

Business News

■ That Rumpelstiltskin is my name...

A French court has decided against Linux distributor MandrakeSoft in an intellectual-property dispute with Hearst Holdings, Inc. and King Features Syndicate. After MandrakeSoft attempted to have Hearst's "Mandrake le Magicien" trademark cancelled, the court has now ruled in favor of Hearst.

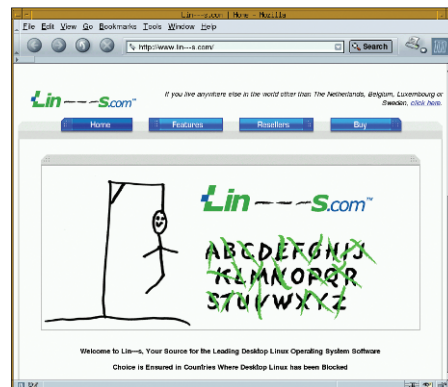
As a result, the French software company could be forced to surrender its trademark and the domain names to the US companies. Whether MandrakeSoft has to give in and pay damages to the holders of the rights to the comic strip character hasn't been decided yet since the Linux distributor has filed an appeal against the court decision.

For the time being, MandrakeSoft can continue to use its trademark as well as the domain names. The company said

the appeals process could continue for a few years.

At the same time, Linux vendor Lindows.com has followed court orders and changed its name. After the Linux distributor lost a case against Microsoft it also lost several letters of its name. The software company is now doing business as Lin---s (pronounced "Lindash") in the Netherlands, Belgium and Luxembourg. A Dutch judge had ruled against the company in a Microsoft case, claiming that the similarity between Lindows and the name of the Windows OS is an illegal attempt to confuse consumers and infringes on Microsoft's Windows trademark.

While the Amsterdam District Court barred the Linux distributor from selling or advertising its products in the Nether-



lands, Belgium and Luxembourg, Microsoft has lost similar trademark claims against Lindows in the United States. There is some controversy over the fact that a trademark for a generic term, such as "Windows", was issued in the first place, given that the term was in use in other systems, such as the X Window System, prior to Microsoft adopting it. ■

<http://www.mandrakesoft.com/>

<http://www.kingfeatures.com/features/comics/mandrake/about.htm>

<http://lindows.com/>

<http://www.lin---s.com/>

■ Meet us at Olympia

Preparations are proceeding for LUDEX 2004, which has been relocated to Olympia, London's premier exhibitor venue. As well as an exhibition, the show will feature a technical conference with interesting talks, such as "Linux for the Desktop", "Linux for Developers" and "Linux in the Public Sector". There will also be the chance to meet some of the people from the Free Software & Open Source community, who actually write the code, and will be exhibiting as part of the .Org village.

Since Linux Magazine is one of the media partners, we will be exhibiting, which will give you the chance to meet us at the booth and talk to the staff in attendance, pick up a free sample or even subscribe to the magazine with our special show offer.

LUDEX will take place at London Olympia from 21-22nd April 2004. Registration is free of charge, if done in advance, and can be done via the website. We look forward to seeing you there. ■

<http://www.linuxuserexpo.com/>

■ All settled

The *netfilter/iptables* project has reached an out-of-court settlement with Allnet GmbH, a Germany-based vendor of networking equipment. Allnet was offering two routers with software developed by the *netfilter/iptables* project. Although the code was published under the GPL, Allnet did not follow the obligations of that license, such as making source code offering or including the GPL license terms with their products.

Allnet has now agreed to follow the clauses of the license and inform its customers about their rights and obligations concerning the GPL. Furthermore, the company has offered to make donations to the FSF Europe and the Foundation of a Free Information Infrastructure.

Shortly after this incident, Fujitsu Siemens was caught appropriating *netfilter/iptables* code into a piece of hardware without following the obligations of the GPL. The company has also agreed to release the modified code and make a contribution to the FSF. ■

<http://www.netfilter.org/>

<http://www.allnet.de/>

■ Sue me if you can

SCO is keeping its promise and has started filing suits against companies that use Linux, which allegedly contains (unspecified) copyrighted material belonging to SCO. Its targets are AutoZone, an auto parts retailer, and DaimlerChrysler, a car manufacturer.

With AutoZone, SCO claims that the "defendant uses one or more versions of the Linux operating system that infringe on SCO's exclusive rights in its propriety UNIX System V operating system technology." SCO is seeking to have injunction issued that will prevent AutoZone's future use or copying of any part of SCO's materials, as well as attempting to obtain damages for the infringement that they claim has already taken place.

In SCO's second lawsuit, targeting DaimlerChrysler, they are suing for alleged violations of the automotive company's Unix software agreement with SCO. For either of these cases to succeed, SCO will need to establish that they have the rights they claim over the Unix code and that this code has found its way into the Linux source tree. ■