
Subject: Little late, but on a Linux system [was Re: It costs how much?!?!]

Posted by [Martin Schultz](#) on Mon, 18 Dec 2000 22:07:09 GMT

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Hi, I'm back. Still enjoying the memories of snow and sunshine a little west of the Boulder-FC axis ;-)

A few points that haven't been mentioned in the wargames between Linux, Windows, and this other OS with the apple ;-):

(1) Just assume it were the other way round, and Linux had a 90% market share (hard to achieve though, if you count 'em by \$\$ instead of ##). Which OS do you think all drivers for new, weird hardware would be written for first?

(2) [consequence] Instead of buying a new computer (and a laptop as such ;-)) you should have taken that offer from your neighbour to trade his old Pentium0.5 PC for a bunch of home grown tomatoes. Sure enough you wouldn't even notice the Linux installation so fast it would go! (well, of course you would have to adjust your watch a little, because a 486.5 is just not as fast as a 986)

(3) when I made my first Linux installation (Redhat 5.2) I was really lucky to be in a place where I could use other computers to access the Internet while I was doing this. You really are stuck if you get neither the network card nor the X server running!! Meanwhile, I find that a search on *deja* or *altavista*, usually brings up a solution thread within the first 50 answers or so --- *if* you know what to put in as search terms ;-)) Be creative and let the words flow! Disassemble your computer, take a magnifying glass and read off the chips. It's all written there! (Eh!? You can't read bar code?)

(4) If you are struggling with the Linux installation and the usage of Unix at the same time, you are almost in as bad a situation as trying to learn IDL and 3D object graphic's at the same time. The two have nothing to do with each other (except that you can use some knowledge of vi for both) but they can both be challenging. Get a system with pre-installed Linux and learn Unix first. (BTW: don't start with vi for IDL. Go emacs right away!)

(5) Once you managed to install Linux on a specific computer, you can be sure it will get easier from time to time when you want to upgrade it on the same computer. This appears to be the opposite of the Windows behaviour, where you need to upgrade at least the CPU and hard drive before you can dare upgrading the OS.

... and finally (has been mentioned in earlier threads on this topic)

...

If you Linux using students have so much free time on your hands, why don't you go ahead and write a software that is at least as good as IDL and more consistent? And free. I for one would of course request -the flexibility IDL offers in reading and writing data sets of almost

any format

- the ability to handle not only large but huge data sets
- fast and pretty graphics with practically unlimited labeling options
- powerful contouring routines which work together with all kinds of map projections and allow for irregularly gridded data
- objects
- widgets
- the ability to link with external C or FORTRAN code
- platform interoperability
- fast and helpful technical support service
- and a nicely designed coffee mug, of course ;-)

Looking forward to beta testing,

Cheers,
Martin

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