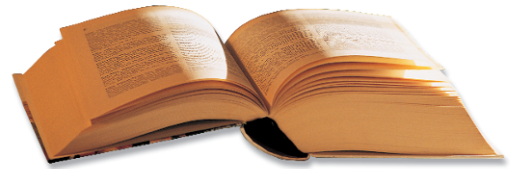


Book Reviews



Red Hat Linux Fedora All-in-One Desk Reference For Dummies

The first words that spring to mind on opening this book are “Bandwagon” and “Jumping”. The Dummies series is a large market for book sellers, but I fail to see who the book is really targeted at these days. If you need to use a Dummies guide then it is probably because a job requires it.

In a corporate environment you are likely to find one of the full cost distributions such as Red Hat Enterprise or Suse if the company can afford it, or a free download loaded version such as Debian or Slackware. I cannot think of many companies that would use Fedora core 1 with all its problems for a production system. Having said that, if you do need to use Fedora, the book is comprehen-

sive and probably the best value for money tome I have purchased in a while.

The Dummies series follows a set style indicating tips and the occasional warning. This book is divided into nine sections, each being called a quick reference book. They range from Open Office to setting up servers. The first ninety plus pages deal with setting up Fedora from the accompanying DVD onto your system. This is the usual guide and

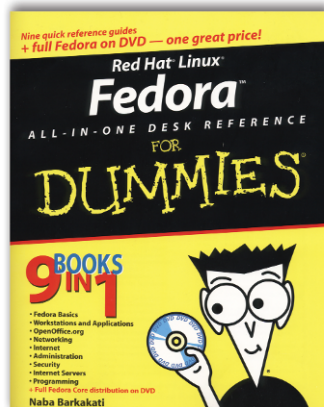
covers RPMs and basic admin functions.

The next 300 pages deal with using applications including OpenOffice and Internet connections. This large page block is probably justified in that the readers will mostly be interested in using the applications to get their daily work

done. The part on `ed` and `vi` was simple and not too confusing. As the last 300 pages deal with managing a system, I assume this is in case you suddenly find that as the reader you have to manage a small office network.

Although I think understanding host security and DNS configuration is important, I would not expect the reader to try this straight off. By the time I reached the last hundred pages, which dealt with Linux programming, I was convinced this book has merits beyond its marketing target. I have grown to like the book for this section. It would have been preferable to have this as a separate book, as a new user is likely to be put off by the technical parts, and admins are equally likely to be put off by the earlier dummied down sections.

Naba Barkakai
848 pages plus 1 DVD
Wiley, 0-7645-4258-3
£26.95, US\$ 39.99, EUR 34.80



Red Hat Linux Bible Fedora and Enterprise Edition

Hey-Ho, another day, another Fedora guide! This one comes with Fedora core 1 on three CDs. It has full installation instructions including an optional section on partitioning and a brief guide to the differences, if you are installing Enterprise instead of the included CDs, or if you are installing from a website. Instructions are straightforward and cover most eventualities.

This book starts with the usual spiel about what is Linux? What is an operating system? etc. I did feel that if the reader found this part necessary, then they might find the installation section a little daunting, just by its size. A useful couple of pages in the preface give a brief overview of how Fedora differs from Red Hat 9. This might be worth reading in the shop before purchase, to see if Fedora is the way you want to go.

The book then proceeds to cover all the major topics that you would expect a Linux tome to contain, listed under general headings so that related topics are grouped together. The first part deals with day to day use and the next with administration. The final part covers networking and servers.

Although the subtitle of the book is “Fedora and Enterprise edition”, the majority of the book is in fact devoted to Fedora core 1, specifically with what is on the three CDs that come with the book.

Within the text, only brief mentions of the Enterprise version turn up from time



to time where there are significant differences, so I therefore share similar reservations to the ones about Fedora for Dummies – does it go into too much detail for its target audience? It is hard to tell as yet until we see a take up by companies of Fe-

dora, but do the publishers know something we don't with their references in the desktop section to Red Hat 10?

Christopher Negus
1065 pages plus 3 CDs
Wiley, 0-7645-4333-4
£33.50, US\$ 49.99, EUR 43.50