Software News

◼ Flash Gordon

Macromedia has announced the availability of the new Macromedia Flash Player 7 for Linux. While Windows and Mac versions of the player have been out since September last year, Linux users had to wait a bit longer to "experience the proven effectiveness of Flash technology on their platform of choice," said Jeff Whatcott, vice president of product management, Macromedia.

Flash Player 7 allows content provided in Macromedia's proprietary Flash format to be displayed, allowing people to view sites that use this technique to add integrated graphics, video, audio, and data capabilities to their Web sites. The latest version provides some new features such as increased performance and support for Cascading Style Sheets (CSS) and Simple Object Access Protocol (SOAP) Web services connectivity.
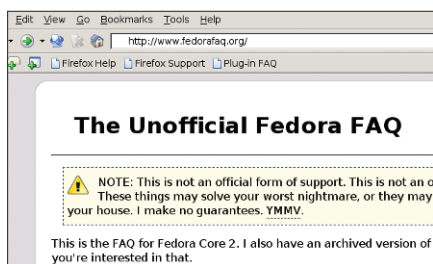
Macromedia Flash Player is bundled with Linux operating systems distributed by Novell, Red Hat, Sun Microsystems, and Turbolinux. "The inclusion of Macromedia Flash Player helps Novell give users the desktop capabilities they want and need", says Charlie Ungashick, director of product marketing and management for Linux desktops, Novell.

More information on the player, its license (and restrictions) and download possibilities can be found on Macromedia's website. ◼

http://www.macromedia.com/software/flashplayer/

◼ Fedora 2 FAQ

An updated version of the Unofficial Fedora FAQ has been published with questions and answers for Fedora Core 2. The site also offers a modified *yum.conf*, which has been tested for Fedora Core 2.

The FAQ gives answers to question in categories such as "About Fedora", "Getting and Installing Fedora Software" and "Problems and Their Solutions". Additionally, you can find a new section on how to contribute to the FAQ on the website. The archives of the Fedora 1 FAQ are still available via a link from the main site.

The maintainers of the site have announced that there "will be many updates in the coming days and weeks, so keep checking back for updates". ◼
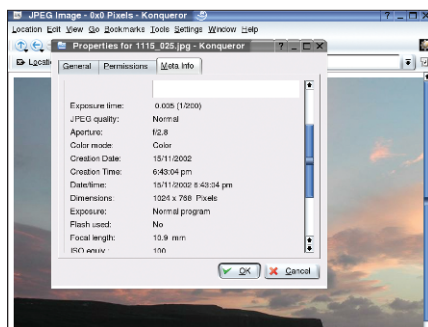
http://www.fedorafaq.org/

◼ Improve your Coding Skills

A new KDE tutorial has been written and published by Brad Hards. In his announcement he says, "If you've ever wanted to get into KDE coding, but reading tens of thousands of lines of code to get familiar with one of the bigger programs was more time than you have, then you might want to check out the tutorial on KFile plugins".

KFile plugins are responsible for the meta-data you see when you display the file properties (right-click on the file, *Properties*, tab *Meta Info*) and the *Info*
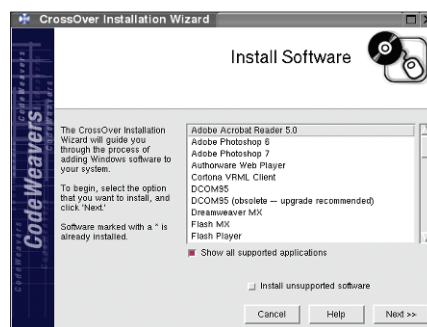
List View in Konqueror. Since KDE currently lacks support for several file formats, the new tutorial offers step by step instructions on how to write meta-data support for a specific file type, with examples to illustrate.

The tutorial relates to version 3.3 of Qt and 3.2 of KDE. "Providing file meta-data support with KFile plugins" is licensed under the terms of the GNU Free Documentation license (Version 1.1) and linked from the KDE Developer's Corner website. ◼

http://developer.kde.org/documentation/tutorials/kfile-plugin/t1.html

◼ Crossing Boundaries

CodeWeavers, Inc., has announced a new major release of its CrossOver utilities, which allow you to install and run Windows applications on your Linux desktop.

CrossOver Office 3.0 features support for over 30 Windows applications, including Microsoft Office, Visio, and

Internet Explorer. New support has been added for Lotus Notes 6.51, Microsoft Outlook XP and Microsoft Project.

The standard version ships for $39.95 and includes six months of free technical support and free upgrades. All multi-license CrossOver Office customers are automatically upgraded to CrossOver Office Professional status, receiving free upgrades for 12 months plus 12 months of level two support. CrossOver Office 3.0 Professional is available for $74.95 (volume discounts are possible). The CrossOver Office Server Edition, the product's thin client product, costs $695 (no client licenses included). Education customers can get a 30% discount. There is also a free trial version (valid for 30 days) available for download from CodeWeavers' website. ◼

http://www.codeweavers.com/

Good Connections

Novell has announced that it is releasing Evolution Connector for Microsoft Exchange Server 2000/2003 (formerly Ximian Connector) under the GPL. A license for running the software is no longer needed and the source code has been made public as well.

Evolution Connector allows Linux clients to access some of Microsoft's Exchange Server's features. Evolution functions as an Exchange client, supporting access to public folders, Global Address Lists, email, calendar, task lists, and group scheduling information in a company-wide setup.

At the same time, Novell has announced that upcoming versions of Evolution (scheduled for the third quarter of 2004) will provide expanded Exchange connectivity based on the current Evolution Connector technology. It is planned to extend support for MS Exchange features to include mailbox management, quota messages and password management.

To run Evolution Connector, users will need a supported version of Linux or Solaris and access to a Microsoft Exchange 2000 or 2003 Server mailbox with Outlook Web Access enabled. Evolu-

tion Connector requires at least version 1.4 of Evolution. The next version of Evolution will be available during Q3 2004 providing expanded Exchange connectivity. More information on how to download and install the software is available via Novell's website.
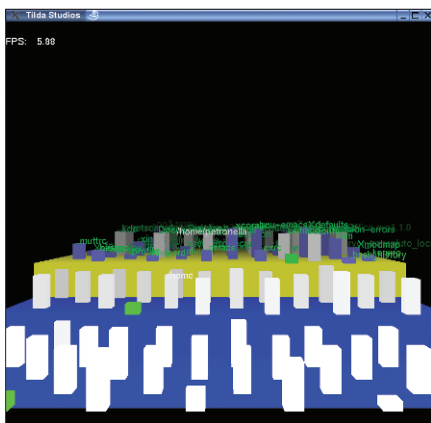
This should prove a real boon for all those that are currently quietly running GNU/Linux in the office, but are forced to keep a Windows machine around for the sole purpose of checking their corporate email. ■

http://www.novell.com/products/
connector/download.html

3D Experience

Ever thought, your file manager didn't display enough information? Ever had difficulty browsing through your files and lost your way? 3dFB is a 3D file manager that might change your view of directory and file structures.

You can activate mouse movement (press *w*), zoom in and out of directories (*q*, *a* and *z*), switch between normal and top-down views (press *v*) and toggle full

screen. The tab key allows you to rotate between views that show the names, sizes, etc. of your files. The functions for copying, moving and deleting files are implemented but switched off. The README explains, "I don't want to risk messing anything up just yet".

The latest version (0.5.6) is still beta status – several changes are planned for upcoming versions. For more information go to 3dFB's project site on Sourceforge.net. ■

http://sourceforge.net/projects/dz3d/

Linux, Beer and Hiking

The annual Linux Beer Hike (aka "LBW" aka "LinuxBierWanderung") will take place in the tiny village of Schin op Geul in the Netherlands from Monday 16th August to Sunday 22nd August. This will be the sixth LBW, with previous meetings having taken place in Germany (1999), England (2000), Belgium (2001), Ireland (2002) and Slovakia (2003). Both first timers and returnees are invited to to join the community to hack, hike and drink.

Schin op Geul is located in the south east corner of the Netherlands. The venue

is a classic timber 17th century Dutch barn, which has been converted into a sort of beerhall. The organisers are planning to set up a DSL-line so that people will be connected to the "real world". During the event geeks will not only spend time in front of their computers but also do some walking and go on day trips to the surrounding regions, with Belgium and Germany being close by.

For more information on accomodation, travel and how to register, go to the LBW website. ■

http://lbw2004.eu.org/

Free (as in beer) Xandros

Xandros has announced the release of an „Open Circulation Edition" of the Xandros Desktop Operating System.

Despite the „Open" in the name, this is still the proprietary Xandros distribution, it's just that they are encouraging users to download it for free and pass it around for non-commercial use.

Being Xandros, you get the „four-click install" (with automatic disk partitioning), automatic hardware detection and configuration. You also get various standard applications, such as the free office suite OpenOffice.org 1.1, several multimedia programs (without MP3 encoding license) and Opera Web browser and e-mail client (ad-sponsored version). CodeWeaver's CrossOver Office is not

included in this Open Circulation Edition. Users will have to upgrade to the Deluxe or Business editions to get this functionality.

Users will also be reminded that they're using a give-away version of Xandros by the fact that they have to live with cut-down versions of some programs. The CD burning speed in Xandros File Manager for example is limited to the minimum burning speed of your CD burner. To get the full featured program you have to either become a Premium subscriber to Xandros Networks or upgrade to the Standard, Deluxe or Business editions.

More information and download links can be found on Xandros' website. ■

http://www.xandros.com/