of your screen, or if it is centered between the left and right borders of the screen. You

can also select the visibility options. This includes if the panel is "Always visible," set to "Auto-hide," if "Windows can cover" the panel, or if "Windows go below" the panel. If you select the "Maximize Panel" option, then the panel will expand to fill the entire border that you have assigned to it. It is here, under the "More Settings" option, that you can also remove the particular panel that is associated with the "More Settings" menu item.



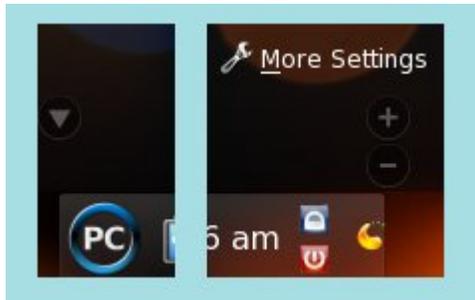
Fine Tuning The Appearance Of Your Panel

The things that we have covered so far involve the appearance of your panel as it exists on a full installation of PCLinuxOS 2010. There are other options available to help fine tune the appearance of your panel.

Not everyone cares to have the panel maximized to fill the border assigned to it. It is while you have the panel options activated that you can set the width of the panel. At the far left of the panel, just above the "PC" KMenu icon, is a down arrow. Clicking and dragging this arrow with your mouse will set where



KDE 4 Panel: Widget Dashboard



you want the edge of the panel to be. At the far right side of the panel, just above the cashew, you will see a "+" and a "-" sign. Click and drag the minus sign to set the minimum size of the panel, and click and drag the plus sign to set the maximum size of the panel. You can again quickly make the panel fill the entire border edge assigned to it, simply by selecting the "More Settings > Maximize Panel" option.

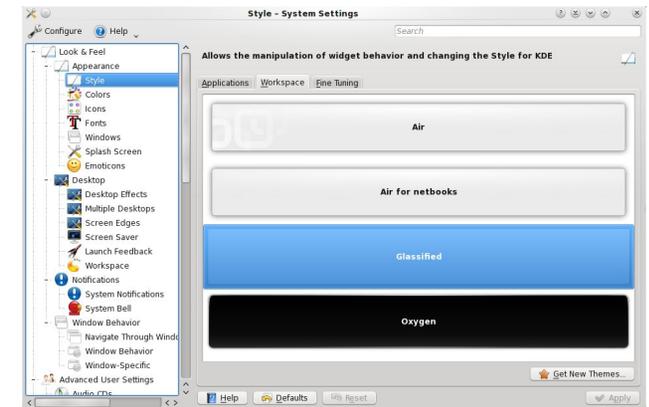
Just as everyone has differing views on how wide to make their panel, not everyone wants to have the panel arranged the same way. When the panel is unlocked and in the panel options mode of display, simply place your cursor over any item or element of the panel. You will see the cursor change to one with four opposing arrows. By clicking and dragging your mouse, the item under the cursor will be moved to whatever position you choose. Simply release the mouse button when you have the item placed where

you want it. For example, we can place the "move" cursor over the pager widget, and move it from its default position after the launchers, all the way to the right side of the panel, between the clock and Lock/Logout widgets.

As I mentioned earlier, the Firefox icon is not present, by default, on the panel. I added that, since I use Firefox so often, and since I want quick, easy, one-click access to launching Firefox when I need it. You can do this with any program icon that appears in your KMenu. Simply right-click your mouse on the item (as it appears in the KMenu), and select "Add To Panel" from the pop-up menu. This will place a launcher on your panel, although not necessarily where you might want it. If it isn't inserted where you want it (my Firefox icon initially was added next to the System Notification widget), simply use the previous instructions on how to move it where you want it. In my case (with the Firefox icon), I moved it to the right of the icon for Dolphin.

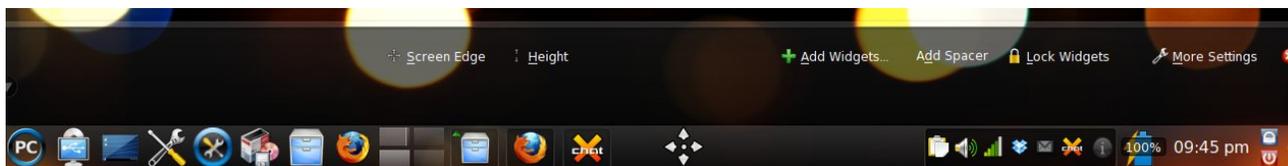
You can further tailor your panel's appearance to suit your tastes by going into "Configure Your Desktop" (a.k.a., KDE Control Center). Under "Look & Feel » Appearance » Style," go to the "Workspace" tab. From there, you can set the KDE style. The default style on the PCLinuxOS 2010 installation is "Glossified." You can also choose from "Air," "Air for netbooks" or "Oxygen." You can also download

additional themes from <http://www.kde-look.org>, and install them for your use. Just go to the Themes/Styles section, and be sure you are in the KDE 4 section.

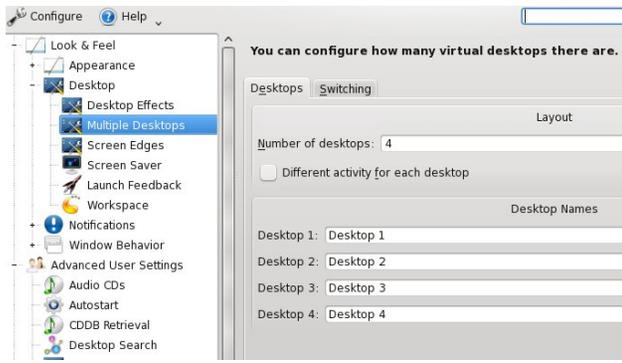


There is yet another customization you can make. Although it isn't directly related to configuring your panel, it is worthy of including here. The default installation of PCLinuxOS 2010 comes with 4 multiple desktops (a.k.a "virtual desktops" and "workspaces") pre-configured. But some users want to have more workspaces. Some users are known to have as many as 20 (yes, twenty) workspaces. Some users are at the other end of that spectrum, and use only two. By going into "Configure Your Desktop," and moving to "Look & Feel," "Desktop" and "Multiple Desktops," you can select the number of desktops you want to have available to you, and displayed in the pager widget.

Some users like to have different wallpapers displayed on each different desktop. It is here where you can select to have a "Different activity for each desktop." Under Plasma in KDE 4, you apply



KDE 4 Panel: Moving objects with widgets unlocked. Note the 4-way cursor.



"activities" to your desktop. The wallpaper is but one component of that activity. Other components include the various widgets. As such, by selecting to display a different activity for each desktop, each desktop activity becomes a stand-alone activity that is applied to the assigned desktop. This means that if there is a widget that you wish to be displayed on every desktop, and you have KDE 4 set to display a different activity on each desktop, you will have to re-add that widget to each desktop activity, and run that widget as many times as you have number of desktops. Currently, there is no way to separate the wallpaper from the desktop activity, and have a different wallpaper on each desktop, while running a common set of widgets across all desktops. Numerous pleas to the KDE 4 development team for this feature have gone mostly ignored.

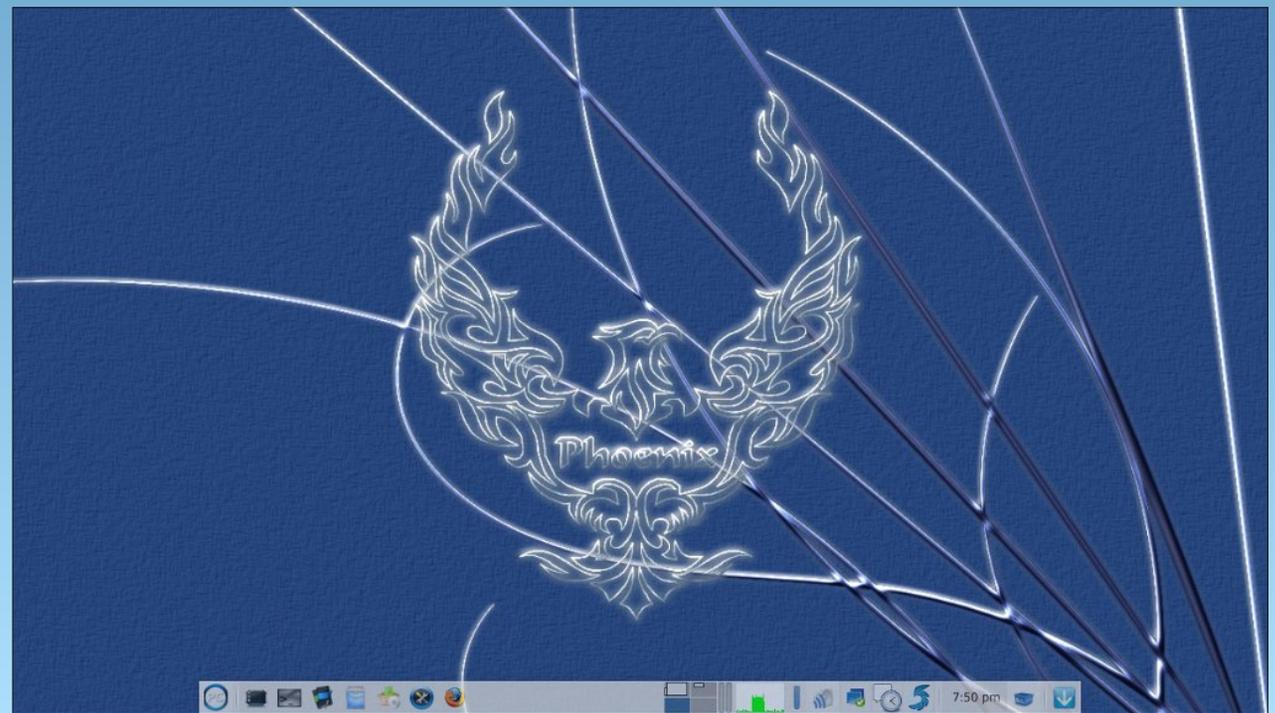
It is also here, in "Configure Your Desktop," that you can (if you wish) assign names to your desktops. For example, instead of the default "Desktop 1," "Desktop 2," and so on, you may want to call your four default desktops "Earth, Wind, Fire, and Air," respectively.

Conclusion

As you can see, there are quite a few configuration options for the new panel widget in KDE 4. Let your imagination run wild. Play with the configuration options, and come up with a custom panel configuration that's exclusive to you and best fits how you work and interact with KDE 4.

The
PCLinuxOS
 Magazine

Screenshot Showcase



Posted by Meemaw on April 27, 2010, running XFCE

Testimonial: Another New PCLinuxOS User

by Darrel Johnston (djohnston)

Yesterday I called on a lady who was having printer problems. She had told me the printer would act erratically and usually stop in the middle of the page without finishing. When I checked the printer, it was the usual culprit: almost empty ink cartridges. When I looked at the screen of the nice, shiny Samsung landscape flat-panel, I couldn't help but notice that she was running Windows Vista. I checked the hardware specs and saw she had a dual-core modern Intel CPU and a healthy nVidia 65xx something. She is connected via ADSL, and she has an all-in-one HP printer, scanner, copier. I also noticed that Norton Protection Center, as it's called, was nagging about being "renewed." After digging further, I saw that Norton had been factory-installed, probably never run, and certainly not renewed. When I asked Dona, she confirmed my suspicions. Dona just wanted to read her email without seeing pop-up windows. Worse yet, most of them were coming from Vista's UAC. It was still on, even though the firewall was turned off, there was no malware protection, and the one-time Norton "protection" had lapsed.

It was time to test a theory. I downloaded and installed ClamWinAV. After updating the antivirus database, I started the long scan of the C:\ drive. Well, I had my answer in the first three or four minutes when two trojans were detected. If ever there was a candidate for Linux, it was Dona. She simply wants to read her email and experience what the net has to offer without the computer nagging her. She has very basic needs.

This morning I returned to Dona's house to discover she had closed the ClamWinAV window. I will never know the results. A rerun would be too time-consuming. She just wanted to read her email. Like I said, a likely candidate.

Having just come out three days ago, it was with some trepidation that I installed PCLinuxOS-KDE 2010 full edition. It was not just that I am still unfamiliar with KDE4, I never know what kind of hardware issues I will run into. But her Compaq PC with onboard graphics and 3 GB of RAM are pretty standard fare for a newer PC. I didn't really anticipate any problems with the hardware. I started by booting the liveCD and logging in as guest. After the desktop came up, I plugged in the external USB drive and copied all her personal files. I then re-partitioned her single 300GB drive and began the install. After retrieving the ejected CD, I continued the reboot and did the usual BIOS duties.

< Here comes the testimonial part >

Continuing to the new PCLinux install, I answered the user and password information and logged in. I had run the new MiniMe in VirtualBox the night before and knew I could count on a Synaptic launcher to be in the toolbar. But that was MiniMe. What about the full-blown version? Well, of course it was there. How could I have ever doubted? So I launched Synaptic and ran the 15 or so updates that

were waiting. No reboots needed, so I proceeded to the nVidia side of things. Hmm, all the drivers were installed. Moving on, I check the sound. No problems here. Moving along, I put the new printer cartridges in, after having first turned on the printer. Turning to the screen, I saw a hardware wizard

running, naming the printer, and offering to set it up. I followed the prompts and ran a test page. Only it was two pages, instead of one. The first was the standard HP colorwheel and font stuff, and the second page was a calibration sheet for the scanner. I started up the PCLinux Control Center, Hardware section, and set the printer options. I then checked the scanner settings. Yep, everything was already there, ready to go.



I checked Firefox against the firewall settings and discovered Flash was already installed. It took some 35 minutes to install the OpenOffice suite, but I discovered later it was well worth it. It not only opened the few Office files Dona had, it also opened all the MSWorks (oxymoron?) files she had accumulated. I ran Digikam and set the paths to what Dona's granddaughter had previously used on Windows. Since she has a DVD R/W, I burned a backup DVD of the initial install.

Except for the printer, all the hardware was setup on install. To setup the printer, I basically had to turn it on. I know other distros can do that, but come on, that's pretty cool. Dona's Windows Vista Premium

Home Edition never did that. I know that RedHat5 never did that. Hplip has become a pretty awesome driver. Anyways, as I re-connected the USB drive to restore her files, it occurred to me that this was the easiest, most efficient Linux install I've had, in spite of my bumbling attempts with KDE4. I believe it is because I relied on PCLinuxOS's new KDE4 desktop interface to be true to the original, enduring layout. And it is, within the constraints of KDE's new design. The menu and the desktop icons have remained pretty much the same, to a degree. I know I can always count on a file browser in the form of a home.desktop icon, or in the trash.desktop, for that matter. And, of course, the ever-present (install.desktop? I'm not sure), finishes the task in a predictable manner. I also relied on PCLinuxOS's excellent hardware detection.

Maybe one of the most important things to me about PCLinuxOS, aside from its friendly community, is that Tex is "back at the helm," so to speak. And it shows in the finished product. Texstar's absence after the Houston-area hurricane was felt by many. No, Tex doesn't provide the excellent artwork, but he encourages it. He doesn't produce any of the excellent XFCE, or Gnome, or LXDE, or e17 variations of PCLinuxOS. But his stamp is on each one in the form of a tex-compiled kernel and the gcc toolchain. I remember a Con Kolivas-tweaked tex-compiled-desktop-kernel that I ran for over a year and, only then, grudgingly updated. And, of course, KDE is Tex's baby. And I gotta say that Tex's KDE 4 is one pretty baby!

Dona was thrilled that she could install wallpapers from a changing list over the internet by clicking a few buttons. Actually, they're the background for the desktop folder, aren't they? I just can't grok the

plasma paradigm. What problem are these people trying to solve, again? This was my second KDE4 install. The first one was Mandy 'cause PCLOS was not yet ready. Not officially, anyway. Well, I need to learn KDE4. Some clients are going to want it.

I was surprised that I relied on Dolphin instead of Konqueror for all the file transfers. I'm beginning to like it now that it doesn't suffer from random crashes. I kind of expected the Vista-like KDE look and feel. But hey, Dona is already used to seeing those transitions and window effects. I was really itching to install Compiz and spin the cube, but I really didn't want to confuse Dona any more with new concepts. Dona is a new PCLinuxOS user, and she is still trying to grok the difference between Windows and Linux. Dona just wants to access the internet. Did I mention she wants to read her email? Now she has a reliable means of communicating over the internet without her computer being so easily compromised. And the chances of her computer becoming part of another botnet are now much, much lower. Maybe nil.

Thank you to all the developers who build the packages. Thank you to all the distro-meisters who assemble the packages for different desktops. I am REALLY looking forward to a newer e17 build. Thank you to all the beta-testers who report the bugs. Thank you to all those who contribute other code. Thank you to the people who create the artwork and the new mascot. And thanks to everyone who has ever helped another solve a problem.

International Community PCLinuxOS Sites



Screenshot Showcase



Posted by Joble on April 10, 2010, running e17

PCLinuxOS.



Radically Simple.

Computer Languages A to Z: Korn Shell

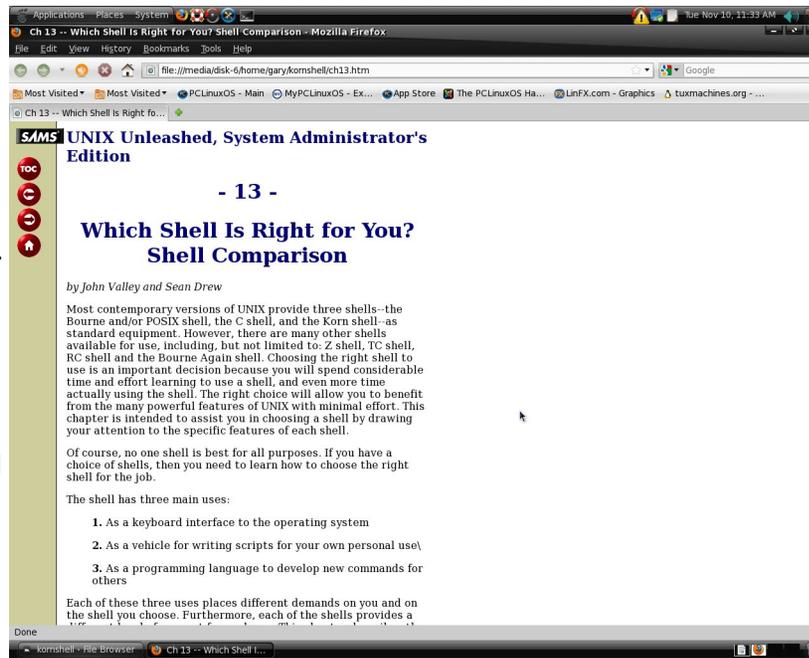
by Gary L. Ratliff Sr. (eronstuc)

I would like to dedicate this article to my wife Trudy, as this is being written on her birthday. This is the same day on which Hurricane Ida landed on the coast of Alabama: Nov. 10, 2009. - Gary L. Ratliff, Sr.

The Korn Shell was written in 1982 by David Korn, who was then working at the AT&T Bell Laboratories. It was soon a standard feature of the Unix environment and was the most used shell, just as the bash shell is the standard shell on Linux systems. For the earliest years, it existed as a proprietary shell, and a similar shell was written for Linux called pdksh, for the public domain korn shell. In fact, if you search the repositories, the pdksh shell is the one you will obtain.

However, in the year 2000, AT&T decided to place the Korn Shell in Open Source Software. Now, as the Korn Shell is one of the most powerful shells available to the Nixes family of operating systems, it was soon included in the default installations of many versions of Linux. However, if you install the pdksh version and then later chose to install then true ksh shell from AT&T, then you, like me, will want to rename it to ksh1 once it is installed. That is because the pdksh shell will install and be launched if you give the ksh command.

The uses of a shell are currently being explored in a series of articles which are in the magazine. See [Command Line Interface Intro: Part 1](#), and [Command Line Interface Intro: Part 2](#). You can also refer to Chapter 13 of "UNIX Unleashed, System Administrator's Edition," which gives three reasons for using a shell.



Obtaining and installing the Korn Shell

As was mentioned earlier, you may obtain the pdksh shell from the repositories. Run the synaptic command and do a search for "korn shell." This should produce two results: bash and pdksh. If you wish to launch the shell with its proper name ksh, then it is recommended that you forgo the install of pdksh and instead opt for the official version. As I mentioned, I did not do this and had to change the name of the AT&T version to ksh1 to avoid conflicts. Therefore, I am going to use apt-get remove pdksh to remove the conflict, and then install the official AT&T version.

To begin the process use firefox to visit the AT&T

web site:

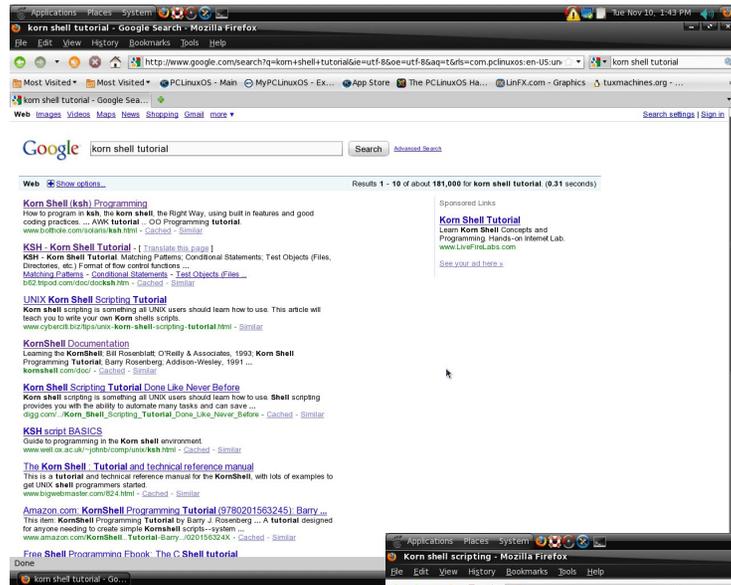
<http://www2.research.att.com/~gsf/download/>. Now you will see a list of files. This will contain packages and single files. We want to download the file "ksh" (standalone AT&T ksh executable). This file will go to your Downloads folder in your home directory. But first, you will be asked for a user name and password. You will find these by clicking the cancel button when the window shows up asking for a password. Go to the bottom of the page. The user name is "I accept the password etc." You may want to highlight this and copy it. Then, just use the Control V key to paste it into the password request form. The password is just a single period (.). Once this is done, the file will download to the mentioned folder.

If you read the directions on the page, they suggest that you just need to copy or move the downloaded file to the bin directory. WRONG, since doing this will only get a permission denied message.

You must become root and then move back to the /home/username/Downloads/ folder. Now, execute a gunzip ksh.2009-05-05.linux.i386.gz command. Follow this with the command: cp ksh.2009-05-05.linux.i386 /bin/ksh. Then move to /bin, and make the file executable with chmod +x ksh.

You may now use exit to return to the normal user. Now, you may verify that this works by getting into terminal or xterm and executing the command ksh. You should just receive a \$ prompt, indicating that ksh is now ready to accept your commands.

Learning to use the Korn Shell



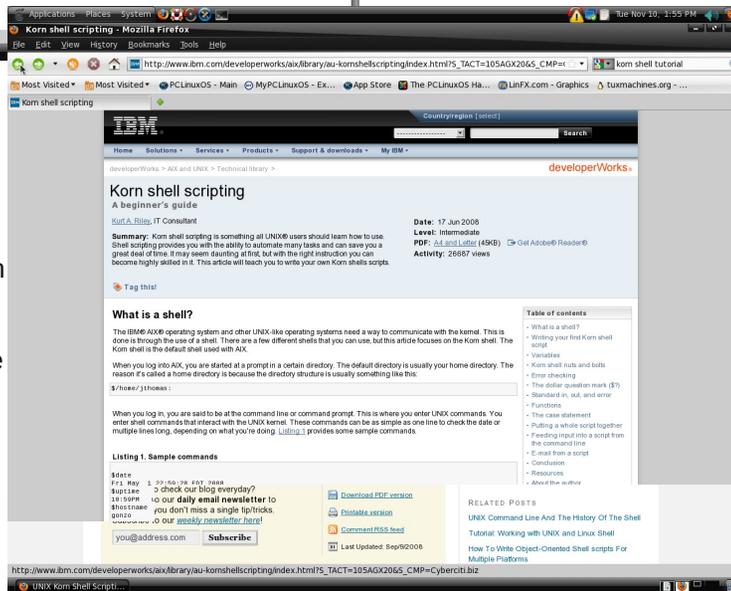
Here, we see just the first page of many which are devoted to teaching the new user the features of the Korn shell. As you already have bash as the default shell, you may also wish to follow the instructions for learning the bash shell. The shells are very similar. Here are the initial pages of two of the tutorials, which I found easy to follow-->

As you can see there is a world of information available on how to begin to learn using the

shells. It only takes a while to learn the basics, and once you do this, you may enjoy creating your own scripts to automate the tasks you do every day.

Then, you may add shell scripting to the arsenal of tools you may use to make working with the computer more productive and also easier.

About Gary L. Ratliff, Sr.: Gary retired from work in Quality Control, and introduced computers to his company in 1981. Besides writing articles in PCLinuxOS Magazine, Gary has had articles appear in COMPUTE!, Dr. Dobb's Journal, kilobaub, and Personal Computing magazines. He also served as Associate Editor of the SUPERPET Gazette.



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Dedication

Gary lost his wife, Trudy, on January 24, 2010. As he stated when he led off his article, he wrote this on her last birthday. As such, Gary wishes to dedicate this article to the memory of his departed wife. Here is the email from him on January 24, 2010:

I reviewed the article which I dedicated to Trudy, as it was written on her last birthday, Nov. 10, 2009. She passed this morning at about 12:45 am. She was a wife, mother, artist and poet. On several times her work was nominated for awards from poetry.com

I would like the dedication to be in memoriam and to include this poem which appeared in the book: The Enchantment of Memory (part of the Silence Within series by The International Library of Poetry). Copyright 2001 as a compilation.



A Yellow Rose

*Yellow is the color of the rose of friendly cheer.
Yellow is the symbol for a friend I hold dear.
There is yellow in the rainbow,
And yellow in the sun.
There are yellows in the sunsets;
God paints them everyone.
I enjoy the shades of yellow
In everything I see,
But none could be more precious
Or mean as much to me
As the yellow in a single rose
Placed on my grave someday
By a friend I truly cherish
In a very special way.
Yellow is the color of the rose of friendly cheer.
Yellow is a symbol for a friend I hold dear.*

Trudy Ratliff

(This is found on page 47 of the sited work.)



Managing My Data Center.

Flexible
Reliable
Secure
On-Demand
Computing
...delivered in a
win/win relationship

EN*KI The Computing Utility™ www.enkiconsulting.net

Get The Little Plastic Spoons:

A Taste-Test Of The PCLinuxOS Flavors

by Andrew Strick (Stricktoo)

Much to my delight, PCLinuxOS 2010 was recently released. Adding icing to the cake, there are now more options than ever. Beyond KDE, the default, PCLinuxOS now comes in five flavors (with another on the way), as well as three mini versions. And you thought it couldn't get any better.

Of course, this awesomeness does have a small drawback: I have to pick one. Well, not really. After all, this is Linux; Tux has given the monolithic, "one size fits all" approach a vigorous kick out the window. My love of beautiful artwork remains, however, and if I ever want to accomplish more than admiring all the pulchritude (look it up) that each flavor has to offer I'll need to choose one. And I imagine that most of you are in the same boat, so to make your life a bit easier I'm going to give a short overview of each option, as well as my initial impressions.

General Requirements and Features

Since the flavors all share the same base, they have several common requirements and features. To save (digital) ink I'll list them here.

System Requirements

- * A CD or DVD drive (and BIOS capable of booting from that drive), or a live USB (and BIOS capable of booting from USB)
- * A modern Intel or AMD processor
- * Both KDE (including MiniME) and Gnome required a minimum 512 MB of memory, and 1 GB or more

is recommended. Gnome ZenMini, XFCE, LXDE and E-17 require a minimum 384 MB, and 1 GB or more is recommended

- * A minimum 3 GB of hard disk space. 10 GB or more are recommended, especially if you plan on installing additional software
- * An nVidia, ATI, Intel, SiS, Matrox, or Via video card. 3D desktop support requires a 3d-capable card
- * A SoundBlaster, AC97 or HDA-compatible sound card

Features

- * Multimedia playback support for many popular formats
- * Wireless support for many network devices
- * Printer support for many local and networked printer devices.
- * Addlocale, a utility for easily converting PCLinuxOS to over 60 languages
- * GetOpenOffice, a utility for easily installing Open Office.org in over 100 languages
- * MyLiveCD, a utility for taking a snapshot of your system and making it into a livecd-capable ISO.

A Note on My Impressions

Please keep in mind that all of my impressions are from the livecds running in VirtualBox. I simply haven't had time to give each a proper hard disk-install, and for some odd reason VirtualBox is refusing to install them. Don't worry, though, as I'm sure we'll see plenty of reviews and testimonials for upcoming issues!

For hardware purposes, I allocated the following virtual hardware to each:

- * 1.5 GB of RAM
- * 1 virtual CPU
- * 6 MB of video memory
- * Sound (via ALSA)
- * A network connection

KDE (Main & MiniMe)



About

KDE is the default desktop and the flagship of the PCLinuxOS fleet. KDE itself is a popular, free and open source multi-platform desktop environment. KDE is stable, easy to use and has first-class support for internationalization. ease of use, stability, and first-class internationalization and accessibility support. KDE has all the vital tools for a modern

computing, including file management, web browsing, file management, office suites and games.

There is also a KDE MiniMe version available. As the name suggests, MiniMe ships with only KDE and the most vital programs, allowing users to build their own installs without any unwanted addons.

Vital Statistics

- * KDE main ISO size: 692 MB
- * MiniMe ISO size: 445 MB
- * Kernel: 2.6.32.11-bfs
- * KDE 4.4.2
- * Nvidia and ATI fglrx driver support
- * Produced by: Texstar

Features and Applications

- * Firefox 3.6.3
- * Thunderbird 3.0.4
- * Dropbox (online storage and synronization)
- * Pidgin 2.6.6
- * Kymoney
- * Ktorrent
- * Gimp
- * Digikam
- * AmaroK
- * Smplyer
- * Parental Controls (in the PCLinuxOS Control Center)

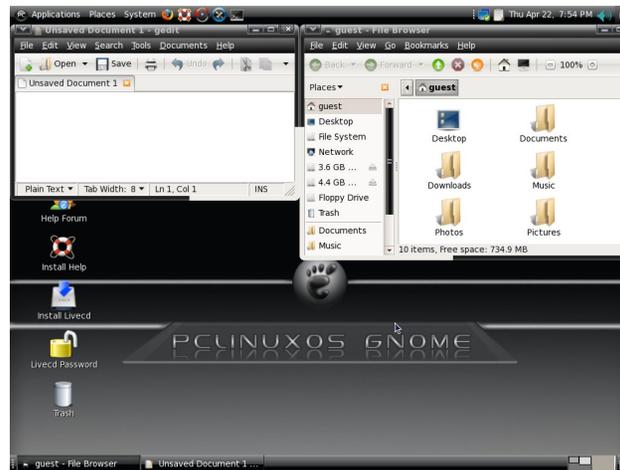
- * Over 12,000+ additional packages available from our software repository
- ** PCLinuxOS does not ship Win32codecs or libdvdcss2 software

Impressions

Both the main version and MiniMe are excellent. While KDE can be a resource hog at times, even with limited virtual hardware I only noticed a slight drop in performance. However, I did not initiate many programs or enable desktop effects, which would have slowed the system down considerably. That aside, KDE is fantastic. The artwork is gorgeous, KDE 4.4 seems much more mature than 4.3, and overall I can safely say that Tex & crew's hard work has resulted in a superb distribution.

Download Main & MiniMe:
http://pclinuxos.com/?page_id=180

Gnome Desktop



About

The GNOME Desktop: a popular, multi-platform desktop environment for your computer. GNOME's focus is ease of use, stability, and first-class internationalization and accessibility support. GNOME is Free and Open Source Software and provides all of the common tools computer users expect of a modern computing environment, such as e-mail, web browsing, file management, multimedia, and games.

Vital Statistics

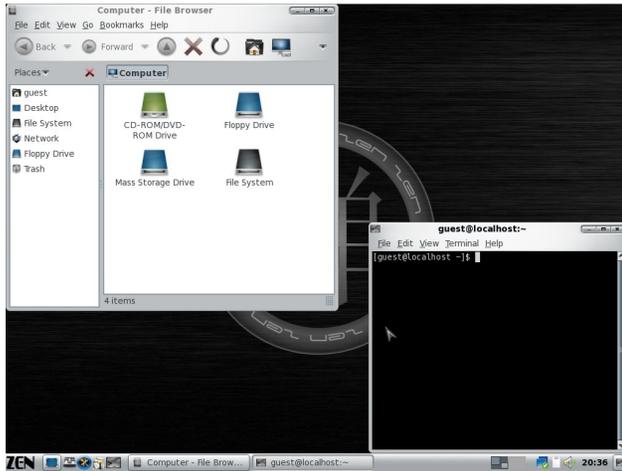
- * ISO size: 693 MB
- * Kernel: 2.6.32.11-bfs
- * Gnome 2.30.0 Desktop
- * Produced by: Slick50

Impressions

I've always enjoyed Gnome, and Slick50 has really delivered. The design is well laid-out and the artwork gives KDE 4 a run for it's money. I also found Gnome to be a bit quicker than KDE. Even though I mostly use KDE I could see myself becoming a convert (well, part time).

Download Gnome:
http://pclinuxos.com/?page_id=184

Gnome ZenMini



About

Zen Mini is a minimal Gnome Desktop with a minimum of applications giving you the freedom to install and use the applications of your choice from our software repository.

Vital Statistics

- * ISO size: 343 MB
- * Kernel 2.6.32.11-bfs
- * Minimal Gnome 2.30.0
- * Produced by: Siamer

Impressions

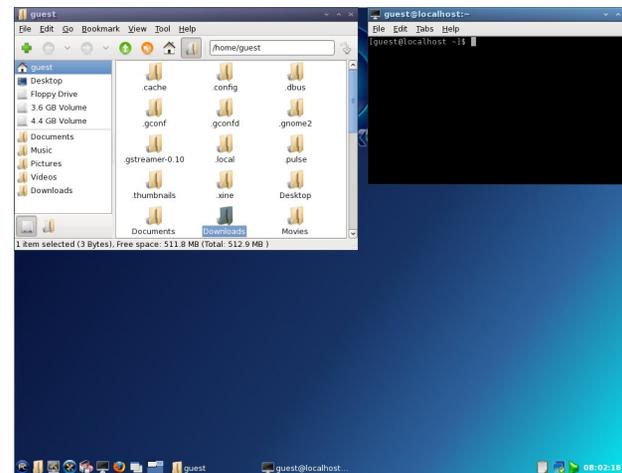
Wow. ZenMini is gorgeous. Everything, from GRUB through the bootplash, GDM and desktop have a beautiful, consistent look. And for being "mini" it's quite full-featured; all of the essentials come

preinstalled, but redundancy and bloat have been eliminated. Consequently ZenMini is also fast and very responsive. I'm really starting to give serious thought to converting.

Download ZenMini:

http://pclinuxos.com/?page_id=186

LXDE Desktop



About

The "Lightweight X11 Desktop Environment" is an extremely fast-performing and energy-saving desktop environment. Maintained by an international community of developers, it comes with a beautiful interface, multi-language support, standard keyboard shortcuts and additional features like tabbed file browsing. LXDE uses less CPU and less RAM than other environments. It is especially

designed for cloud computers with low hardware specifications, such as netbooks, mobile devices (e.g. MIDs) or older computers.

In addition to the full LXDE version, there is also a Mini version with just the desktop and void of extra applications for those advanced users who wish to trick out their desktop with only the applications they want to install and use.

Vital Statistics

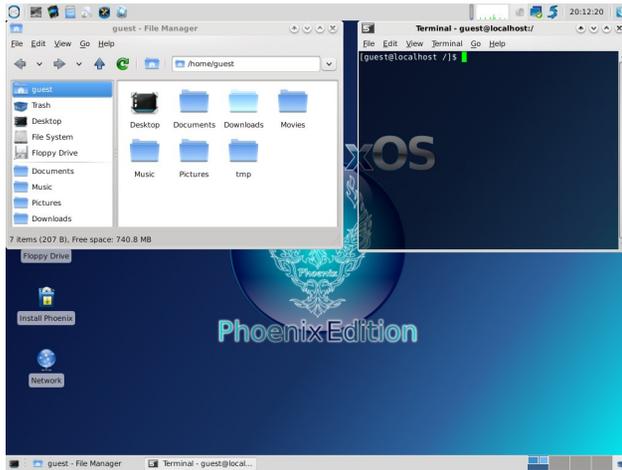
- * Main ISO size: 580 MB
- * Mini ISO size: 410 MB
- * Kernel: 2.6.32.11-bfs
- * Full LXDE Desktop
- * Produced by: Neal

Impressions

If I had to sum LXDE up in a word, that word would be "blazing". Even on minimal virtual hardware LXDE was extremely responsive. I didn't notice any lag or decrease in performance. In fairness I didn't begin any processor-intensive tasks, but I bet LXDE would probably hold up well. Also, while LXDE technically requires a modern processor and 384 MB of memory, it has been reported functioning perfectly on a Pentium II with 128 MB of memory.

Download LXDE: http://pclinuxos.com/?page_id=188

Xfce Phoenix Edition



About

PCLinuxOS Phoenix Xfce Edition features the lightweight but fully functional Xfce desktop environment. It is designed for productivity. It loads and executes applications fast while conserving system resources.

Vital Statistics

- * ISO size: 619 MB
- * Kernel: 2.6.32.11-bfs
- * Full Xfce 4.6 Desktop
- * Produced by: Sproggy

Impressions

Xfce usually seems to market itself as a desktop environment that removes bloat without sacrificing functionality or requiring users to use the command line to configure the system. Phoenix stays true to this principle. It was fast (quicker than both KDE and Gnome) but still provided plenty of GUI tools for configuring the system. And like LXDE, Phoenix is not beholden to its "minimum" 384 MB of RAM; there are reports that Phoenix can run comfortably on a meager 256 MB.

Download Xfce:
http://pclipinuxos.com/?page_id=213

E-17 Desktop



About

Enlightenment is not just a window manager for Linux/X11 and others, but also a whole suite of libraries to help you create beautiful user interfaces

with much less work than doing it the old fashioned way and fighting with traditional toolkits, not to mention a traditional window manager. It covers uses from small mobile devices, like phones, all the way to powerful multi-core desktops (which are the primary development environment). Enlightenment Desktop is for those who want the bling without the bloat.

Vital Statistics

- * ISO size: 610 MB
- * Kernel: 2.6.32.11-bfs
- * Full Enlightenment desktop
- * Produced by: Linuxera

Impressions

The Enlightenment e17 desktop is lightweight and snappy, yet rivals KDE 4 in graphics. It's also my understanding that the E17 desktop is incredibly flexible due to its widget-based nature. Due to its lightweight status that doesn't skimp on power, e17 is fast becoming a favorite among many Linux users. It takes a different approach to the desktop, and is extensible to your heart's desire, using widgets. And it does it all, without consuming huge amounts of computer resources. There are reports of e17 being successfully ran on a Pentium I with only 16 MB of memory.

Download E17: http://pclipinuxos.com/?page_id=215

Conclusion

Unfortunately, the final version of PCLinuxOS OpenBox was not available when the magazine was published, but was reported to be very near completion. The OpenBox version will fit well with users who have older computers, since it is also a lightweight window manager that literally sips system resources. Like the other versions of PCLinuxOS, it is built on the common stable core produced by Texstar and the Packaging Crew.

Hopefully this brief overview will help in the decision-making process. Thankfully "one-size-fits-all" is a phrase the rarely applies to Linux, and it definitely doesn't apply to PCLinuxOS. With so many great options, it's going to be hard to pick one. Then again, who says you have to pick just one? Of course, your choice may be somewhat dictated by the hardware you have on hand. Maybe you can pull that old computer out of the closet, and place one of the lighter weight desktop versions on it. Or imagine putting one of the light weight desktop versions on a modern, dual core processor with 2 GB or more memory. Whatever your situation is, there is a version of PCLinuxOS that is likely to fill your needs.

Finally, thank you very, very much to Tex, Slick50, Siamer, Neal, Sproggy, melodie and Linuxera, and to everybody involved in bringing the 2010 release to fruition. No words can adequately express how deeply your hard work and dedication is appreciated.

Screenshot Showcase

Linux 2.6.32.10-pclos2.bfs on i686
 Frequency: 1.40 GHz CPU Temp:44C
 RAM Usage: 151MiB/565MiB 26%
 CPU Usage: 24%
 Processes: 151 Running: 1

File systems:
 / 127MiB/270MiB

Networking:
 Up: 0B - Down: 0B

Name	PID	CPU%	MEM%
shutter	17687	9.74	8.63
X	5527	4.22	5.29
lxpanel	5689	0.65	2.10
conky	17658	0.32	0.73
conky	15346	0.32	0.73
conky	13753	0.32	0.73
pppd	14868	0.00	0.08
pppoe	14856	0.00	0.11
kjournald	9031	0.00	0.00
init	1	0.00	0.10

Posted by Weirdwolf on April 6, 2010, running LXDE

Testimonial: PCLinuxOS 2010 A Job Well Done

by Don Cosner (exploder)

I just wanted to express my appreciation for a job well done. I have thought for a long time that Linux is ready for the masses, PCLinuxOS clearly demonstrates this is true. This release has all of the elements in place for success where most distribution fall short. The rolling release concept is the very best way to attract new users and maintain a stable system. People do not want to reinstall all of the time to have current applications and it is especially undesirable for people that have collected a lot of data and made customizations to their systems. PCLinuxOS is always right on top with current applications and very quick to address any problems that might be encountered.

The artwork in PCLinuxOS 2010 is very attractive and the time, hard work and thought that went into it shows. I mention the artwork because there was a time when I thought all graphics artists that created artwork for Linux had bad taste as one of their requirements; clearly this is not the case these days. First impressions are important and PCLinuxOS 2010 makes a very good first impression. All of the artwork looks good and is consistent throughout the system.

The way PCLinuxOS 2010 is built is unique in the world of Linux distributions. PCLinuxOS is not a remade version of another distribution. It was built from source from a variety of sources to ensure the highest level of quality could be achieved. Just think about the huge number of packages available in the repos for

a moment. Every single one of those packages was built by Texstar and the PCLinuxOS team. That's quite an accomplishment, isn't it! Patches were applied to some of these packages as well as things like custom splash screens to ensure your PCLinuxOS remains in perfect condition. You really have to respect these guys and gals for the work they do, you just don't see this in other small distributions. The larger distributions could learn a lot from the work being done here.

PCLinuxOS 2010 was tailored to the needs and requests of the community. How often do you see this? Most developers tend to build what they envision things to be but that is not the case here. I see a lot of things requested by the community in PCLinuxOS 2010. Every effort was made to make the transition from KDE 3.5 as pleasant as possible right down to the desktop layout. Texstar did accomplish what he really wanted to see, too. He wanted the system to be fast and it is. It is very rare to see this style of development more distributions

could benefit from this approach. Build something that people actually want! Seems radically simple to me!

The tools in PCLinuxOS 2010 are so valuable and yet all revolve around good old common sense. The MyLiveCD tool is the most intelligent tool ever to be provided in a Linux distribution. This tool simply has no equal, and I can't believe other distributions have

not ported this application. A good working backup of a perfectly set up system is worth it's weight in gold.



There really isn't anything more to say. Including BleachBit by default was brilliant. People always ask how to keep their system cleaned up. Someone obviously saw a need and fulfilled it. Dupeclean-gui is also an interesting addition to the default tools. I have never seen this used before, but I would imagine it could come in handy. The PCLinuxOS Control Center is good as always and has always received high praise from the community, as well as many reviewers. Having administrative tools all in one place just makes things so much easier; who wants to search all over for their system tools?

One of my favorite things about PCLinuxOS hardly ever gets any mention: the installer. The installer makes it easy to preserve your home partition. This comes in real handy! The installer is also quick, no dumb slide show slowing things down and an oem install can be done simply by shutting down the pc when the install completes. Best of all, it works with consistent results!

One last thing, you just can't beat a distribution with a Lead Developer that participates in the forum and interacts with the community. When I see the Lead Developer taking the time to help an individual user with a problem I know he really cares about the work being done and the community members themselves. That's real dedication! I should mention that I like Texstar's sense of humor too! It's nice to kid around and have some fun once in a while.

Yeah, I tend to write a book...but hey, I see a lot of good things in this release. My thanks to everyone that built PCLinuxOS 2010 and all of the hard work that went into it.

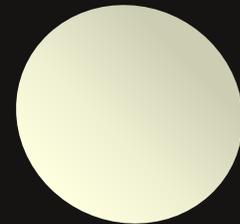
ms_meme's Nook: Quiet Nights

Quiet nights PCLOS brings as I strum upon my strings
Floating on the desktop that surrounds me

Quiet hum from my tower hope I don't lose the power
As I look into my files and folders oh how lovely

This is where I want to be here with Root so close to me
Hope I can recall his password

I who am just a newbie am glad to have this freebie
Though it is a system so complex
I give all my love and thanks to Tex



MP3



OGG

Forum Etiquette: Being a Good Citizen

by Meemaw

Most of the forums I have visited have been filled with wonderful, caring, helpful people. I happen to think ours is the best! However, occasionally, someone will visit the forum who hasn't used the best judgment in his manners or choice of words. Since we are a kind of family, it's always a good idea to have a reminder of the proper way to treat your forum brothers and sisters.

In 2006, the Forum Usage Rules were posted. It is the first section on the page. You can read the entire post here

<http://www.pclinuxos.com/forum/index.php/topic,240.1.0.html>

The main rules are listed as follows:

1. SEARCH!
2. Check the Wiki for answers to your questions.
3. Post your question in the most appropriate place.
4. Choose an appropriate subject line.
5. Include as much information as you can when seeking help.
6. Keep all HELP posts ON-TOPIC.
7. Make sure you have read the parent post completely before posting a reply.
8. Do not cross-post the same question to multiple places.
9. Mark SOLVED.
10. DO NOT discuss anything about the unstable directories on the forums.
11. Refrain from discussing politics or religion.
12. Refrain from using coarse/insulting/vulgar language.
13. Report to Moderator
14. No Distro Promotion.

15. Keep all commentary civil, and be courteous at all times.
16. Thank those who help you.
17. Use mixed case.
18. No advertising or spam.
19. Do not 'astroturf' or pretend to be/represent somebody else.
20. Use your own words.
21. Do not discuss illegal activities.
22. Do not make geographical assumptions.
23. Have Patience
24. Software Additions
25. How To Keep Your System In Good Order

Failure to abide by these rules may result in an editing, negative moderation or deletion of your post. PCLinuxOS reserves the right to ban abusers from the site and possibly seek legal action against them. If you haven't visited that area of the forum, I recommend it.

Although that covers the main rules, and we are supposed to know how to act, the forum is still a place where one can remain somewhat anonymous. Many people take advantage of that to say things to people they wouldn't necessarily say if that person was standing in front of them.

What Not to Do

We don't discuss politics or religion, which I think is a good thing! Many of those discussions deteriorate into big fights where all sorts of feelings are hurt. (I personally don't discuss religion or politics with anyone else. I have my opinions and everyone else is welcome to have theirs as well). Occasionally a discussion in the Sandbox will venture in that direction, but a caution from a moderator usually

slows things down. I'm sure there are political and religious forums for those kind of discussions. If there is a thread on some current event, and you disagree with someone's statement or opinion, just say that you disagree - don't shower them with insults just because they don't agree with you. Everyone is entitled to his own opinion, whether you agree with it or not. You are free to give them your reasoning for your opinion, as long as doing so doesn't include insults or nasty language.

Also, please remember that there are people from all over the world on this forum, and not all of them speak English as their native language. Before you are so rude as to put them down for their spelling or written speech, please think what it would be like to have to post your problem in one of the sections of the forum provided for those who don't speak English. (I would love to be able to speak another language, but I don't, and I admire those who have the courage to post in the English sections even though their grammar or spelling has a few mistakes.) Remember too that some English words are not spelled the same in every country, and some words have different meanings in other places.

Crude or vulgar language is another thing not tolerated. Forum readers can be any age (I know my grandchildren love to come see what Meemaw is doing on the computer) so please don't post anything you wouldn't want your younger sister, children or grandchildren to read. I have a relative who posts with great frequency on another Linux forum. Occasionally he will encounter someone who's acting rude. His standard reply is to simply wish the person luck in the future. After that, he doesn't go back to the post. I was on the same forum three years ago and a poster was asking for

help with a certain program. He explained what the name of the program was and what it was supposed to do and even what kind of error message he had gotten. I for one had never heard of the program, but I believed that someone who did would come along and help him pretty soon. Two days after the original post, he came back and spent many lines running down the members of that forum (including my relative) and telling them they 'sucked' and the forum 'sucked' because no one would help him with his program. I believed that he had a program that was not very well known and the right person hadn't shown up yet to help. However, he was extremely rude and impatient. So after that, if there was someone who did know about his program, they most likely wouldn't have helped him. You're going to say, wasn't the moderator there to say something as well? I'm sure he was. It's possible the post was deleted later, or the person was suspended from using the forum for a while, but I sure never went back to that post to find out.

We have wonderful mods!!! Their hard work goes unappreciated many times. They are always on hand to handle a situation like this, and, whether or not you agree with a particular course of action, they are doing it in the best interests of the forum. If one of your posts gets changed or deleted, and you don't understand why, the best course of action would be to pm a mod and ask. The worst thing you can do now is get all mad and say something nasty in the forums. A very polite pm will most likely get you the answer you want without making your situation any worse. Rude, argumentative or insulting posters can be suspended from forum access for a length of time or can be banned from the forum altogether.

Our mods are very good, but they aren't perfect! If,

when reading a post, you feel it is not appropriate for the forum, you can always report it to a mod yourself. There is a link in every post called Report to Moderator. If you click this, it will direct the mod to the post you are questioning. They may have missed it.

Getting Help

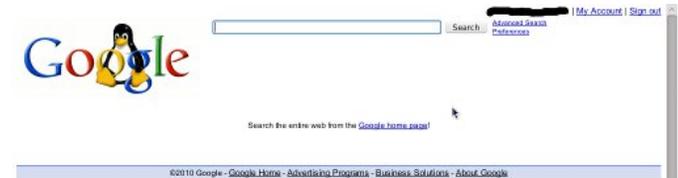
I have had very few computer problems since I switched to Linux, but I could almost always find a solution simply by searching the forum, which is probably the reason that rule #1 is SEARCH! Luckily, my one and only problem when I first installed Linux was getting my wireless card to work. Before I even registered on this forum, I searched for my wireless card and the way to install and configure it. I found the information and got it up & running. Since then my driver has been added to the distro and works nearly every time. You can use your favorite website search function (I usually use Google) or search on the PCLinuxOS Forums or try the Wiki -

http://www.pclinuxos.com/wiki/index.php/Main_Page.

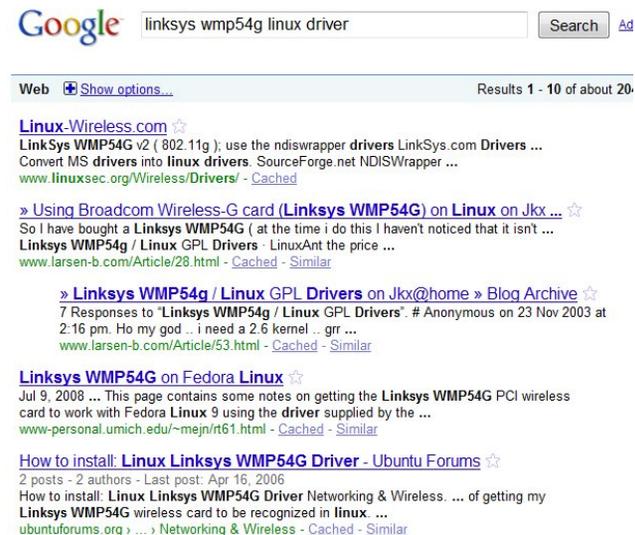
If you use a website search, make sure you find very specific terms. For example, my wireless card is a Linksys WMP54g. I would put in that information along with the word Linux and that should limit my results to those items about that card in reference to Linux.

And so it did:

Google also can be "configured" to search only Linux topics. Simply go to <http://www.google.com/linux>, and enter your search terms as you normally would in Google. This will avoid you having to put "linux" in your search criteria.



If you don't find the information you need, you should post. Pick the most logical section to post in and make your post clear and to the point. (Not long ago, I was having trouble configuring a drawing tablet on my desktop computer, and couldn't find enough information on our forum, so I posted in the Desktop Hardware section). Your thread title should reflect what kind of help you need. (Mine was 'I need help with a Wacom Bamboo'). I've seen many posts that just say 'Help!' or 'I'm going crazy!' and while we all understand your frustration, that sort of title may not be enough to attract someone who actually knows how to solve your problem. If you say that it's a Linksys WMP54g wireless card, for example, someone who can configure that card is more likely to see that



post and answer. It will also be helpful if you give people some sort of idea of the type of computer you are using (desktop or laptop, cpu, ram, etc. Many of us have our computer specs in our signatures) and what version of PCLinuxOS you have. An additional hint is to post the particular error message you are getting (if you are getting one) or the exact behavior of your computer - if opening a troublesome program locks up the computer, add that to your post. Even a screenshot (if it's visual) may help more than you think.

The rule about cross-posting always made perfect sense to me but maybe not to others... if you can get help in one place, more help in two places is better, right? Wrong. First of all, you have to run back & forth from post to post, and make sure you say the same thing in both. That makes more work for you. Then, if you get help in both places, and try to implement both ideas, you may end up doing more harm than good to your system. (PCLinuxOS is easy to install, but I don't want to reinstall every week!) A better method would be to post in one place, so everything is together and in order. That way, if you should ever have to re-visit your solution (for a new computer, maybe) it's all in one spot and all possible solutions are right there. Also, when the solution is found and working, editing your post to 'solved' will help our future newcomers by indicating that there is a solution to that problem. In addition, saying 'Thank You' to the person who helped you is a good way to end your post.

If your post is actually meant to help the person who started the thread, post it. If you are wanting to post about another problem (even if it's similar) please start another thread. If you are wanting to say hello to someone, pm them or post it in the Sandbox and

not in the help thread. Ideally, each thread should cover one problem. Staying on-topic helps others who may have the same problem - they won't have to plow through a bunch of 'Hiya, it snowed here' to get to the solution they are hunting for.

Above all (and this is in the rules) - **be patient!!!** Everyone in the forum is there because they want to be, but the majority of them work full time and have homes, families and other obligations. Your problem is important to be sure, but most of the forum members don't spend all day there.... they are working or away from home and haven't gotten the opportunity to get to the forum to see your post. (Also remember that some people live on the other side of the world and are online when you are asleep.) As hard as it is, please try to wait for a reply or take a break. Do some more searching and come back to the forum the next day - your reply might be there.

Remember the guy who said they all 'sucked'?

We're better people than that!

The rules are there to make the forum helpful and enjoyable for all. Following these simple rules will help keep it that way.

powered by EN*KI

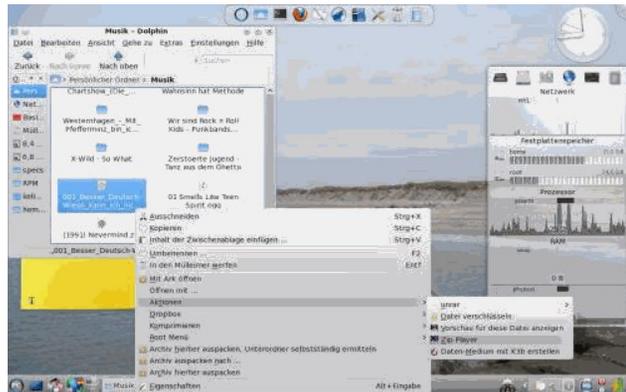


Zip-Player Plays Music Archives: Part 1

by Daniel Meiß-Wilhelm (Leiche)

One day, a user in a German forum was talking about "zip player." Messing around, I asked him what "zip player" was. He stated that it is a player that can play music from a *.zip archive, it's need for <http://www.jamendo.com/>, and Foobar can play it.

I searched in our repositories for this function, but I could not find anything. The idea that a player can play music out of an archive was funny, and I wondered if I could make something similar. What I ended up with (and now in the PCLinuxOS repository) is "Zip-Player," a KDE 4 Servicemenu (right click menu) that allows you to play music in *.zip archive files.



So What Do We Need?

The first thing we need is a player that can open directories, then play all files inside. I chose xmms, because it has always been able to play all my music files without any problems.

But now it must play music files in a zip-archive? Here a script is required, and I get started writing a simple script file.

To create a script, we need to start kwrite and enter:

```
#!/bin/bash  
#
```

The first line listed in kwrite tells what it is (bash script), and shows the syntax highlighting. We need to save it as 'zip_player.' With the sharp sign "#" you can hide or disable a command.

Now we type the command:

```
xmms $HOME/
```

But wait a moment, because we must first open an archive. Also, we need unzip. When we open a Konsole and type unzip -help, we get this description:



What we need is `unzip <archive> -d <target>`.

So we write in our script:

```
unzip <archive> -d <target> && xmms  
$HOME/<target>
```

But we have to wonder if this will not work or not.

`<archive>` must represent the place and name of the archive.

`<target>` is the place where the archive should unpacked.

And last but not least, the script must executable.

So how do we make the script file executable? A right mouse click on the script open a dialog. In this dialog, we choose 'Properties' and click on the box that says "Is Executable."

Now, when we now click on our script, it'll start in the background, but it doesn't do anything, because unzip has no archive to open.

Kdialog

So exactly what is Kdialog? Open Konsole and type `kdialog --help` and we get this (in German for me). Doing the same on your computer will display the help text in the language installed on your computer.



With Kdialog, we can create a simple GUI. This will make it easier for us to open an archive for our zip player.

So far, our script looks like this:

```
#!/bin/bash
#
unzip <archive> -d <target> && xmms
$HOME/<target>
```

Now we add the command `Kdialog --title "zip-player" --getopenfilename "open..."`

The two ampersands tell the next program to wait for the first to complete its job. However, we must set a attribute to give it to unzip. We simply type our command as below:

```
SAVE=$(kdialog --title "zip-player"
--getopenfilename "open...")
```

So, we do not need to enter the unzip command, since our script now reads:

```
#!/bin/bash
#
SAVE=$(kdialog --title "zip-player" --
getopenfilename "open...")
unzip $SAVE -d <target> && xmms
$HOME/<target>
```

We now need to tell our script where to store the contents of the archive file:

```
#!/bin/bash
#
SAVE=$(kdialog --title "zip-player" --
getopenfilename "open...")
unzip $SAVE -d $HOME/<folder> && xmms
$HOME/<folder>
```

But why not just save it in the /home folder? When we want to open another archive, we should remove the old folder and files. We can do that with `rm -rf`. But first, we should create a new folder with `mkdir`.

Create Remove what else?

Our app will not work, unless we create the new folder. So, our script must take the input *.zip file, extract it to our new folder, and tell xmms to play the music files in our new folder. And, when we must be certain to remove our new folder after xmms is finished playing the files, and nothing more.

```
#!/bin/bash
#
mkdir $HOME/.zplayer
SAVE=$(kdialog --title "zip-player" --
getopenfilename "open...")
unzip $SAVE -d $HOME/.zplayer && xmms
$HOME/.zplayer && rm -fr
$HOME/.zplayer | exit
```



Now we can play our MP3s stored in a zip archive with xmms. Notice: If Zip-Player won't start, then type this in a console:

```
rm -fr $HOME/.zplayer
```

Later (next month), we will learn how to make a ServiceMenu for Zip-Player in KDE 4.

To learn more about the command line, see Peter Kelly's series of articles, "Command Line Interface Intro."

Testimonial: A Boring Evening

by Roland Ewert (longtom)

Well, since this is testimonials I thought I'll share this one with you.

I am with Linux for a bit more than a year. Since I live in South Africa I always and primarily used a distribution heavily endorsed by a South African icon. Having said that, I was always intrigued by the philosophy of PCLinuxOS, which appeared to be so logical to me that I couldn't forget about it – as I forgot about so many other distros I had a look at before.

So I started getting into it, downloaded 2009 and had it running in a virtual machine, etc. You all know how it goes when they hook you...?

I am part of the forum for some weeks/months and I like it. I like the “down to earth” approach here, no fanciness, no nerd fights and all that unpleasantness I encountered before and didn't care for. So here I was – not really running PCLinuxOS on any system but having fun with the community.

Yesterday I downloaded 2010 – and things are changing.

I was, sitting at home yesterday evening. As Walter (that one from Jeff Dunham) says: "I was bored as

hell, it was hot as hell, mosquitoes using me as their main landing strip and I was not tired – so going to sleep wasn't an option." So I thought: “Why not install that PCLOS KDE 2010 on my PC?” “Nah...that's never going to work – stop kidding yourself!”



Let me tell you about my PC. I bought it 2nd hand from a spoiled teen who needed something more powerful for gaming – many years back. Many, many years back. Many, many ... It is a proud Pentium IV 2.0Ghz Celeron with a whooping 512meg Ram divided into 2 sticks. It is also filled up by some oldish to very old harddrives (80GB Seagates and the like). Ah yes – and I am the proud owner of an ancient nVidia 128meg video card and some sound card which I forgot the name of. Oh yes – I don't have dsl at home yet – so this is an off line machine.

So, I did try the live CD on that thing and it loaded up. KDE desktop and all. All right ... Shut down, pop the gparted live cd in, make some space and start again. There she is again and off I go installing. This took some time – long enough to make coffee, drink it, get rid of it ... you get the picture. The grub settings were as simple as I had never seen it before. I didn't touch a menu.list file – how cool is that! It finished, I restarted, popped in my credentials and there I was. The video card was detected without a hitch and installed without me even

noticing it. Everything was there that should be there, resolution was fine, sound was sweet ... cool!!

So I started playing. I am not a KDE person, and never used it for longer than 10 minutes. My stuff works in Gnome! So I had ample to explore and eventually arrived, as we all do, at the desktop settings. I didn't even think of Compiz on this old block, but there was some animation in KDE itself. Rotating cube and all that jazz. Well, surely not on this machine. Come on, longtom, you should know better ... I didn't. I always have to push it – ask my mom. Well – what can I say? It worked. On a 2.0Ghz Celeron with 512 MB of RAM, I had a rotating cube – and if I had the speed slower than normal, it did it without any stopping or stuttering. How is that?

This will be a distro for the whole family. It couldn't possibly be simpler to setup and operate.

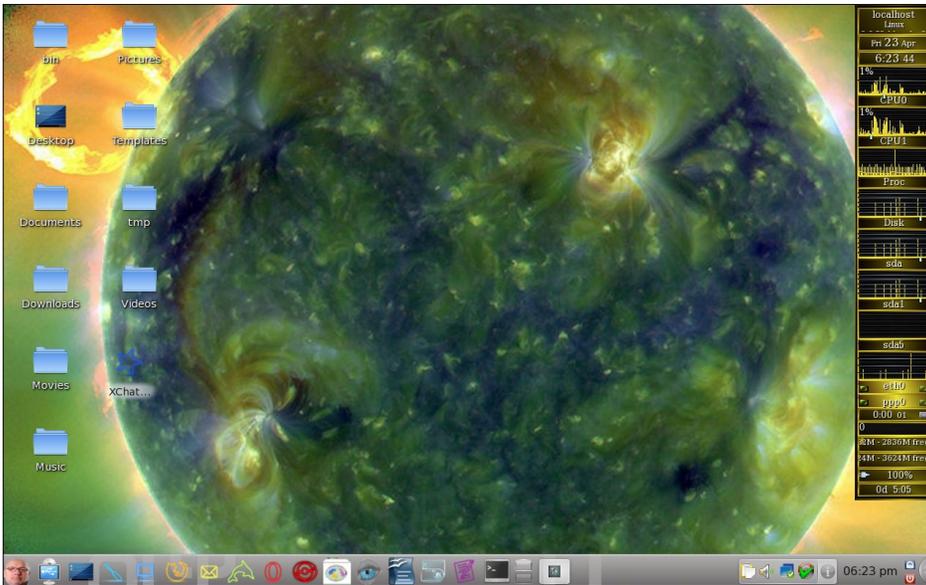
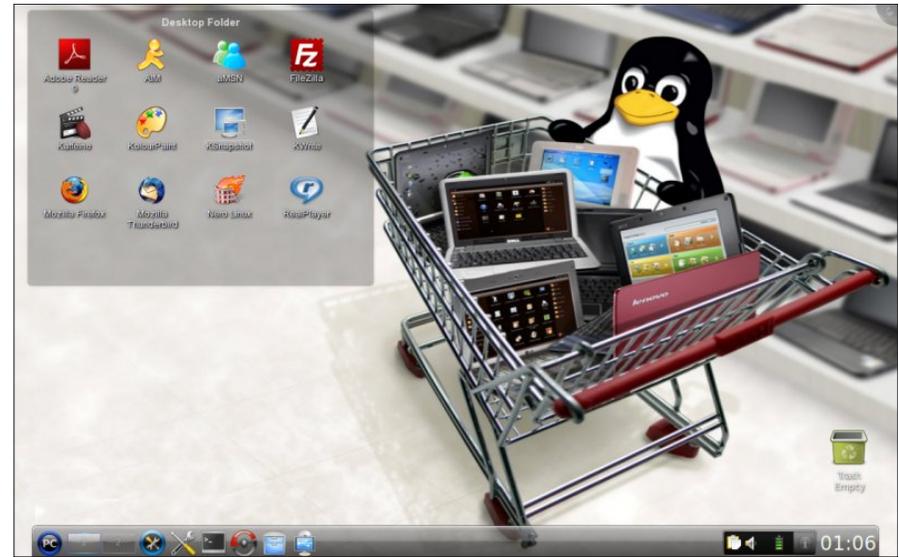
The only thing I need to find out is how to get Open Office on this block without an Internet connection.

All in all – what a great distribution. Thank you to Texstar and his nameless team who put in all the hours and effort to get it this far. I can say without a blink that this was my best Linux experience I had this far – and by some distance!

Go to the fridge and get yourself a beer – you deserve it!!!



More Screenshot Showcase



Top Left: Posted by Critter on April 4, 2010, running KDE 4. Bottom Left: Posted by smieeb on April 23, 2010, running KDE 4. Top Right: Posted by Stephen1 on April 22, 2010, running KDE 4. Bottom Right: Posted by Pirate on April 5, 2010, running KDE 4.