

Re: I've dumped Linux and moved to Windows XP.

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"Jim Backus" <jhb@nospam.co.uk> wrote in message
news:TpquPuPd0tCd-pn2-5NTjKYVbrMyH@localhost...

>

> *Where does one learn 'basic Windows internals'?*

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The old fashioned way, the way engineers have learned stuff since time
out of mind: hacking.

> *What are the 'right tools' and how much is one supposed to spend on*

> *them? Some are listed but what about the 'few other 3rd party tools'?*

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Depends on your needs.

> *What are the 'sound protocols' for loading and removing software?*

> *Presumably Windows own 'Add/Remove programmes' does not qualify?*

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Each application should be responsible for installing and removing
itself completely. Poorly written applications are not within MS's control.

The thing that everyone misses, even you with your fairly open-minded
perspective, is that 3rd party support is king. MS didn't "win" by use of
good marketing, they simply opened it up so that anyone could develop Win
apps at a time when everyone else kept their systems proprietary. This is
also why Macs were so stable: they only supported a limited set of hardware
and software, making it significantly easier on the OS to remain stable. A
Win PC not only has to support any and all possible hardware out there, with
drivers written by god knows who, as well as any and all possible software,
also written by god knows who, but it also must support the apps that were
poorly written for Win 3.1. It has to support the hardware designed to run
under DOS (Macs don't even have serial or parallel ports anymore, they have
gone completely USB and Firewire). It has to be 100% backward compatible
with all the antique technology you can think of, but also run efficiently
with the newest and coolest hardware and software. It also has to be
ironclad so that poorly written apps with memory leaks don't cause problems
for other apps. Frankly, that's an impossible task. All that support for old
software and hardware brings bloat, which causes inefficiencies, which leads
to other problems. Surely, as engineers, you understand that this works like

a bubble under plastic: you push down a problem in one area and it pops up in another. And they can't simply lay down a new sheet of plastic, because it would piss off all the people expecting the properties of the old sheet, and would be called a conspiracy by MS to hurt the little guy who depended on that support. And no, linux doesn't fulfill all of these requirements, otherwise everyone would be using it.

Your average user doesn't care a whit about the flexibility or power of the OS, all they care about are the apps they need to use. Do they work, are they interoperable, and is it easy to use? That's the bottom line, and linux fails on all 3 points. The apps people need don't run on linux for the most part, those that do aren't interoperable with the other apps (because they were written by people on different sides of the planet without standards in place), and it's complicated to use (for the average user) no matter how much you hear the linux-heads talk about similar-to-windows shells. So no matter how good linux becomes, until it addresses those 3 points, it will never gain any ground on the desktop, and Windows, no matter how bad it is, will continue to reign there. If you can do your job with linux and you are capable of maintaining it, more power to you, do it and be happy that you are in a position to utilize a "superior" operating system. Otherwise, your options are limited by the requirements of your job and your lack of technical expertise, not by some conspiracy by MS to control the world. Just look at Star Office. Here we have a replacement for MS Office that is *free*, and no one wants it. Do you know why? Because it isn't (easily) interoperable with MS Office. You can't *give away* a better replacement for Office if it doesn't fulfill the requirements I mentioned above (runs, is interoperable, and is easy to use). It's a reality of the market that linux fans just can't seem to grasp. They keep coming back with "but this one is *better*", to which the Win users say "not for what I need." And the linux people sit flabbergasted that anyone would intentionally use an inferior OS, while the Win people are busy getting their jobs done.

Personally, I use Windows because all of my clients and employers do, and interoperability is an absolute necessity. I do have a linux server in my house, but it goes largely unused except as a compatibility testing platform. My job is to give my clients what they are paying me for, and that involves using Windows, so at that point, there's no reason not to use Windows throughout the house (the wife and kids have Win boxes, I have a Win web server, etc.). It's not a matter of which is more powerful or flexible, it's a matter of which one serves my purpose better, and in my case Win wins.

ryanm