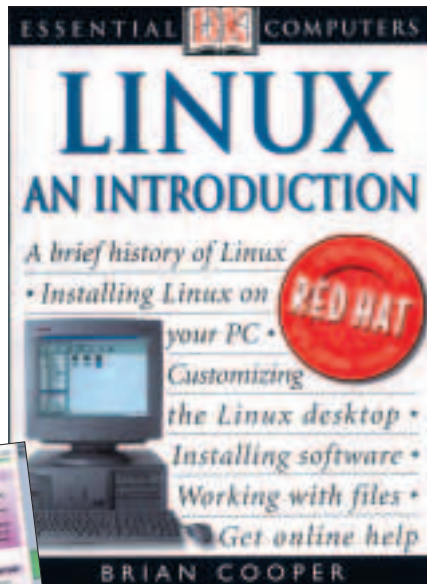


LINUX: AN INTRODUCTION

This is a handy little guide published in the style that Dorling Kindersley is well known for – beautifully illustrated and very user friendly. The book starts with a brief history and introduction to the various distributions. The examples in the book are all based on Red Hat, but most of the information is generic and can be easily adapted for any of the other distributions. There is a very clear table of hardware requirements needed to run Linux and a nice summary of its pros and cons, although the hardened Linux user may feel that the cons are not qualified enough. For

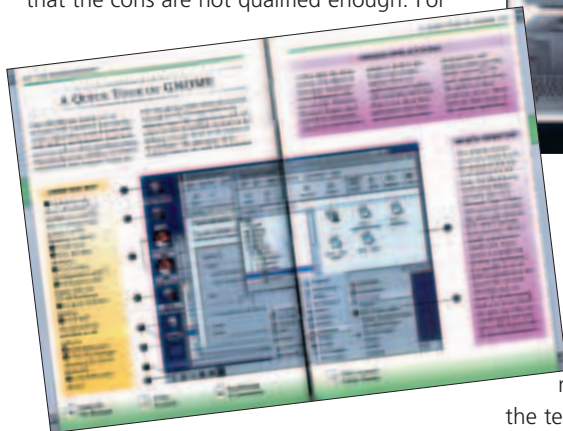


example the lack of software availability, such as Microsoft Office, does not mention that there are good alternatives to proprietary software. Any technical terms are clearly defined and references are made to those definitions wherever the term is used.

Having introduced the user to Linux the book then shows how to log on and off. It doesn't attempt to explain how to install Linux, that would be beyond the scope of such a small handbook, and admits that the novice user may need someone else there to install the operating system. The rest of the book is then devoted to programs and applications; it covers how to mount and unmount devices and how to access the Internet. It concentrates on GNOME and only briefly mentions KDE as an alternative.

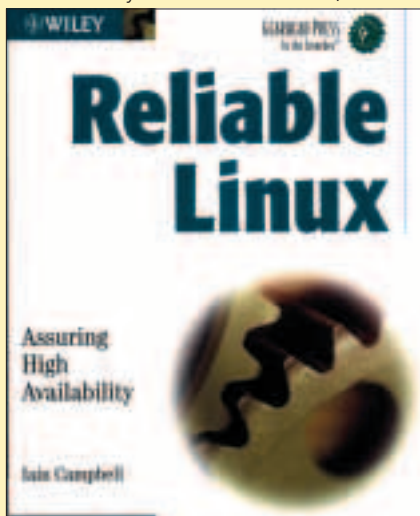
The final chapter is devoted to locating and installing software. Given that the book was aimed at novices, we felt that it should have had advised users to stick to tried and tested programs and avoid anything that still needs work done on it. Aside from these considerations, the book is a very good introduction to the subject, and excellent value at under a fiver.

Author	Brian Cooper
Publisher	Dorling Kindersley
Price	£4.99
ISBN	0-7513-3582-7



RELIABLE LINUX

In contrast to the previous book this one is aimed at experienced users. The target audience is systems administrators, or



similar, running a server under Linux. The book assumes that however reliable a system is it will eventually go down and the book aims to minimise the chances of that happening and to minimise the damage caused when it does happen.

The book opens with a guide to assessing the risk of your server failing and goes on to give details on choosing the hardware, how to assess its reliability and how to run it optimally. It also gives examples of how to tweak the software when necessary. The following chapters then discuss the software, which version of the kernel to use, how to choose a distribution, installation and how to configure the program to be as reliable as possible, giving examples and possible scenarios.

Other chapters cover storage and backups and how to monitor the Linux server in use to catch potential problems. It also covers how to recover data, should the worst happen. This is a very good guide for anyone who uses a Linux server in business. We all talk about how reliable Linux is, but eventually the best system in the world will suffer from some problems and advance planning could prevent these from becoming serious. This is a guide for doing just that and could help solve many potential problems.

Author	Iain Campbell
Publisher	Wiley Computer Publishing
Price	£33.50
ISBN	0-471-07040-8