WRITE ACCESS

Timely plea for help

As a Linux user, who doesn't even have access to a Windows machine at home, I sometimes feel like a second class citizen. With the PC world being so dominated by Windows, technical support for anything else is usually unavailable.

I would very much like to upgrade my Internet connection – I am currently using a 56K modem, but I am unsure what will be compatible with my desktop system: ADSL, cable modem or whatever. It would help very much if you could do a roundup of what is available to me as a Linux user,

D Gates, London

More people are taking an interest in what Linux has to offer, and with this the need for mainstream support must also increase. We can only hope that this happens sooner rather than later.

High speed Internet access is going to be tackled in full next month. As it stands, most cable modem installations seem to work without added complications, so long as you are familiar with accessing a network on your machine. ADSL uses hardware that is less than fully compatible with Linux systems, but drivers are available. Exactly what you need for ADSL depends on who your supplier will be.
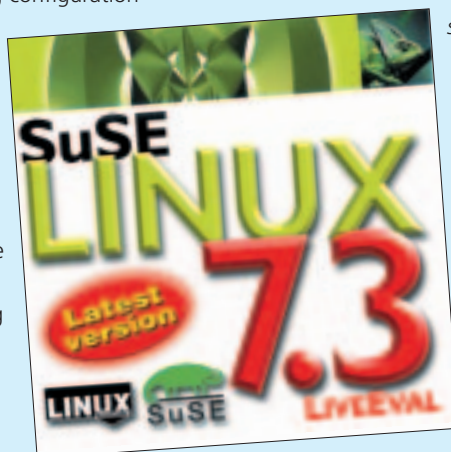
SuSE LiveEval 7.3 coverdisc

I haven't had any success with the LiveEval of the SuSE 7.3 OS. I get at far as part six: "Finishing basic installation ...updating configuration (10 per cent)" and that's it. The Abort button doesn't work so I'm left to turn the machine off, go into Windows where I find one file (suselive) to be deleted. I'm running Windows 98SE, 600MHz Athlon Processor, 700Mb+ RAM and I was hoping that a Linux platform would be more enjoyable to work with than a Windows system which has something of a mind of its own. The evaluation CD would have given me a taster of what to expect from Linux. It's unfortunate, and more than a little annoying, that the CD does not deliver what it offers.

A Beattie via email

We have had similar comments from Windows 98 and Me users. Apologies to all those that have

Star letter ★

From word of mouth of a friend I tried installing SuSE 6.4. I installed it on a spare Celeron 300MHz machine in my home, and just as a test I decided to see how long it would be before the system crashed. I've only had to switch the machine off once in one year and two months, and that was to switch off power to install a new socket in my house.

The installation was every bit as easy as a Microsoft Windows install and I would say the OS is much more configurable and fun to use. I have had an application crash on me once on Linux but it never affected the OS.

It has been quoted that " Window Millennium Edition is actually the cheapest OS, coming in at £147.04". Linux is free if you could be bothered to download it. A standard distribution should never cost more than £80 from any distributor, and that comes with more software you can shake a stick at. The only downside about Linux I would say is the lack of good games. So you see I am not a Linux fanatic!

Nicholas Herriot via email

The ease and simplicity of a Windows install is often quoted as one of its features. As far as we've found this just isn't the case. Once you've run the risk of the installation itself – holding it in check from overwriting partitions that you want to keep – you still have to gather together all of the driver disks to get the full support out of your peripherals. You don't suffer this with a Linux install.

The ability to download a distribution is no stumbling block either. If you are looking to get yourself set up at a rock bottom price and the option of downloading 650Mb is not an option, then contacting your local Linux user group is bound to bring results.

suffered disappointment. We have been in contact with SuSE and you'll be pleased to know that there is a work around for this problem.

Should YaST2 hang while writing the config files at '10per cent', you should press the Alt+SysRq+S keys (all three keys simultaneously) The SysRq key may be marked as Print Screen on some keyboards. This will get YaST2 running again, the Alt+SysRq+S key presses synchronises the mounted filesystems again. Full details of this problem can now be found on the SuSE Web site at: http://sdb.suse.de/en/sdb/ html/cndegen_yast2_error_diagnosis.html

Contact us

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