

## Re: Damm Small Linux

**Source:** <http://sci.tech-archive.net/Archive/sci.electronics.design/2004-11/7098.html>

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**Date:** 11/29/04

Date: Mon, 29 Nov 2004 08:58:40 GMT

Guy Macon wrote:

>

> *Joel Kolstad wrote:*

>>

>> *"Rich Grise" <rich@example.net> wrote...*

>>

>>> *You can still compile a kernel that'll fit on a couple of*

>>> *1.4MB floppies, if you don't want to load it all up*

>>> *with modules.*

>>

>> *Umm... that's still well over an order of magnitude more than QNX,*

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> *With QNX you can fit the entire OS with drivers for a wide variety*

> *of hardware, dialup and Ethernet support, a full-featured web*

> *browser, plus various other programs, all on ONE 1.44MB floppy.*

>

>> *Last I heard, some distributions of Linux still re-compile the Kernel during*

>> *installation -- something that should never be needed in a 'modern' OS.*

>

> *That's a deliberate design decision, based on the fact that a kernel*

> *that uses extra CPU features such as MMX or optimizes for the pipeline*

> *in some of the new CPUs runs faster. Other OSs either have to restrict*

> *the code to what runs on a 386 or have a bunch of different kernel*

> *versions for different systems.*

Concerning MMX, isn't that mainly to support sound and maybe partly extend some low-level video functions?

Then it is useless, as there are other processors that do far better (and faster) off-CPU chip – namely a Creative Labs-like sound chip or equivalent, and some very fancy video processors that make MMX functions look stone-age.

In fact, MMX was almost obsolete when it came out for those reasons.