LINUX NEWS

Red Hat 7.3 unveiled

In the latest version of Red Hat Linux 7.3 you will find added support for new productivity tools, personal firewall configuration at installation and video conferencing software. Red Hat boasts that this package will deliver everything individual users, educational institutions and small businesses need for flexible Internet-based computing.

"Small businesses and enthusiasts are looking for a combination of performance, ease-of-use and value in their technology infrastructure, which is hard to find with today's proprietary operating systems," said James Prasad, vice president and general manager EMEA at Red Hat.

Some of the key features included are:

- KDE 3.0 and GNOME 1.4 desktops
- Evolution email client and contact manager
- GNOME Meeting video conferencing software
- Apache 1.3 Web server
- Firewall configuration
- PostgreSQL relational database management system

Info
Red Hat Web site
http://www.europe.redhat.com/products/

Caldera praised for Linux support

Caldera Education Services, along with Support Services, Professional Services and Online Services, form the Caldera Global Services division of Caldera International. Caldera Global Services was recently selected by Network Computing as Editor's Choice for Linux support and had a strong showing, in the category of Directory Based Application, at the Network Computing's Annual Well-Connected Awards at NetWorld+Interop 2002, held in Las Vegas.

Caldera Education Services, which is one of Caldera Global Services provides courses designed to meet the demands of IT professionals who need to get Linux solutions up and running within their business environments. A variety of courses are available through the global network of Caldera OpenLearning Providers.

Info
Caldera Global Services: *http://www.caldera.com/services*

Mandrake 8.2 on the shelves

MandrakeSoft is now shipping Mandrake Linux 8.2 in three retail boxed sets:

- Standard – £39.99+VAT
- PowerPack – £59.99+VAT
- ProSuite – £149.99+VAT

Standard comes with 30 days Web-based support; PowerPack has seven CDs, two Manuals and 60 days Web support; and ProSuite has eight CDs, one DVD, two Manuals, 90 days Web support plus two tech support phone calls as well and two update CDs with security fixes during product life.

Info
The MandrakeSoft Web site
http://www.mandrakesoft.com

Py: A Python technical journal

All those Python users and developers out there now have their own paper-based independent technical journal. Launched in April this bi-monthly magazine from editor and publisher Bryan Richards hopes to give the Python development community another firm platform for news and views.

The April issue included articles on Scientific Python and Simple CGI Template processing. Bryan Richards is hoping to include five articles an issue and is keen to make contact with writers.
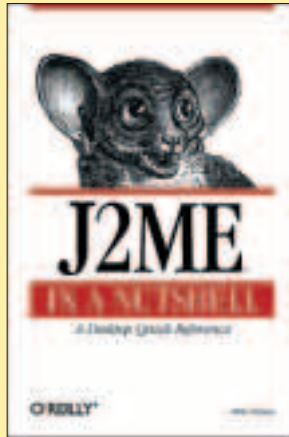
Info
The Py Web site
http://www.pyzine.com/

Books from O'Reilly

The specialist publishers O'Reilly has once more come up with some new books to tempt you to fill your shelf space up with spines of a similar theme.

J2ME in a Nutshell – Java for the embedded world

A companion work to *Java in a Nutshell* and *Java Foundation Classes in a Nutshell*, *J2ME in a Nutshell* by Kim Topley is aimed at developers who want to get the most out of Java on embedded platforms.

"To the experienced Java developer, J2ME (the Java 2 Micro Edition) looks just familiar enough to be tempting, but just different enough to warrant caution. The 478 pages of *J2ME in a Nutshell* provide a solid, no-nonsense reference to the "alphabet soup" of micro edition programming, covering the CLDC, CDC, KVM and MIDP APIs. The book also includes tutorials for the CLDC, KVM, MIDP and MIDlets, MIDlet user interfaces, networking and storage, and advice on programming small handhelds. Combined with O'Reilly's classic quick reference to all the core micro-edition APIs, this is the one book that will take you from curiosity to code with no frustrating frills in between."

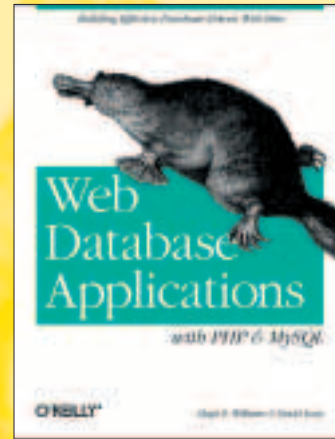**Java Web Services – Realising the potential of Web services**

Java has helped to shape the Internet, but in an ad hoc fashion. The development of Web Services is enabling structure to form part of this development.

In its 276 pages, David A Chappell and Tyler Jewell explain the use Java Web Services, showing the reader how to use SOAP to perform remote method calls and message passing. It also covers topics such as the use of WSDL to describe the interface to a Web service or understand the interface of someone else's service; and how to use UDDI to advertise (publish) and look up services in each local or global registry.

Security issues with Web services are addressed, as are issues involving interoperability and integration with other Java enterprise technologies like EJB and with Microsoft's .NET services.

Web Database Applications with PHP & MySQL – Online database applications

Hugh E Williams and David Lane's book offers detailed information on designing relational databases and on Web application architecture, with a mixture of theoretical and practical information.

The ability to integrate large databases in Web applications was necessary for sites such as eBay, Amazon.com and CNN.com to come about. Their popularity, and the power and ease of use that they provide, stems from their accessibility and usability: thousands of users can access the same data at the same time without the need to install any additional software on their computers.

The book details the development of a fictional online shop, which it uses as an example throughout. The shop allows users to browse, search a database, add items to a shopping basket, manage their membership, and purchase wines. Using this site, the book shows you how to implement searching and browsing, store user data, validate user input, manage transactions, and maintain security.

If you want to build small to medium-scale web database applications that can run on modest hardware and process more than a million hits a day from users, this book will show you how.

Info

J2ME in a Nutshell
http://oreilly.com/catalog/j2meanut/
Java Web Services
http://www.oreilly.com/catalog/javawebserv/
Web Database Applications with PHP & MySQL
http://www.oreilly.com/catalog/webdbapps/

New Chairs at Red Hat

Matthew Szulik has taken on the post of Chairman of the Board of Directors at Red Hat, in addition to his existing post as CEO. Promoted to CEO in November of 1999, he has been instrumental in the continuing success of Red Hat and the unprecedented growth in the adoption of Open Source computing.

"Matthew's enhanced leadership position as CEO and Chairman will enable Red Hat to improve its customer service and product offerings even faster and increase the speed of Linux adoption in the enterprise." said Bob Young, a former holder of the position.

In addition, Marye Anne Fox, Ph.D., has joined the Red Hat board of directors. Fox, a well-known education leader, is also a widely acclaimed chemist who serves on the American National Academy of Sciences' Committee on Science and Engineering Public Policy.

Keeper Linux

You don't need to have a hard drive in your network routers, especially for xDSL/cable modem connections. This is now even easier to achieve with Keeper Linux KLX-2.01 which will allow you to start up your system with nothing more that a CD drive.

The Keeper Linux CD-ROM distribution boots off a single CD-ROM, with a 64 Mb root filing system in RAM disk, so no hard drive is necessary. Once booted the CD-ROM is mounted and the main configuration files are read. A key advantage of a distribution whose system can manage without a hard disk is for system

security, and this was a major factor in the design of Keeper Linux. If any tampering is suspected in the RAM disk root filing system, the system can simply be rebooted as any changes made to the booted system are not permanent. The CD-ROM filing system is read only, so any changed files cannot be saved to the CD-ROM. This makes the distribution extremely secure against malicious intruders.

Keeper Linux is completely free and available for download from the Web site.

Info
Keeper Linux: http://www.keeper.org.uk/

Acucorp entrusted with system relocation

The Taiwan Securities Central Depository Co. called on the services of Acucorp, an international provider of application development solutions, to assist in the migration of a stock inventory system.

The system was moved from IBM's RS6000 to Linux running on the S/390 mainframe server, making Acucorp the first Open systems COBOL vendor to announce its selection as the COBOL of choice in a server consolidation strategy under Linux on this platform.
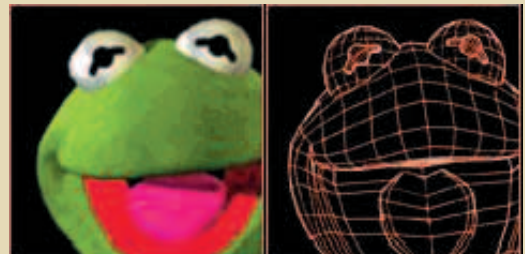
Acucorp's extend5 family of solutions, currently available on more than 600 other platforms including Linux for the IBM eServer iSeries platform, provide technologies for Internet deployment, COBOL-based GUI development, COBOL access to RDBMS data (DB2, Informix and Oracle among others) as well as access to ODBC data sources; distributed computing with Thin Client architecture; and programmer productivity.

Info
Acucorp Inc.: http://www.acucorp.com

Red Hat has hand in puppets

Puns about puppets aside the Jim Henson's Creature Shop is using Red Hat Linux to power its design studio and other digital projects. Red Hat and the Jim Henson Creature Shop have worked together for four years, but this new development will take their relationship to a new level with Red Hat being used at the core of the company's new Digital Performance Studio (HDPS).

With HDPS, the Academy Award-winning Jim Henson's Creature Shop has created the next generation of puppetry and computer graphics – a system that makes a digital character as instantly performable as a puppet. The company uses Red Hat Linux as the operating system on both the HDPS and the animatronic Henson Performance Control System (HPCS).

"Jim Henson's Creature Shop is changing the way digital production works, so it makes perfect sense that Red Hat Linux would be at the base of their innovative systems," said Mark de Visser, Vice President of marketing at Red Hat. "We're thrilled that the company which brought us Kermit and Miss Piggy is using Red Hat technology, and we're glad to be part of this growing trend within the digital production industry."

The Jim Henson Creature Workshop's choice of OS is yet another feather in Linux's hat, with Dreamworks also choosing penguin power for it's films Shrek and Spirit: Stallion of the Cimarron.

Info
Red Hat: *http://www.europe.redhat.com/news/article/223.html*
Henson Digital Performance Studio: *http://www.henson.com/hdps*

Mammoth PostgreSQL

Designed to give small to medium size businesses the power, performance and Open-standard support they deserve, Mammoth PostgreSQL from Command Prompt, Inc. is an SQL-compatible object relational database management system.

Compatible with the PostgreSQL 7.2.1 release, Mammoth PostgreSQL provides a commercially-supported PostgreSQL distribution for various systems, but most importantly for systems running Linux on x86 platform. Shipped with built-in support for SSL connectivity, Mammoth PostgreSQL also has all you need for programming APIs for C/C++, Perl, and Python.

A Deluxe version of Mammoth also ships with the SQL/XML application server LXP, which provides high level out-of-the-box developer support for Web site integration with PostgreSQL, XML documents, and other Web-based programming solutions (such as PHP, or Perl).

Command Prompt Inc. offer one-time and subscription-based licensing models available for immediate purchase.

Info
Command Prompt Inc.:
http://www.commandprompt.com/

Online Linux training services

Merrow Internet Services, based in Guildford (UK), run web-based training courses for UNIX, Linux and the Apache Web server. By using a Web-based conferencing system to create an online classroom, trainees can take part at home or at work, from anywhere in the UK or any compatible time zone.

Simon Ritchie of Merrow Internet Services said: "Web Conferencing is an ideal medium to teach IT skills and I'm very excited about using it. With facilities like document and application sharing we can provide all the advantages of a classroom-based course led by an expert instructor, but without the participants having to travel.

"When I taught at Coventry University a few years ago, we used the *learn software* to introduce students to UNIX and it was very successful. I thought it was great pity that it doesn't appear in modern systems, especially as reworking it only took a few days. Now people can use it to learn the basics of Linux and UNIX at their own speed before they have to part with money for a taught course."

Info
Merrow Internet Services
http://www.merrowinternet.com.

Award for Trolltech

Trolltech's Qt 3.0 continued its recent record of increasing industry recognition when it recently received the coveted Productivity Award from Software Development Magazine. Qt, which was nominated in the Libraries, Frameworks, and Components category, emerged with one of the prestigious Productivity Awards.

Receiving awards in the same category was Microsoft's .NET initiative and J2EE from Sun Microsystems. With this award Trolltech has been recognised for the most important benefit delivered by Qt – vastly improved developer productivity.

"Ever since we first created Qt, our goal has been to build an application framework that increases developer productivity," said Eirik Eng, Trolltech's President.

Info
Trolltech: http://www.trolltech.com/company/
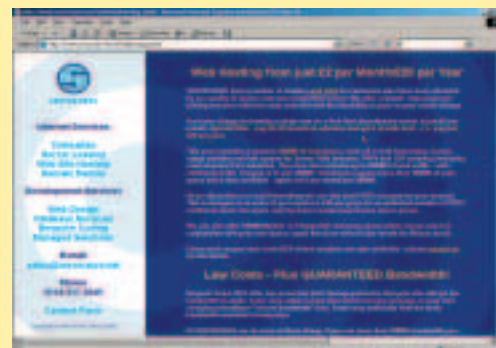
ServerSure Web hosting

Founded in 1989, ServerSure has an established track record of providing cost-effective IT solutions to a large number of corporate clients. Based in Sheffield, this Unix/Linux consultancy, has recently started offering low cost Co-location and Dedicated Server packages aimed at the cost-conscious UK Linux community.

With prices starting from £25+VAT per month for co-location and £40+VAT per month for dedicated servers, it's now possible to take full control of your own online server for less than the cost of some "virtual hosting" packages.

As ServerSure operate from their own fully-equipped data centre in Sheffield, they can offer a high quality of service at extremely competitive prices.

Info
ServerSure: *http://www.serversure.net/*

Microsoft FUD dispelled

The use of second-hand systems is just one way that schools might be able to afford to set themselves up with computer equipment. A recent posting on the Microsoft Education Web site – "A Guide to Accepting Donated Computers for Your School" – was widely regarded as muddying the waters with regards to licensing issues on the

Microsoft products that are often to be found already installed on second-hand equipment. Readers were left with the impression that only the operating system that was supplied with the machine could be used – for the entire life of that machine.

In May, Leon Brooks, of the SchoolForge group refuted these statements. "Using Linux, OpenOffice.org and other Open Source software, a school or charity can safely accept almost any donated computer," he said. "Simply wipe it and replace the software with Linux and Open Source applications, then use the computer as a powerful workstation or server. It's an excellent idea to erase the existing operating system anyway – this also erases viruses and Trojan horses, protects the donor's privacy, and complies with the typical EULA – so why not upgrade to Linux while you're there?"

Brooks also noted that Linux removed many of the burdens, costs and legal risks of licence management and software asset auditing faced by most businesses, organisations and individuals.

The price tag is also attractive. "School decisions are often dominated by cost; much Open Source software is available at little or no cost, and runs well on donated computers," Mr Brooks explained, "Linux is easy to set up as a fast diskless workstation or `thin client', so many schools are rolling out networks using this robust technology with both donated and new equipment."

"On top of this, Open Source software is immune to almost all existing viruses, has an excellent security record, is extremely reliable, and in an educational setting often provides a deeper spontaneous involvement in computers than programs deliberately designed for the classroom."

Info

SchoolForge Web site: *http://www.schoolforge.net/*
An unusual link for this magazine: *http://www.
microsoft.com/education/?id=DonatedComputers*

BakBone of Britain

The physics department at Oxford University – one of the world's most prestigious academic institutions – has chosen NetVault 6.5 from BakBone, to back up Unix and Linux systems which hold data on particle physics research for around 600 staff and students.

BakBone's NetVault 6.5 is a flexible and easy-to-use product. Installed on an IBM 8-way SMP server, with a Qualstar AIT-3 library attached, it is now backing up locally attached disks of around 1Tb of data, plus other network attached storage used within the group.

The files being backed up by NetVault are used mainly for code development and computation – a mixture of code and script and large quantities of data. Typical datasets are a few hundred Gbs spread over a number of sequential files of approximately 2Gb each.

Ian McArthur who heads the IT for the physics department said: "NetVault provided the functionality we needed at an affordable price. Being an academic institution cost is always a consideration and we found NetVault to be one of the only low-cost solutions for the Linux platform."

With the new version of NetVault 6.5.1 recently released there is now optional support for ACSLS drive devices attached to an ACSLS storage server, enabling enterprise-class backup and recovery for ACSLS environments.

Info

BakBone software: *http://www.bakbone.
com/products/netvault/*
Sales contact: *sales_europe@bakbone.com*

IARNA takes Linux hosting to heart

IARNA, the Web-hosting company, has announced that following its successful merger with the global Hostway corporation, it is re-launching its Web site along with a range of new services. These include SiteControl 3.0, a Web-based management tool and, for the first time, a comprehensive suite of Linux-based Web-hosting services. To date the company's services have been Windows or Unix-based but it has recently configured its servers to exclusively run Red Hat Linux 7.2.

This reconfiguration allows IARNA to take account of the growing popularity of the Open Source platform with existing customers. It is offering a new comprehensive suite of Linux packages to include new features such as improved reliability and enhanced email management.

Mission critical information is supported by MySQL databases and PHP version 4, so that fully interactive Web pages can be created and structured, giving end-users a richer Web site experience.

IARNA's Web hosting now uses Sitecontrol 3.0, claimed to be the UK's most advanced control tool which gives customers advanced usability functions including an improved interface, delivering enhanced navigation across the SiteControl 3.0 application. The tool has been re-designed for optimum scalability, speed and stability. Many more simultaneous users can be supported enabling them to manage their Web sites at any time and from anywhere that they have access to the Web.

Info

IARNA: *http://www.iarna.com*