

# Business News

## ■ GPL at LaST

Novell announced that Suse's YaST ("Yet another System Tool") is finally being released under the GPL. While the source for the tool has always been available, it was licensed so as not to satisfy the conditions for being "Open Source" or "Free Software", meaning that commercial distributions that might want to use the software would have had to sign a licensing agreement with Suse. Juergen Geck, Suse's CTO, said this was Suse's "defense against being 'Mandraked.'"

The change of licensing policy for YaST is said to be a key indicator of how serious Novell/Suse is about its support of the Linux community. Then again,

putting YaST under the GPL will probably attract more Open Source programmers to work on the code, both in adding new features, and more importantly, improving the existing code.

The long term goal is to make YaST the center for system management tools across multiple platforms, such as Novell's own ZENworks, Hewlett-Packard Co.'s OpenView, Ximian Inc.'s Red Carpet Enterprise, IBM's Tivoli and Computer Associates International Inc.'s Unicenter.

The GPLed version of YaST is expected to be released soon on Novell Forge, a



collaboration website for development of Open Source projects. Other sources expect the new version to be published together with Suse Linux Enterprise Server 9 (expected late spring or early summer).

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

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

<http://forge.novell.com/>

## ■ Mandrake out of Danger

MandrakeSoft has emerged from its previous state of corporate limbo that resulted from its January "declaration de cessation des paiements". This is a move, which like Chapter 11 of the USA's Bankruptcy Code, allows a company to put its creditors on hold while it reorganises its ongoing business operations.

In the months since then, Mandrake has have been in a state known as "redressement judiciaire" in which a court-appointed administrator oversees what the company does in order to bring it back into a profitable state. It seems that the restructuring is working, in that Mandrake recently managed to file its first profitable quarter since 1999 (recording a profit of 270,000 EUR on 1.42M EUR of revenue for the last quarter of 2003) and the court has now approved a business plan to exit "redressement judiciaire" in which Mandrake agrees to pay off debts of 4.1M EUR, over the next 9 years, without interest.

Additionally, MandrakeSoft's shares, which resumed trading on Euronext's Marché Libre on 8th March, have since risen by over 20 percent, so it seems that the financial markets also approve of the exit plan.

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

## ■ Greetings from Mars

Linux is delivering pictures from Mars – Content from Nasa and the European Space Agency is now being served by Linux powered HP ProLiant DL360 servers. The machines are hosted by Speedera Networks.

"HP's commitment to space has been gaining momentum over the past 30 years, beginning with Apollo and continuing with support of the Mars Exploration Rovers through vendors like



Speedera Networks, which is delivering content for our Web portal," said Jeanne Holm, NASA's portal project manager. NASA reports that the web portal received in excess of 7.5 billion hits during the first two months of the year.

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

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

<http://marsrovers.jpl.nasa.gov/home/index.html>

## ■ LPI goes East

The Linux Professional Institute in cooperation with the Free Software Association Bulgaria has offered the first LPI exams in Sofia as part of the WebDev Conference in March. Evan Leibovitch, President of the Linux Professional Institute, said that the FSA Bulgaria, being one of the most recent affiliates, represented "another example of the increasing popularity of Open Source software around the world".

As LPI-Bulgaria, the Free Software Association will assist with the creation and development of centres for the education and certification of Linux experts in Bulgaria. Linux Professional Institute, based in Toronto, Canada is a not-for-profit international organization which organises programs for education and certification of Linux professionals all over the world. LPI has representatives in more than 24 countries around the world and is sponsored by a long list of leading IT companies.

A recent addition to the list of sponsors was Linux Magazine. The magazine chose to become a "Gold Sponsor" because of LPI's ability to consistently demonstrate the value of professional standards

<http://www.fsa-bg.org/en/index.html>

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