MAKE LINUX
YOUR FUTURE

If you want a well-paid job in IT, learn Linux. That might surprise some people who thought that the biggest demand was for people with Microsoft experience. But however you look at it, it seems a pretty safe bet that systems administrators with good knowledge of Linux will be in increasingly high demand in the years to come.

Linux is now the fastest growing operating system on the planet. Desktop use is already on a par with the Apple Macintosh, while over 30 per cent of enterprise servers are now said to run Linux. And according to research company IDC these figures are set to grow by 25 per cent year on year for the next three years.

Now consider the effect of the nationwide shortage of skilled IT personnel which is leading the Government to consider relaxing immigration rules for people with the desired qualifications. Already, if you have good technical expertise, companies are falling over themselves to offer you a job. So how can you acquire the expertise they seek quickly and cheaply?

Learning Linux is the obvious choice. Unlike other operating systems used in commercial environments it costs next to nothing to acquire a copy and it doesn't need extravagant hardware in order to run. Most of what you will learn running Linux on your home PC can be applied equally when using it on much more powerful enterprise hardware platforms. You might want to fork out for a few books to help your studies along, but much of the information you need is available free, online. And there are plenty of opportunities to obtain practical experience that you can put on your CV by getting involved with open source projects.

Some Linux distributors are developing qualifications like the Red Hat Certified Engineer scheme. Achieving certification would be a good goal to aim for. But possessing such certificates isn't yet considered as essential by employers as it is in the Microsoft world. There are many ways other than by taking an exam to demonstrate what you have learnt.

Linux is an operating system with a glittering future. It could be your future too. If you are looking to give your career a boost, what are you waiting for?

Our thanks to everyone who wrote complimenting us on our launch issue. We're very happy to have got it just about right first time. We still welcome your comments and constructive criticisms about the content of the magazine itself and the CD. We know that many of you would prefer not to have a full distribution on the CD most of the time: if you are one of those people, tell us what else you would like to see there.

Until next month,

Julian Moss
Editor