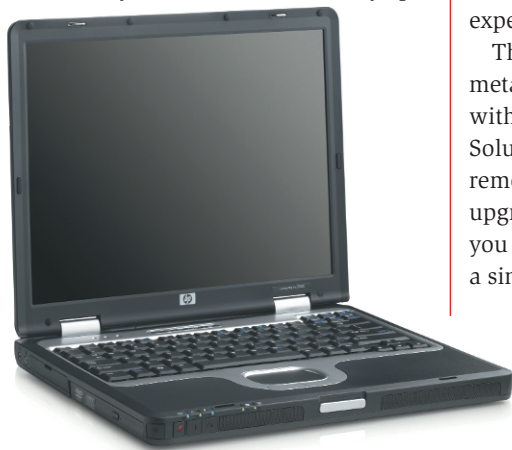


# Business News

## ■ Getting Linux with HP Compaq

HP announced what it calls "...the world's first pre-installed Linux notebook PC from a major hardware vendor." HP's Compaq nx5000 business notebook PC will come with Suse Linux, as well as wireless and Bluetooth connectivity, and HP support.

You'll also find OpenOffice, CD-R/RW support, DVD, and a media player. Of course, Linux notebooks have been around for years, but pre-installed Linux notebook systems have been mostly spe-



cialty systems. HP's announcement brings the Linux laptop a step closer to the high-volume consumer market. The nx5000 starts at US\$ 1,140.

HP has also unveiled a new Linux thin client system. The HP Compaq Thin Client t5515 is the first system in the t5000 series to offer Linux. HP envisions the t5515 for "call centers, medical environments, financial services, and other IT infrastructures where access to centralized applications in a desktop-like experience is required."

The t5515 features the 800-MHz Transmeta Crusoe processor. The t5515 comes with a free copy of Altiris Deployment Solution, a management package for remote deployment, management, and upgrading of HP thin clients. Altiris lets you manage all your client systems from a single interface.

The entry-level price for the t5515 is US\$ 349. ■

<http://www.hp.com/hpinfo/newsroom/press/2004/040803a.html>

## ■ Merging the Adopted

Novell unveiled a product at San Francisco's LinuxWorld Expo that will merge technologies from the recently acquired Suse Linux and Ximian Linux systems into a single product. The prototype is tentatively called Novell Linux Desktop. The new system is based on Suse's Linux Desktop but will include Ximian's version of Gnome, as well as custom features that will provide enhanced compatibility with Novell's Groupwise server software. This combination of Ximian, Suse, and Groupwise will form a formidable Linux product.

The powerful Novell Desktop Linux system will also include Mono, the open source version of the .NET framework, as well as RealNetwork's media player and Novell's iFolder tool for sharing and synchronizing files. Novell estimates a release date sometime this fall. ■

<http://www.novell.com>

## ■ An Opening in the Cloudscape

IBM announced that it will donate the embeddable Cloudscape Java database system to the Open source Community. Cloudscape, which joined the IBM portfolio with the 2001 purchase of Informix, will be released under an Open Source license and administered by the Apache foundation. The code will be donated under the Apache Software Foundation's corporate license grant.

The sudden arrival of a powerful and reliable Java database system could have a profound effect on the Open source landscape. Paul Rivot, Director of Database Servers and Intelligence for IBM, states, "It's the first, fully functional Java database in Open Source." The Open Source spin-off, which IBM is calling Derby, reportedly contains of more than 500,000 lines of code. ■

<http://www.ibm.com>

## ■ Dancing with the Sun

Sun Microsystems Chief Operating Officer, Jonathan Schwartz, stated in an interview with eWeek that Sun is considering making a move to buy Novell.



According to Schwartz, this strategy is based on the observation that, now that Red Hat is producing its own application server product (see the month's Software News), Red Hat is now competing directly with IBM for the server market. "What would happen if Sun decided to buy Novell? What would IBM do? If Red Hat is competing with them, they are left with only one choice: Novell Suse Linux. And no matter how small a portion of the market Suse represents, it runs on all of IBM's hardware. Sun could then end up as the owner of the operating system that runs IBM's mainframe. Wouldn't that be an interesting scenario?"

Of course, the real scenario is actually between Novell and IBM, and it is interesting whether or not Sun works its way to the middle. As you might guess, Mr. Schwartz didn't mention the other reason for such a deal, which is that many believe Solaris's days are numbered and Sun would be wise to find a reliable Linux distro with an integrated networking suite so they can stay in the operating system business.

Schwartz was asked whether IBM might try to outbid Sun on the Novell deal. "We have more cash on hand than IBM does," Schwartz said. "Novell is a public company, and public companies are always for sale, and its directors would have to be open to any such discussion should it ever happen." ■

<http://www.sun.com>

## ■ Safety in Linux

According to a survey by Evans Data, 92% of the respondents indicate that their Linux systems have never been infected with a virus. 78% said their systems had never been hacked. In a similar survey, 3 out of 5 non-Linux developers reported a security breach and 32% experienced three or more security breaches.

According to Nicholas Petreley, Evans Data's Linux analyst, "It's not surprising that Linux systems aren't hacked to the degree that Windows machines can be exploited. The reasons for the greater inherent security of the Linux OS are simple: more eyes on the code means that less slips by, and the OS is naturally going to be better secured."

The study also uncovered other interesting information on Linux trends. The rate at which Linux developers are moving to the 2.6 kernel has increased significantly in the past six months. The number of developers using the 2.6 kernel has risen by more than 80%, and only 12% of those who haven't switched expect the move to be more than a year away.

<http://www.evansdata.com/n2/index.shtml>

## ■ DaimlerChrysler scores on SCO

SCO's case against DaimlerChrysler began to unravel when the defendants brought several motions to dismiss the case and all but one of the motions were granted by Judge Rae Lee Chabot. SCO sued DaimlerChrysler in March, alleging that DaimlerChrysler failed to certify compliance with its contract to use Unix System V, for which SCO now holds the rights.



The court found that DaimlerChrysler did certify its compliance, and the only remaining issue is SCO's assertion that they didn't certify it fast enough, which probably won't lead to any monetary damages.

<http://www.linuxinsider.com/story/35285.html>

## ■ More on SCO

Apparently unconcerned by recent losses in court (see "DaimlerChrysler scores on SCO") and recent revelations by Evans Data that Linux users are becoming progressively less intimidated, SCO is hinting that they may be considering raising the "license" fee they will attempt to impose on anyone who uses Linux.

SCO's public relations director Blake Stowell told ZDNet UK, that SCO was evaluating its pricing scheme and that it was considering raising the stakes for companies who fail to seek indemnity. SCO currently offers to "let" users continue to use Linux for a cost of US\$ 199 (EUR 163) per workstation and US\$ 699 (EUR 572) for a server with a single CPU.

According to Stowell, "Companies who license now may be able to do so cheaper than if they do so later." But of course, it could certainly be cheaper still not to pay any license at all to the company – at least until SCO presents some real evidence to back up its claim that SCO's proprietary Unix code is present in Linux.

<http://news.zdnet.co.uk/business/legal/0,39020651,39162998,00.htm>

## ■ The Patent Game

The Public Patent Foundation conducted a study on behalf of Open Source Risk Management (OSRM) which determined that Linux could potentially infringe on 283 patents, including 27 patents held by Microsoft. According to Public Patent Foundation's executive director Dan Ravicher, the study examined Linux kernel versions 2.4 and 2.6.

283 potential patent infringement lawsuits may seem intimidating, however, the study notes that not all patent suits are successful – up to half of all patent suits in the U.S. result in the original patent being declared invalid. To make matters worse, software patents are more obscure and confusing than old-fashioned patents for mousetraps and washing machines. And Microsoft, with its seemingly limitless access to legal counsel, is reportedly shifting the odds still further with its goal of filing up to 3,000 new patents this year.

Stuart Cohen, chief executive officer of the Open Source Development Labs (OSDL) consortium, appears undaunted, stating, "As we said in the response to the SCO allegations, OSDL is prepared to work with the development community to remedy any offending code in Linux that infringes on the legitimate legal rights of others, and we extend that as well to any issues around patents."

IBM made the announcement at LinuxWorld that it will not enforce any patent rights it may have against technologies used in the Linux kernel. IBM VP Nick Donofrio drew applause, but perhaps the applause started before Mr. Donofrio finished the sentence – reportedly: "IBM has no intention of asserting its patent portfolio against the Linux kernel, unless of course we are forced to defend ourselves."

Before you get too worried about the 283 infringements, note that that OSRM,

who sponsored the study, is essentially an insurance company that plans to cash in on selling patent-lawsuit-protection policies and, presumably, has an interest in making the situation look dangerous.

Mr. Ravicher adds that American courts actually encourage companies to remain ignorant about the possible patent infringements their products cause. The law creates a situation where "If you have knowledge and are found to have infringed, a court can punish you. If you say you didn't know and didn't see it, a court can't punish you..."

The recent machinations regarding patent law perhaps explain why Albert Einstein, who worked in a patent office, embarked upon the Theory of Relativity as a mild form of recreation and therapeutic escape from the irresolvable quandaries he encountered at his day job.

<http://www.pubpat.org>