

BYTES & PIECES

ELECTRONIC NEWSLETTER OF THE HOBART COMPUTER USERS GROUP INC.

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LINUX READY FOR THE DESKTOP?

Good enough says OSAF

Linux on the desktop is close to being a mass market option and could unseat MacOS as the second operating system of choice, according to a report by the Open Source Applications Foundation (OSAF). Projects such as KDE, Gnome, OpenOffice and Mozilla have been recognised as important milestones in the rebirth of the Linux desktop.

While it is generally conceded that much work remains to be done, the OSAF claims that desktop Linux is now "good enough" for significant classes of users. The report said that if the current interest by the public sector in open source persists, Linux could achieve a market share of as much as 10 per cent over the next four years.

The key remaining task now is to convince buyers to consider a Linux desktop on its merits. "Desktop Linux is no longer a technical challenge - it's a marketing challenge," said Bart Decrem, author of the report.

Although initial deployments of Linux on the desktop will focus largely on highly technical workers, students and transactional workers, the public sector - especially outside of the US - will also be a major driver of desktop Linux adoption.

Sizeable deployments, ranging for 14,000 government desktops in Munich to 80,000 PCs for students in Spain, are already underway, the report said. "Our clients are not asking us to replace all of their Windows desktops. They're asking us to help them figure out how they can reduce the number of Windows desktops," said Mitch Kapor, founder and chair of OSAF.

Linux is already in use by millions of people around the world, and is likely to find a home on tens of millions of desktops over the next few years, outpacing MacOS as the number two desktop operating system.

<http://nl2.vnunet.com/News/1142240>

Never going to make it, says Dvorak

On the other hand computer journalist John Dvorak argues that Linux and Mac are both destined for a slow lingering death. While he admits that Microsoft's recent changes to its marketing strategy, such as the activation system, have sent droves of people looking for cheaper alternatives, he believes that the lack of a killer application is what will ultimately seal the fate of Linux for the desktop.

The argument goes like this:

- The success of the Apple II was due to the development of Visi-Calcul for that machine;
- The success of the PC was due to the development of Lotus 1-2-3 for the PC; and
- The success, such as it is, of the Mac was due to the development of DTP applications for it.
- If you developed a killer application that only ran on Linux, you would have to so protect it with patents that no-one could clone it – a near impossibility given the nature of open source – otherwise Microsoft would quickly produce a Windows version nullifying the Linux advantage.
- The industry is driven by killer applications that tip a machine or operating system over the edge into the “must have” category.

Ergo, as no killer application can be produced for Linux that Microsoft cannot clone, Linux can never reach that tipping point and become dominant.

The above is a bit of an over-simplification of his argument which can be found at:

<http://www.pcmag.com/article2/0,4149,1191830,00.asp>

Works for me, says Peter Campbell

However, despite Dvorak's gloom, I am quite impressed with the improvements that Linux is now delivering. I can set up a machine more quickly and without having to load drivers separately. I can connect that machine readily to a network, without spending ten minutes watching XP's pretty graphics supposedly setting up the network.

The result is stable and the operating system and applications cost me a fraction of what an equivalent Microsoft system would. Consequently, I am gradually changing over to a Linux-based system.

The trouble is Dvorak is right when he implies that people don't buy operating systems, they buy applications, or, more correctly, what those applications can do. It will be interesting to see how it all turns out.

OUTLOOK 2003

Although she hasn't been well, Mandi Wilson has confirmed that she will join us on Tuesday night to demonstrate Outlook 2003. If you use Personal Information Management as well as email, you won't want to miss this update on the application that is widely used in business.

For those of you not familiar with Outlook, it is part of the popular Microsoft Office and handles email, contact lists, appointments and other personal information.

PROBLEMS NIGHT AND BRING 'N' BUY

August 12 and we are reviving an old favourite. Bring along your surplus hardware and software and turn it into cash, or swap it for something more useful to you. And bring your computer-related problems along so that we can try to solve them for you.

There will also be a short demo on how to find solutions on the Internet. This will include recognised sources and how to use search engines to find the drivers etc. that you need.

In addition, we will reveal a source that many of you don't appear to be aware of, or are afraid to use, but one which can be extremely helpful. Hint: It's all about **not** re-inventing the wheel.

BIG DISCOUNTS ON COMPATIBLE INK CARTRIDGES

Hewlett Packard	Black	DESKJET 810C/840C/845C/920C/948C OFFICEJET K60/PSC 500	\$49.95
Hewlett Packard	Tri Colour	DESKJET 840C	\$49.95
Hewlett Packard	Black	DESKJET 610C/615C/630C/640C/FAX 925XI	\$46.95
Hewlett Packard	Tri Colour	DESKJET 710C/720C/810C/815C/830C/880C/890C/895CXI/1120C/1125C OFFICEJET R45/R65/T45/T65 OFFICEJET PRO 1170C/1175C PSC 500	\$56.95
Hewlett Packard	Tri Colour	DESKJET 200/200CCI/320/340/400/420C/500C/540/550C/560C/505J/560J DESKWRITER C/CK/320/540/550C/560C	\$49.95
Hewlett Packard	Black	DESKJET 400/400I/420C/500/500C/500J/505C/505J/505K/510/520/ 540/550C/560C/560J DESKWRITER C/520/540/550C/560C DESIGNJET 200/220/600 OFFICEJET LX/LX 350/300/330/350/FAX 800/900/950	\$45.00
Hewlett Packard	Black	DESKJET 600/660C/670C/690C/692C/694C/695C/725 DESKWRITER 600/660C/694C OFFICEJET 590/630/635/710/725	\$45.00
Hewlett Packard	Black	DESKJET 710C/720C/722C/815C/820CXI/830C/850C/870CXI/880C/890C/ 895CXI/930C/950C/955C/970CXI/990CXI/1000CXI/1100C/1120C/1125C/ 1220C/1220CPS/1600C/1600CM DESIGNJET 700/750C/750C PLUS/755CM OFFICEJET G55/G85/G95/K60/K80/R45/R65/T45/T65 OFFICEJET PRO 1150C/1170C/1175C PHOTOSMART P1000/P1100/P1215/P1218/1000/1215/1218 COPIER 170/290	\$48.00
Hewlett Packard	Tri Colour	DESKJET 350CDI/600/610C/630/640C/660C/670C/690C/692C/694C/ 695C/695CCI DESKWRITER 600/660C/694C OFFICEJET 590/630/635/710/725	\$49.95
Hewlett Packard	Tri Colour	DESKJET 920C/930C/948C/950C/955C/960C/970CXI/990CXI/1220C/ 1220CPS/895CXI/1120C/1220CPS PHOTOSMART P1000/P1100/P1215/P1218 OFFICEJET G55/G85/G95/K60/K80/V40 COPIER 290 PSC 750	\$56.95

These *Speed* brand compatible ink cartridges represent good value at the recommended retail price, but Group members can get 15-20% off them, if they ring me on 6234 4691. All listed cartridges are subject to availability from a local wholesaler and prices are subject to change without notice. *Peach* brand are also available from another local wholesaler. Prices on application. Should you use substitute cartridges? Legally you are entitled to and, with reputable brands such as those available from local wholesalers, they are guaranteed not to damage your printer. If they do, the distributor of the substitute cartridges will repair the printer. That said, substitute ink colours may not be as long lasting as the printer manufacturer's own inks. For archival permanence, it is best to use the manufacturer's inks and papers. For all other uses, you can save money by using cheaper alternatives.

For Brand...	Ink Style	For Printer...	RRP Inc.GST
Canon	Black	BJC-4310SP/4650SP/5000/5500/2000SP	\$9.95
Canon	Tri Colour	BJC-4310SP/4650SP/5000/5500/2000SP	\$18.95
Canon	Black	BJC-6000/3000/6500	\$17.95
Canon	Cyan	BJC-6000/3000/6500	\$14.95
Canon	Magenta	BJC-6000/3000/6500	\$14.95
Canon	Yellow	BJC-6000/3000/6500	\$14.95
Epson	Tri Colour	STYLUS COLOR 400/600/800/850/850N/850Ne/1520/1520K	\$24.95
Epson	Black	STYLUS COLOR 400/500/600 PHOTO 700/710/EX/EX2/MJ-500/IP-100	\$15.95
Epson	Black	STYLUS COLOR 800/850/850N/850Ne/1520/1520K	\$18.95
Epson	Photo Colour	STYLUS PHOTO 700/710/EX/EX2/IP-100	\$29.95
Epson	Tri Colour	STYLUS COLOR 300	\$26.95
Epson	Black	STYLUS COLOR 440/460/640/660/670 PHOTO 720/750/1200/EX3	\$16.95
Epson	Black	STYLUS COLOR 740/740i/760/860/1160 SCAN 2000/2500/2500PRO	\$19.95
Epson	Tri Colour	STYLUS COLOR 440/460/640/660/670/740/740i/760/860/1160 SCAN 2000/2500/2500PRO	\$24.95
Epson	Photo Colour	STYLUS PHOTO 720/750/EX3	\$29.95
Epson	Photo Colour	STYLUS PHOTO 1200	\$32.95
Epson	Black	STYLUS COLOR 900/900G/900N/980/980N	\$19.95
Epson	Tri Colour	STYLUS COLOR 900/900G/900N/980/980N	\$29.95
Epson	Black	STYLUS PHOTO 780/785EPX/870/875DC/875DCS/890/895/ 1270/1280/1290	\$32.95
Epson	Photo Colour	STYLUS PHOTO 780/785EPX/790/870/875DC/875DCS/890/895	\$34.95
Epson	Photo Colour	STYLUS PHOTO 1270/1280/1290	\$36.95
Epson	Black	STYLUS COLOR 480/480SX/480SXU/580/C20/C20UX/C40/ C40UX/C40SX	\$16.95
Epson	Tri Colour	STYLUS COLOR 480/480SX/480SXU/580/C20/C20UX/ C40/C40UX/C40SX	\$24.95
Epson	Black	STYLUS PHOTO 2000P	\$39.95
Epson	Photo Colour	STYLUS PHOTO 2000P	\$45.95
Epson	Black	STYLUS COLOR 680/685/777/777i	\$36.95
Epson	Tri Colour	STYLUS COLOR 680/685/777/777i	\$36.95
Epson	Black	STYLUS COLOR 8-3/880/880i	\$19.95
Epson	Tri Colour	STYLUS COLOR 8-3/880/880i	\$24.95
Epson	Black	STYLUS PHOTO 810/820/830/C50	\$32.95
Epson	Photo Colour	STYLUS PHOTO 810/820/830	\$32.95
Epson	Black	STYLUS COLOR C60/C61	\$32.95
Epson	Tri Colour	STYLUS COLOR C50/C60/C61	\$34.95
Epson	Black	STYLUS COLOR C70/C80/C80WN	\$44.95
Epson	Cyan	STYLUS COLOR C70/C80/C80WN	\$21.95
Epson	Magenta	STYLUS COLOR C70/C80/C80WN	\$21.95
Epson	Yellow	STYLUS COLOR C70/C80/C80WN	\$21.95
Epson	Black	STYLUS COLOR C42UX	\$36.95
Epson	Tri Colour	STYLUS COLOR C42UX	\$39.95
Epson	Black	STYLUS COLOR C41SX/C41UX	\$19.95
Epson	Tri Colour	STYLUS COLOR C41SX/C41UX	\$28.95

KEYBOARD & MOUSE

An preliminary examination of the Group's finances indicates that we need to cut back on costs or increase revenue. Accordingly, the printing of *Keyboard & Mouse* has been suspended until the examination can be completed – hopefully at the special Committee meeting on Tuesday. *Bytes & Pieces*, our electronic newsletter, will continue to be published as time and other commitments allow.

OFFICE BEARERS NEEDED

Nominations for the positions of President, Vice President, Secretary and Committee Member are needed as the Campbells and the Huttons are stepping down from the Committee. Nomination forms were distributed with the July newsletter and need to reach the Secretary no later than 16 August 2003. However, if the proposed revised Rules of the Association are adopted it will not be necessary to fill the Committee Member position.

In the event that there are insufficient nominations to fill the vacant office bearer positions, nominations will be taken from the floor at the AGM. If there are still insufficient nominations, the meeting will be adjourned to a date to be fixed, while further nominations are sought.

If it not possible to fill these positions, two possibilities exist, neither of which are particularly desirable. The first is to try to amalgamate with the Launceston Computer Group and become a branch of that much more vigorous organisation. The second is to close down. The choice, as always, rests with you.

RULES OF THE ASSOCIATION

The draft revision of the Rules of the Association has been placed on the website as a PDF file. Please download it and read it through. Your feedback is important as we want to get this right and present the draft for approval at the Annual General Meeting. A limited number of printed copies will be made available at the meeting on Tuesday night.

Among the revisions are:

- Dating of the revisions for future reference;
- A tidying of the definitions of terminology used, including the interpretation of words that might otherwise be considered gender specific;
- Changed provisions relating to the size and appointment of the Committee;
- Insertion of all known amendments, such as that relating to the size of the Treasurer's and/or Secretary's petty cash float; and
- Clear provision for pro-rata charging of the membership fee where appropriate;

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“We installed little monitors because they make all of our problems look smaller.”