Time to Think

Dear Linux Magazine Reader,

Weekends seem to go so quickly. So many are taken up with events that I rarely arrive at one without it being prebooked in some fashion.

Somehow, one happened. Whose fault it was is still not admitted, but I found myself on a Saturday morning with nothing planned. No computer meetings, children's parties or other time consuming activity to rush through. It was something of a shock. Given the time, I started thinking about reorganizing the home network.

What did I really want, apart from the usual cry for new toys? Could I slim down the number of machines? Where did I want them and what for? In the end I decided that with visitors calling I wanted a system that I could be proud of and that I can show off a little of what Linux is capable of.

Terabytes of storage for my Ogg Vorbis music collection is a nice dream, but lacks the visual awe to a casual computer user. Oh well, maybe next year.

The hardware solved itself with a trip to the local computer fair and the use of a cutting wheel on a small drill. A modded system with UV Blacklights and a windowed case gave the required look.

The software was the hard part. Too long have I suffered from non-Linux people asking if I can run Word or Excel and seeing the disappointment when I start to talk about alternatives. It is not acceptable to be good enough or second best. I wanted to be ahead of the field. Software with that Wow factor.

Adding themes made the system look integrated. I wanted to access anything that the system was asked for so I settled on as many standard based projects as I could find. Dual heading monitors would mean slower video drivers, so I went for more machines, but with the ability to play fast games. Hours later, with hundreds of games installed I moved on. Everyone seems to use the Internet these days. That would be easy to explain to someone. Mozilla is the standard, but I just needed a little edge. Something to quicken the pulse. Asking at the Mozilla foundation, I was recommended Phoenix. This is a Mozilla based browser, but without all the bloat and designed for speed.

Everything set. A knock at the door. And in walks … a Linux user. So disappointing.

Eventually a non-Linux user arrived who was willing to be tortured by listening to me. Patiently he nodded his head and murmured agreement at all the right times. I stopped myself before his boredom set in too deeply. Was he impressed? Not really. He had a mobile phone that was running Opera as its browser. Why did I not have that as default? Some you win and others…

Hope you have better luck!

John Southern
Editor