

PCLinuxOS MAGAZINE

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From the Desk of the Editor

I was delighted when our Chief Editor, Archie, offered me the Foreword page for this issue. For me, it is truly an honor to have the privilege.

Welcome to the second issue of PCLinuxOS Magazine. In this issue, we focus on children and Linux. There are articles by children, about children's distributions and an announcement about an exciting new project in the PCLinuxOS community: eduLOS, an educational client and server system based on PCLinuxOS.

Join us for a trip down memory lane (if you're old enough) as we remember early personal computers and look at how far we've journeyed in so few years. If you don't come from a time when there were no personal computers, you'd still enjoy seeing how we did it in the "olden days."

That said, I'd like to take a moment to express my thanks to all the editors, proofreaders, authors, graphics and layout people. Every one of you did an amazing job finding/soliciting articles, shaping them, polishing them, and just making this magazine something I am proud to be part of. No one person could do this; it takes a **TEAM**, in big, bold, capital, letters.

Our staff literally covers the globe, with people in half a dozen or more time zones, from various educational backgrounds, social influences, experiences and ethnic backgrounds. We are truly an international effort. And in spite of how diverse we are, we've achieved a common goal: a magazine we, as part of a greater community, can be proud of.

We all hope our readers enjoy the articles and will help spread the word about PCLinuxOS, and of course, Linux in general.

Thank you all, staff and readers alike, and see you next month.

Tim Robinson
Senior Editor

PCLinuxOS Magazine is a community project of MyPCLinuxOS.com to provide an additional means of communication to the PCLinuxOS community.

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Home on the Net:

<http://www.pclinuxos.com/forums/>
<http://www.mypclinuxos.com>

Announcement: PCLinuxOS 0.93a Released

Texstar announced on August 21, 2006 the availability for download or online ordering of **PCLinuxOS 0.93a Full Edition** aka **Big Daddy**.

The full edition comes with Kernel 2.6.16.27, KDE 3.5.3, Open Office, Firefox, Thunderbird and Nvu. Digikam, Gimp and Gqview for your digital photo needs. Amarok, Audacity and Audio Creator for your digital music needs. Frostwire, bittorrent and gftp for file transfers and p2p file sharing. Mplayer and Kaffeine for video viewing. (libdvcss2 required for dvd encrypted playback). Kopete and Xchat for online chatting. Blogging and podcast software also included. PCLinuxOS Big Daddy is the full monty!

PCLinuxOS 0.93a Big Daddy

PCLinuxOS 0.93a - Full Edition aka Big Daddy is now available. This is our full version of the PCLinuxOS Distribution.

Internet Suite

Internet, Email, instant messaging, and more! PCLinuxOS includes The Mozilla Firefox Web Browser and Thunderbird Email Client. Kopete Instant Messenger allows your to chat with friends on Yahoo, MSN and AIM.

Complete Open Office Suite

PCLinuxOS comes with a complete Open Office suite for word processing, spreadsheets, drawings and slide presentations.

Digital Photos

Digikam is a pre-installed photo management program that allows you to download, organize, edit, and share your entire photo collection. Easily connect your digital camera to your computer and import all of your pictures with a few mouse-clicks. In addition to Digikam, PCLinuxOS also includes the powerful GIMP image editor.

Digital Music

Manage your favorite tunes with Amarok, an all-in-one music player built into PCLinuxOS. Burn and rip your favorite music with Audio Creator. Fileshare through Frostwire.

Web Publishing Tools

PCLinuxOS includes Nvu, a powerful, easy-to-use web design program that is open-source. Anyone can create web pages now, even those with no technical expertise or knowledge of HTML.

PCLinuxOS allows you to try it in Live mode without touching your current system. If you like PCLinuxOS you can easily install it to your computer using the easy to use Installation program. After installing PCLinuxOS to your computer, you can access an additional 5000 programs and libraries from our free software repository.

If you are tired of Windows constantly crashing all the time, the blue screens of death, the nasty viruses/trojans, constant pop-ups, and sluggish performance then PCLinuxOS is for you.

Switch to PCLinuxOS today!!!

The current list of programs on the Full Edition of PCLinuxOS 0.93a can be found at <http://www.pclinuxos.com//page.php?131>.

Read about PCLinuxOS 0.93a Junior on page 32.

My Linux Experience

"It only took about 15 minutes to decide that PCLinuxOS was what I wanted on my computer. I was very surprised at how easy it was. It took about 20 minutes and I had an awesome new distro to use."

by Danielle N. Pruey

Hello, everyone. My name is Dani and I am 12 years old. My grandfather (Papa), has asked me to tell about my experiences using Linux. Let me start by saying that he has always told me that I could hose a Windows computer faster than anyone he has ever known. I am sure that this fact helped drive him to find something that I can't hose in a matter of days. Being the youngest person in the house has always left me with the oldest and slowest computer. The first version of Linux I used was one called Puppy. I liked Puppy because it was very fast and the theme was cute. My only problem with Puppy was that it did not have some apps that I now use on a daily basis like Limewire (I now use Frostwire), games, a music manager (Rhythmbox, Kaffeine, etc.), and Firefox did not seem the same as on the other computers in the house. So this caused my Papa to install several

distros, one after another, always looking for one that would make me happy: DSL, Goodgoat, Beatrix, Slax, VLOS, Vector, and several others that I cannot remember now.

There was something I liked about every one of them but there was always something that was not quite right, or I would manage to get things so messed up that even Papa could not fix it. Then, after about three months of this, he upgraded my computer so that he could install Simply Mepis. This was a very nice distro, and it had everything that I liked. I really liked the KDE desktop. I love to change the way things look and this desktop let me do just about anything I wanted. While using Simply Mepis I tried many different apps. Papa always says "It's all about choice," so he showed me how to use kpackage to find new apps and to remove the ones I did not like. I

finally ended up using Firefox, Thunderbird, Rhythmbox, Limewire, Open Office (for school), and Gaim for chatting. I really like the way Gaim puts my AIM, Yahoo, etc., all into one screen. I also enjoy the games, most of all khearts, ksnakerace and kmines. We all used Simply Mepis for about a year and then Papa asked if I would like to try a different distro. This was my first time using a LiveCD and I think it is a great idea. I tried PCLinuxOS .92 and really liked it. It still had KDE but it seemed faster and everything seemed easier and to make more sense (at least to me). I liked the default blue and everything I was used to was already there except Open Office which was just a couple of clicks away. This is also where I switched from using kpackage to Synaptic.

It only took about 15 minutes to decide that PCLinuxOS was what I wanted on my computer. Papa said, "Good, now you can install it," and he then



Dani at home running PCLinuxOS

walked me through installing it. I was very surprised at how easy it was. It took about 20 minutes, and I had an awesome new distro to use. I think PCLinuxOS is the easiest OS that I have ever used. I recently upgraded to .93 and was again surprised by how much faster it was than .92. Having used PCLinuxOS for several months now I have changed several of the apps I use on a regular day. Instead of Firefox I use Flock. Amarok has replaced Rhythmbox and Kopete has replaced Gaim. All of my friends who come over use my computer and they want to know what kind of Windows I use and I just smile and say "I don't, I use PCLinuxOS!"

EduLOS: Yet another edu-Linux version?

We also have a philosophy behind our development: we believe that ICT should facilitate learning rather than being subject to study. With this version, we want to help children learn smarter rather than study harder.

by Patrick De Ridder, Education Consultant and Trainer

eduLinux,-eduKnoppix, Edubuntu ... already there are so many educational versions. **Is there a need for another one?**

I believe there is. Most educational versions call themselves **edu** because they add *GCompris* and/or *kdeedu*, add a nice wallpaper and a lot of games. This edu version promises to do more. First of all it will be a two-part distro: one geared towards schools for the easy setup and maintenance of school servers and the other a live distribution that can be given to students and educators for home use, and used for classroom and lab PCs.

We also have a philosophy behind our development: we believe that **Introduction to Computer Technology (ICT)** should facilitate learning rather than being just another subject to study. With this version we want to help children learn smarter rather than study harder. Instead of relying on mugging up solo, we want to facilitate collaboration and enable the children to do more using software; to be creative.

We believe the time of handwritten essays is over: this is a new century with new forms of learning. Nowadays children learn through gaming; through

images and animations; through experimentation; through working together; rather than *ex cathedra* where the teacher is the fountain of wisdom and the child is an empty receptacle. Let children learn to use software like we do: by using it on a daily basis

- to organize ourselves, and to keep in contact with people all over the world at the press of a button.

Here in India, children have to study Java and C, which is not bad, but I ask myself questions when I see them typing using only two fingers. Isn't there something wrong with that picture? Didn't we miss something fundamental? When I ask children how they study, they tell me it's simple: they take their books and they study. Nobody told them how to take notes; most of them never heard of flashcards or mind maps.

Oh, they all have computers and they all have playstation thumbs, but they have no clue that flashcard software, mindmappers or even calendars may help them learn, let alone where to get them. This eduversion hopes to change that. There will be no need to look for that software; we'll include it and add

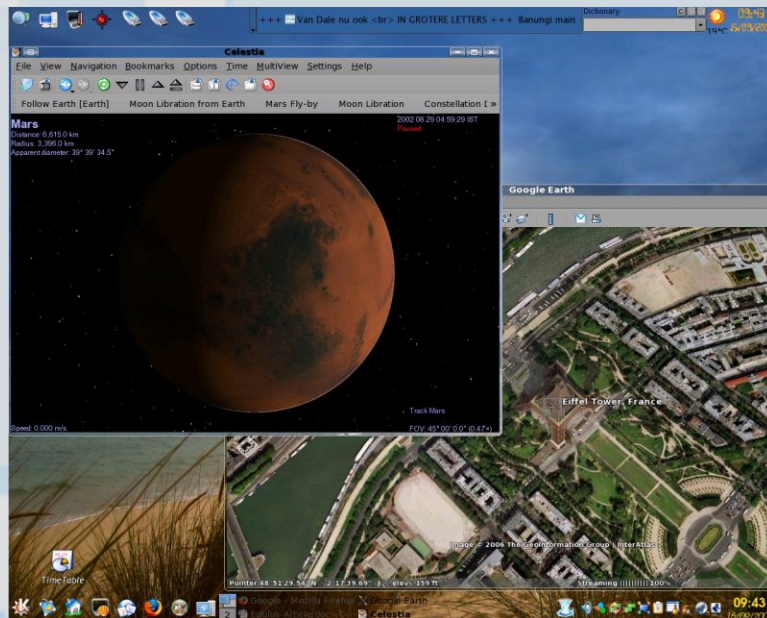
some nice interactive and/or animated tutorials so they can learn how to use the software we provide.

Okay, you have been talking about how students can use this distro but you also mentioned a server

version, can you elaborate on that? Sure, we know that PCLOS is actually geared towards desktop use, but it is also a rock solid distro and can be used to run servers as well. We want to give schools a total package, with easy installation scripts allowing the ICT staff to set up mail servers, file servers, web servers, online classrooms, groupware and home access. By providing the same base for the desktop version and the server version, we are hoping to help the already overworked administrators to learn **one** new system

so we can wean them away from the closed source they are using now.

We're now working on a tight integration between Joomla, Moodle and Openbiblio. One of my pet projects is the integration of the library program and the website. We want to enable the learners to add comments, reviews and ratings to the books they read, something like Amazon. This will help other children to make an informed choice: they won't have to judge a book by its title or cover anymore.



Another important part is **ease of administration**. Scripts and secure remote access will allow the school network or sysadmin the same usability of active directory. This easy part is our trump card to encourage schools to migrate and embrace open source. Here in India the free, as in no cost, is not an argument that works with most school administrators. *International* software is available for 20 Rupees. A DVD with all Windows Server editions, Exchange, etc is available for 50 Rupees. And when they get caught they have a *contingency fund*.

Moreover, most school administrators think they have to use Windows or believe that Linux is not an alternative (the console and text only view) for desktop use. Most ICT courses are tailored around Word, Excel, Access and VB. We want to show them that all this is possible on Linux, and more. We want to show them that Linux can be radically simple. And all that runs from a live CD or DVD.

What about the desktop version; what do you plan to include?

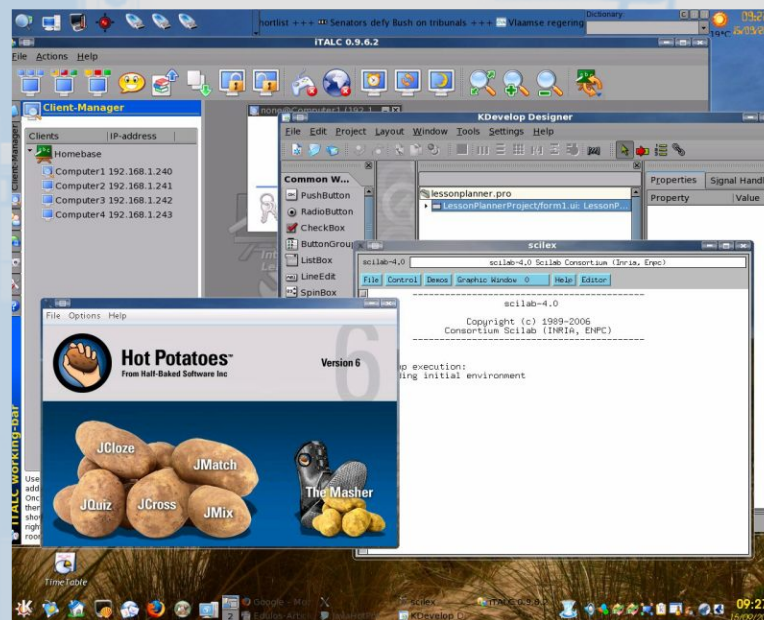
We want to include something for every main subject so that ICT can indeed facilitate learning. We will even include a sports tracker for the PT teacher.

How many educational distro's include planning

and productivity software?

Isn't that what you in your business use most, and wouldn't it therefore be a good idea to let learners become proficient in it as soon as possible? So many children don't even use a calendar for their time management; no wonder, then, that their minds become clogged and bogged down with all the little details they have to remember. Show them how to use Kontact and Planner. What about mindmapping software? Doesn't that facilitate learning as well as a flashcard program? And why not include Google Earth and Celestia instead of the boring map of the world in the classroom?

Or why stop at a music and video player, shouldn't we also give them the chance to experiment with making their own music and editing their own videos? So let's include LLMS or



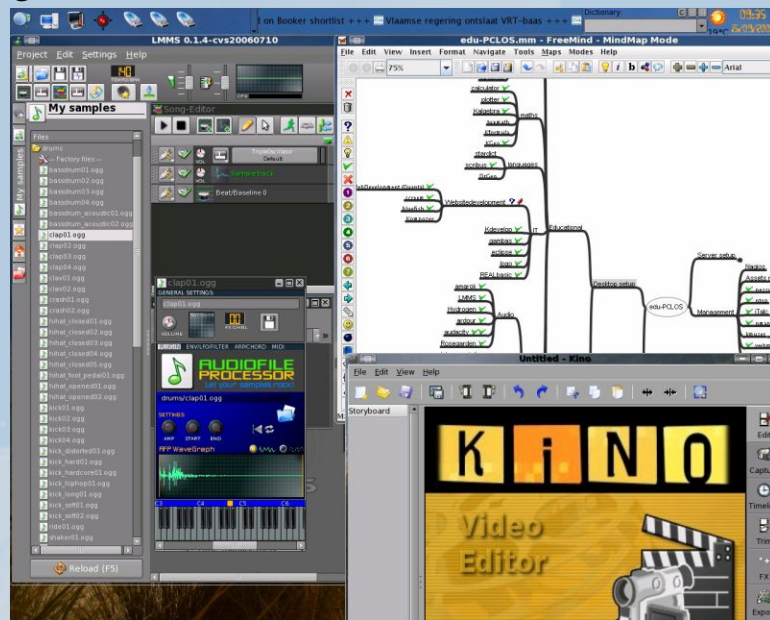
Rosegarden and Cinerella or Kino. For the arts department, we added Tuxpaint, Blender, Gimp and Inkscape. And then, because learning computer languages is made compulsory here in India, we have

included not only Logo (KTurtle) and RealBasic but also full development environments, Kdevelop and Gambas as well. And to show off all their work we included Scribus so they can write and publish their own newsletters.

We will also have 3 different user profiles pre-installed: primary, secondary and educator. They will each come with their own theme, style and menu geared towards that age group.

So the school has its servers, the students their desktop, any goodies for the educators?

Education would be nothing without *teachers* - a dedicated and overworked lot. Not only do they need to teach but also prepare tests, grade, create exercises, lesson plans and progress reports. And they also need to update their knowledge. For them, we are working on software that allows for easy creation of lesson plans and progress reports. We'll also include a version of Exe(SCORM) and Hotpotatoes so they can easily create new material and exercises and upload them to the Moodle classroom. We added Wink so the



computer teacher can easily create interactive tutorials and iTalc to monitor and interact with a complete computer lab in realtime.

On the server the teachers will have access to groupware for sharing info and files, even at home. A module will allow them to stay in contact with the parents as well and facilitate report writing, not just grading. We are currently testing some school management systems to make it possible to also integrate administration and payment of fees.

What about safety?

That, for us is a major concern. One of the reasons we decided to add a mail server to the server version is to allow schools to run heavy spam filters and have control over what is allowed and what is not. Which provider runs a content filter that checks for bad Hindi or Slovenian or Bangla words? Even at home the children should be behind a safe connection. A firewall and virus scanner does not keep all baddies out, so the desktop version will come with an ad-blocker and Dansguardian for content filtering. Kiosk will also ensure that the children have only restricted (or no access) to certain functions like the consoles and configuration options.

Create Your Own Web Site

by Rodney A. Adkins

To start building a web site you will need a browser (preferably Firefox) and a text editor. *Under no circumstances would I use a WYSIWYG (What-You-See-Is-What-You-Get) editor.* To create a web page, you need to know the basics of HTML. If you've learn the basics and your page renders wrong or gets errors, you will be able to find the problem.

HTML is short for **Hyper Text Markup Language**. It is a broad language and is used by all sorts of Internet browsers. HTML document is essentially an **ASCII** (American Standard Code for Information Interchange, and pronounced *as-key*) text and specialized codes to represent the formatting of documents and links to resources which it can connect to.

WWW or **W3** stands for the **World Wide Web**. The W3 project was started by the European Laboratory for Particle Physics (CERN) in Geneva, Switzerland. In 1989, they proposed the project to carry research information and ideas efficiently throughout the organization. This was very important to CERN as their members were spread throughout the world.

The project first proposed to use a simple network system to carry hypertext documents to its members. By the end of 1990, web software was demonstrated on a computer. This software allowed users to edit hypertext documents and to transmit to other members on the network.

By 1992, CERN began promoting the idea outside of its own organization. CERN released the source code

for W3 servers and browsers. The release of the code and ongoing development in technology and file formats has brought the Internet to the point it is today.

How does a user get information from the Web?

W3 is designed as a client/server architecture. The client (a web browser) requests information from the web server. The server responds to this request by sending the information. The server is responsible for storing the document and the web browser is responsible for displaying it.

Browsers and platforms must be taken into consideration when designing a web page. Page rendering will be affected by the different browsers, different versions within the browser, different computer monitors, video resolutions, and computer platform. Most of these problems can be overcome by viewing the Web page with different browsers, resolutions and if you can on a different platforms.

CSS stands for **Cascading Style Sheets**. CSS is a simple mechanism for adding style (e.g. fonts, colors, spacing) to web documents.

Your first web page will require some content. Decide what you want to put into the Web page or follow what I am going to use. I want my content to look like this:

```
Welcome to Jerry-Lee's Web Site
I am a twelve year old German Shepard
that does not bark. I have big brown
eyes and really know how to beg. I have
a good life, sleep on the sofa in the
play room. Have lots to eat and I am
happy. It really is a dogs life!
I know you will come back soon
Jerry-Lee.
```

For this project, we will use the editor **KEdit** (available through Synaptic).

There are several tags that are absolutely necessary for an HTML page to work correctly. These tags are the foundation of an HTML page. Also remember that every tag has an open and a closing tag. Do not put code in capital letters. All codes are spelled with American spelling. The document will also need a document type, we will use the following doctype: `<!DOCTYPE HTML PUBLIC "-//W3C//DTD HTML 4.01 Transitional//EN">`. The tags that we are going to use are `<html> </html>`, `<head></head>`, `<title></title>` and `<body></body>`. Remember closing tags always have a slash (/). Once coded on the page it will look like below:

```
<!DOCTYPE HTML PUBLIC "-//W3C//DTD HTML
4.01 Transitional//EN">
<html>
```

```
<head>
<title>Jerry-Lee The Dog</title>
</head>
<body>

</body>
</html>
```

Save the page in KEdit by clicking **Save As** a window will open, in the **Location** type **myweb.html**. Change **Filter** to **All Files**.

As you can see in the above code, all tags have open and close tags. The next step is to add some content to the page. We add these between the <body></body> tags. It will look something like:

```
<!DOCTYPE HTML PUBLIC "-//W3C//DTD HTML
4.01 Transitional//EN">
<html>
<head>
<title>Jerry-Lee The Dog</title>
</head>
<body>
Welcome to Jerry-Lee's Web Site
I am a twelve year old German Shepard
that does not bark. I have big brown
eyes and really know how to beg. I have
a good life, sleep on the sofa in the
play room. Have lots to eat and I am
happy. It really is a dogs life!
```

```
I know you will come back soon
Jerry-Lee.
</body>
</html>
```

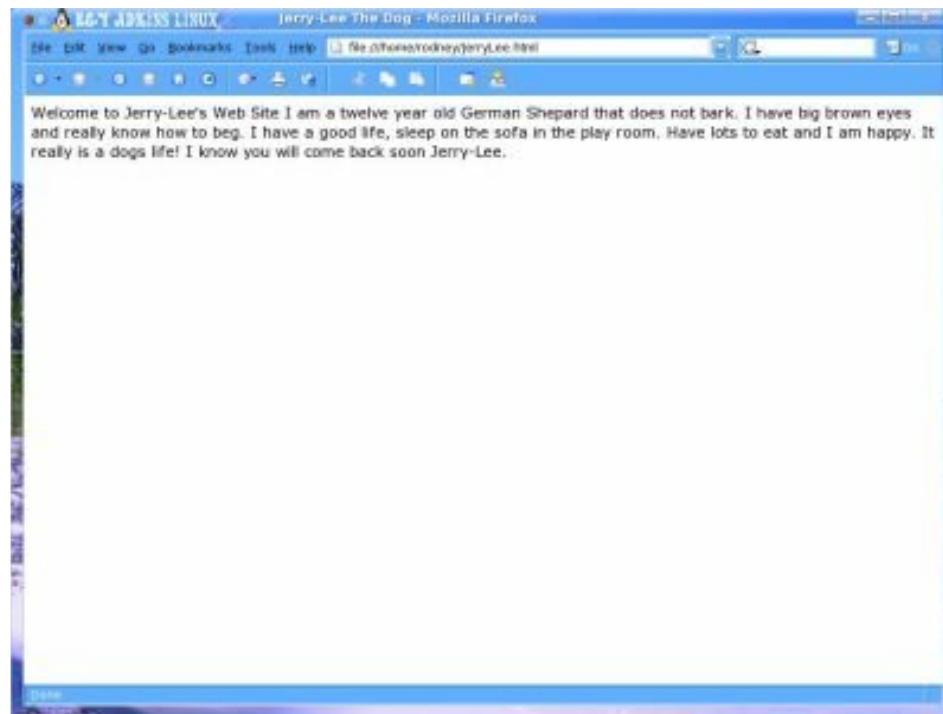


Fig. 1

The content is on the page; let us take a look at it on Firefox shown on Fig. 1.

As you can see, the text shows up but there is no formatting to the text. The next step in the process is to add some formatting For the demonstration we will

use a heading tag <h2>, The heading tag has different sizes from <h1> to <h5>; a paragraph tag <p>; we will also use a line break tag
.

```
<!DOCTYPE HTML PUBLIC "-//W3C//DTD HTML
4.01 Transitional//EN">
<html>
<head>
<title>Jerry-Lee The Dog</title>
</head>
<body>
<h2>Welcome to Jerry-Lee's Web Site</h2>
<p>I am a twelve year old German Shepard
that does not bark. I have big brown
eyes and really know how to beg. <br>
I have a good life, sleep on the sofa in
the play room. Have lots to eat and I am
happy. It really is a dogs life!<br>
I know you will come back soon </p>
<p>Jerry-Lee. </p>
</body>
</html>
```

Now when the page is viewed in Firefox you will see that it is laid out in the manner that we chose as shown on Fig. 2. This is the beginning of a very basic web page.

Now that the page is basically formatted, it is time to add a picture, The tags we will use are as follows: , align, hspace, vspace and border.

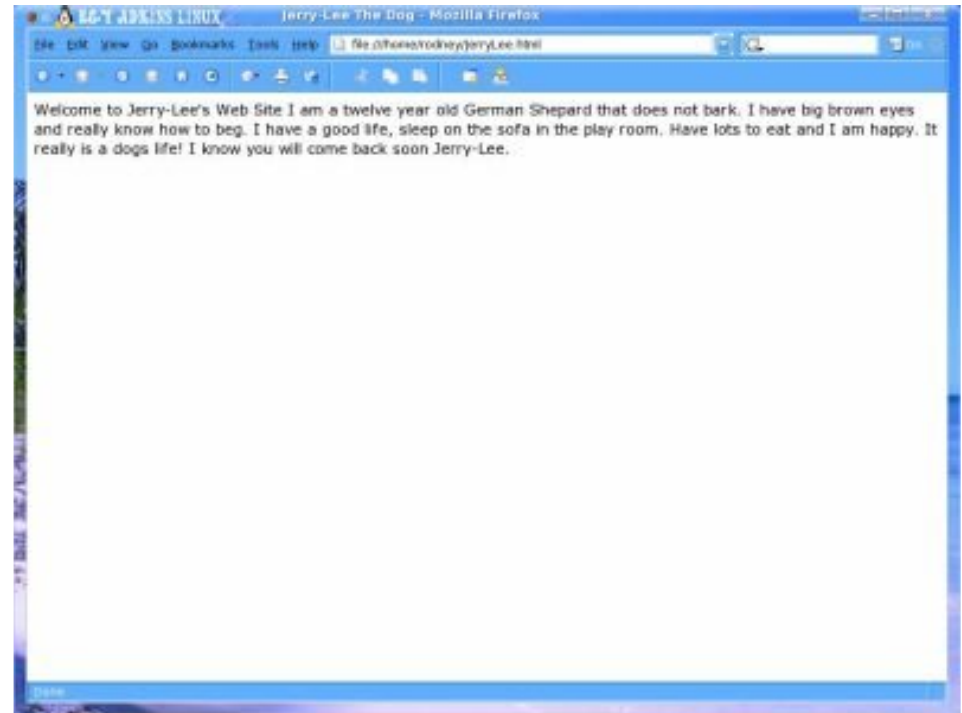


Fig. 2

The tag allows us to add a picture to the document, align tells the document where to put the picture, hspace and vspace tells the browser how far to place text away from the picture. The alt tag describes the picture for people with graphics turned off in the browser. The border tells how large to make the border around the picture. You should always include height and width as well as the alt tag.

```
<!DOCTYPE HTML PUBLIC "-//W3C//DTD HTML
4.01 Transitional//EN">
<html>
```

```

<head>
<title>Jerry-Lee The Dog</title>
</head>
<body>
<h2>Welcome to Jerry-Lee's Web
Site</h2><br>
<p>
I am a twelve year old German Shepard
that does not bark. I have big brown
eyes and really know how to beg. <br>
I have a good life, sleep on the sofa in
the play room. Have lots to eat and I am
happy. It really is a dogs life!<br>
I know you will come back soon </p>
<p>Jerry-Lee. </p>
</body>
</html>

```

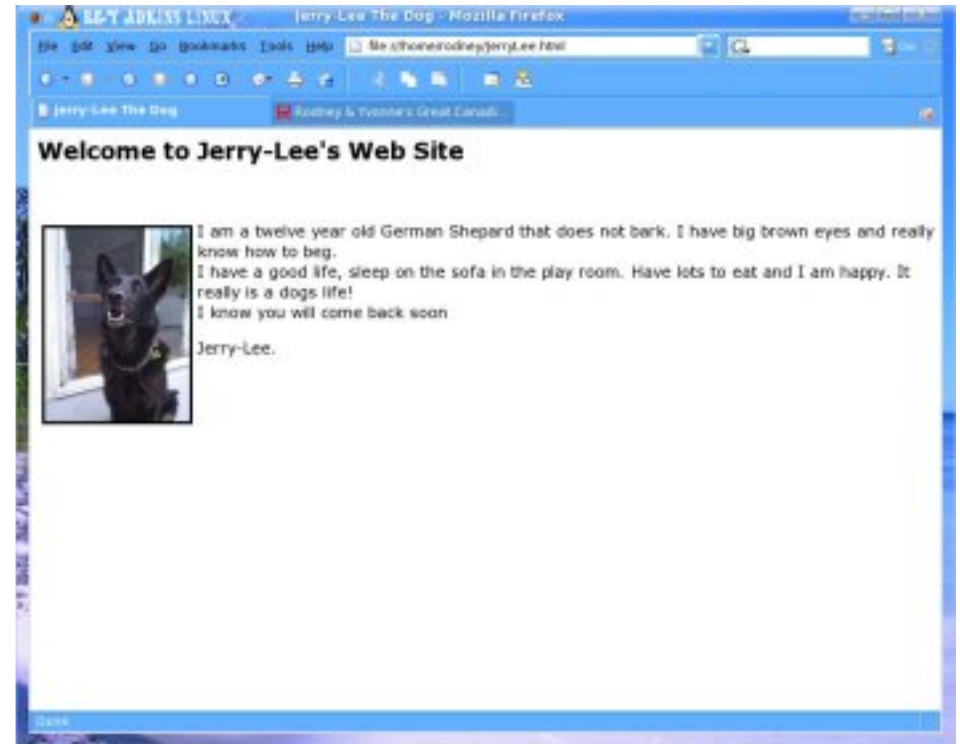


Fig. 3

Fig. 3 (on the right) of Firefox and the web page shows the basic web page as we have coded it.

This is a very basic start to a web page. Each month we will add more codes and get even more complex. The purpose of this column is to give the reader a thorough understanding of HTML and in the end, the knowledge to code a page with a combination of HTML and Cascading Style Sheets.

About the author:

Rodney became interested in Web Design back in 1997. He attended University at night and took courses in basic and advanced HTML. He also completed a course in Javascript. He volunteers and gets great satisfaction from one-on-one teaching computers to pensioners.



I Love Old Computers

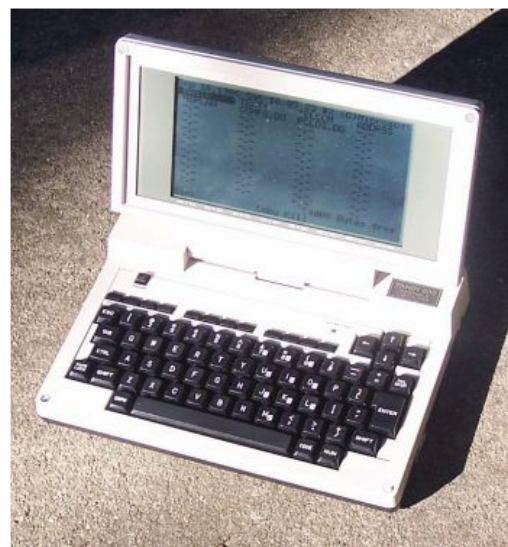
by KDulcimer

I love my old computers. Honestly, there's nothing like holding a laptop on your lap that does what you want it to. I mean, come on. What is the number one frustration people have with computers? The stupid things don't do what they're told. *Why computers are stupid things* may be my next article for the PCLinuxOS Magazine. Maybe the one after. But I digress.

The laptops I have in mind are the ones lovingly known as **Model T** laptops. They are the **TRS-80 Model 100**, **Tandy 102**, and **Tandy 200**.

I have come up with lists in the past as to why I love these old computers. None of those lists have made publication before, so I'll put up a few points here. I have more information on my website, including a manual for complete imbeciles at <http://kdulcimer.googlepages.com/oldlaptops>.

The home for the M100 is a very good place to learn



Tandy 200

more about the M100, get some programs, or upload programs that you've written for the M100: <http://www.club100.org>.

Now for the list.

These computers run on AA batteries. Yes, you read that right.

They use double-A cells. No, keep reading; these aren't some cheap 50 cent toys. Not only do they use AA batteries, I have received as much as 35 hours of running time on a single charge of NiMH (Nickel-Metal Hydride) batteries. On regular alkalines, 16-20 hours is to be expected. With the best new laptop you might get eight hours. Eight hours of what? Typing? And if your laptop battery goes dead, can you pop into a store

and buy four replacement AA batteries like the 100?

Not only does it run for a long time on cheap batteries, when you run out of those, you can just plug in a barrel adapter (6 volts, tip negative) and keep typing.

What's more, **this computer has been run as a webserver for humanclock.com.**

How cool is that?

It's durable. There's no hard drive to destroy. Somebody once said that the Model 100 is as fragile as a bowling ball. I heard a story that one guy accidentally dropped his computer onto concrete from 30 feet in the air. It still worked fine. The screen was cracked, but the rest of it was no different. Presently you can buy a new screen for \$20. Try that with a brand-spanking new Alienware or Dell.

I have also done the *flying laptop* demonstration for others, which is quite impressive.

It's very simple and easy. It's more intuitive than Windows (Which means it's a whole lot better than MS-DOS.), the Mac, or any Linux distribution out there. Trust me.

Okay, so BASIC isn't very simple or easy for the person new to computers, but you won't need to know

much BASIC at all to use the 100. The rest of the computer couldn't be simpler as computers go.

However, if you're curious about programming, BASIC is a very easy language to learn.

It makes today's smallest laptop seem cumbersome by comparison. It's smaller and weighs less. It's more like an oversize PDA. But unlike either a PDA or laptop, you don't have to worry that much about dropping it because it doesn't get its feelings hurt easily that way.

Battery life. You get 16-20 hours on alkaline and 32+ hours out of 2300 mAh Nickel-Metal hydride rechargeable batteries.

You can type just as fast with this computer as with any other. There's some slowdown experienced once free memory drops below about 8 kilobytes, but I can usually find some file to remove or compress with TS-DOS and speed things back up.

It's too ugly to steal. Even if somebody did steal it, the monetary loss on the computer would be small and it's easily enough replaced from eBay.

It's hard to tick it off. There's no blue screen of death. Because it's simpler, fewer things will make it mad at you and stop responding. Kinda like moving from

Windows to PCLinuxOS. Even when it does a *cold boot*, there's a quite easy method to retrieving data.

It won't burn your lap. It doesn't get one little bit hot unlike a laptop PC with a 2Ghz processor. If you need a lap warmer, use a blanket.

Full-size keyboard. You won't get that in a PDA without shelling out too much or more.

Easy to read display. It's not lit, but you can buy a little book-reading lights that should do fine. I have one that hangs on a cord on my neck and it works fine.

You never have to think about saving a document. If the document's on screen, it's saved! In a modern word processor, you're not working on the actual document when you're typing it up. You're working on a copy. Then, if you have good habits, every once in a while you hit Ctrl+S, saving the copy to the original. However, on the M100, you aren't working on a copy, you're working on the original.

It's a go-anywhere machine. Combine the battery



TRS-80 Model 100

life, durability, small size, low weight, full keyboard, and why shouldn't you be able to sit out in the woods all day and type? Now most people won't need to do this, but for a college student it makes a lot of sense to have a laptop for which you don't have to worry much about your battery life.

In the Spring 2006 semester, I used my M100 and T200 in History. I can't write by hand very fast, but I can type at about 40 words a minute on the Dvorak layout. So every class I pulled out my M100 or T200, turned it on, and started typing. I had a couple of my classmates comment on how neat they found it.

Low cost. Anybody paying \$200 for one of these is out of their mind, even if it has every doodad. (A Model 102 with a Tandy Portable Disk Drive 2 [extremely rare] on eBay recently went for over \$105.) Why buy a \$600 new PC laptop if all you're going to use it for is typing? Save your money- buy a PC desktop for \$400 and transfer your stuff. An M100 on eBay will probably cost you less than \$40 with shipping. A T102 will be less than \$30 before shipping, and a Tandy 200 about \$50 before shipping.

And I've saved the best for last. This is probably my favorite feature:

Instant on. With other computers you have to wait a while before you can work. Not so with the 100! You flip the switch and go to work. No waiting.

So you can see why I've fallen in love with my M100 and T200. Why should I mess around booting up a modern laptop when I can just open my T200, hit the power button, and go right to work?

Give the Model Ts a try; you'll fall in love with them too!

PCLinuxOS MiniMe 0.93a

PCLinuxOS MiniMe 0.93a is the minimal version of our Live CD for those who just want a basic desktop without the bloat allowing for full user customization. Simply put the CD into your CD or DVD drive and run it in live mode without ever touching anything on your computer. In addition to the Live CD mode you can also save your changes to a usb key disk.

PCLinuxOS MiniMe can be installed to your computer by simply clicking on the install icon on the desktop and using the easy to follow instructions provided you like PCLinuxOS and it runs well on your computer.

After hard drive installation, you can access over 5000 programs to fully customize your desktop the way **YOU** want.

PCLinuxOS MiniMe comes with the latest 2.6.16.27 kernel, a basic KDE 3.5.3 desktop, CD Installer, Synaptic Software Manager and Control Center.

Announcement

EduLOS is a PCLOS community project which will create a customized PCLinuxOS distribution focused on classroom use.

According to Patred, the project lead of EduLOS, the LiveCD/DVD will include two parts - the desktop and the server.

The project is in need of volunteers "with experiences in script writing (mostly PHP) and database knowledge (most likely MySQL and PostgreSQL)." eduPCLOS also needs designers with skills to give "the look and feel" of the desktop and server.

For more information, please visit <http://www.mypclinuxos.com/forumdisplay.php?fid=34>, and help in any ways that you can.

You can also send the project lead an email addressed to [edupclos at gmail dot com](mailto:edupclos@gmail.com).

Our children are the future. Let's bring them up to the spirit of PCLinuxOS. Let's give them freedom.

Good and Bad Computer Practise

by jaydot

Develop good computer discipline and your system will stay up indefinitely. Adopt bad computer practise and your system is in danger of falling apart at the seams.

Good Practise - Login to a user account. There is rarely a need to login to root. On the rare occasion that there is, before you login, be sure that you have removed the Ethernet cable so that the machine is isolated from outside.

Bad Practise - Many people are under the impression that they are safe to go on line logged into root if they have booted a LiveCD. Not so. The LiveCD gives you access to the hard drive. If you have access, so too does the hacker and by being in root you give the hacker access to your entire network. You may argue that you have only one machine and that it is virgin

territory, so what does it matter?

Virus, Trojan, worm, root-kit: heard of these?

When you go on line logged into root, a hacker can leave one of these presents on your hard drive, and you would never know it. You could install your shiny new PCLOS release, set it all up just how you like it and one day, phut! Your system may not boot, perhaps the hard drive is inaccessible and you cannot login. So many horrible things can happen. Perhaps the worst of these is a hacker hi-jacking your system and using any personal information they can find in myriad nefarious ways.

When you login to root and go online, you give your machine away.

My Journey Into Linux

"... have been more with the use of applications than trying different distros, I firmly believe that PCLinuxOS is the most user friendly and stable distro I have used."

by Kathleen R. LeBlanc

I am almost 16 years old, and my journey into Linux began when my grandfather (Papa) bought a book called "Knoppix Hacks" and it came with Knoppix 3.6 on a "LiveCD". We had been using some Open Source software for awhile like Firefox and Thunderbird and I really liked them.

After booting the LiveCD, I was first impressed with the theme (a silver pocket knife opened on a black background) and the icon set. I explored the menus and soon realized that everything I used on Windows had an equivalent application and in some cases the same application (ex. Limewire).

A few days of playing later and Papa walked me through installing Knoppix next to my Windows, what he called a "dual boot." Over the course of the next couple of weeks I found that I booted into Windows

less and less. Eventually, I found that the only thing I needed in Windows was Word and Powerpoint, as Open Office was not quite as feature rich. I found many wonderful applications like The Gimp, Gaim, Rhythmbox, Amarok, and Xmms.

I continued to use Knoppix even though the rest of the family was migrating to a different Linux distro called Simply Mepis. My Papa had also found this in a book called "Point and Click Linux."

A month or so later, I happened to sit down and use my Papa's computer and his desktop looked completely different from mine.

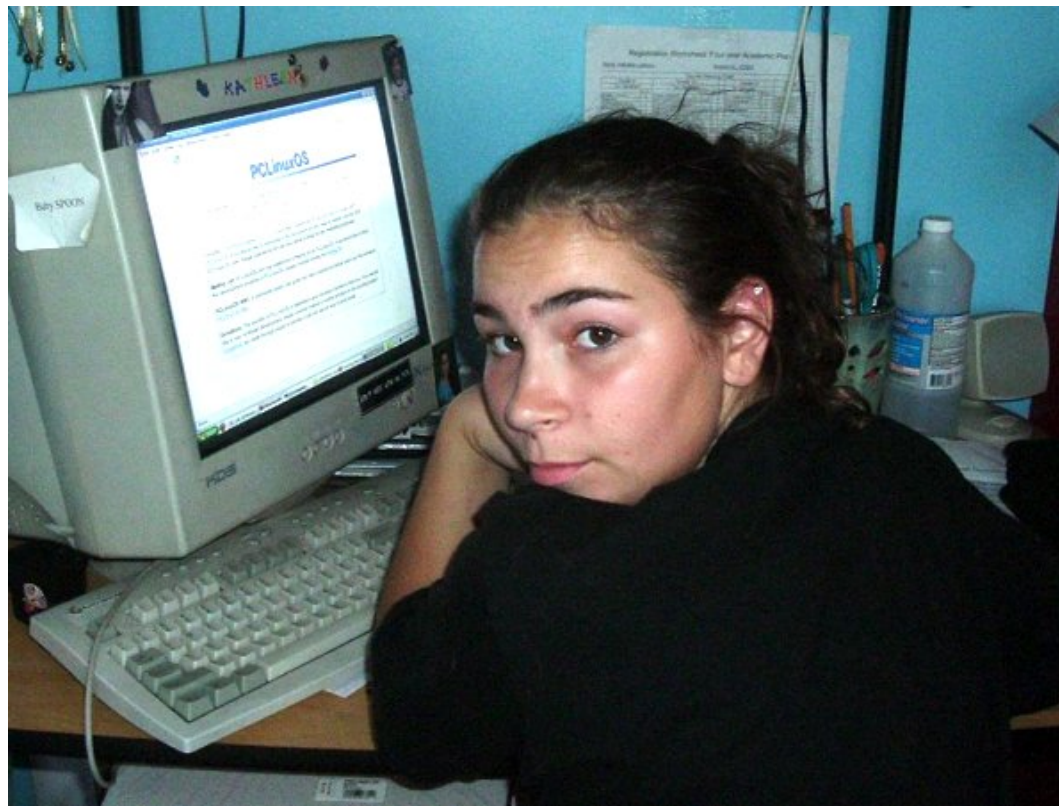
I began to cruise around in the menus and the panels and before I knew it, I had found what would become my desktop environment of choice which I still use today.

When Papa came home from work I told him that I wanted his desktop on my computer. He then told me that it was called Gnome and that it was entirely different in many ways from the KDE desktop I had been using.

Since I am really into Tinkerbell, faeries, and trolls, something called Gnome was just too cool. Papa and I run Gnome, and my Mema and younger sister prefer KDE. I find that with Gnome everything is more intuitive, or put another way, everything is where I would expect it to be.

I used Mepis from version 2004.04 up to 3.4.3 where things started not working properly. At this point, Papa switched the whole family to PCLinuxOS .92. He had been using it since .81 as one of several distros that he kept on his computer.

I loved the default blue theme but I had to install Gnome so I themed it blue to feel comfortable. I have found PCLinuxOS to be as stable as a 12-legged



Kathleen and PCLinuxOS

coffee table.

With the release of Open Office 2, I could finally leave Windows behind and I now use it for all of my school-related activities. Although I still use Firefox, I have been experimenting with Flock. If you use Myspace, Ebay, or other such sites, Flock has some neat features.

Amarok has replaced Rhythmbox because it has more features like the lastfm plugin that allows me to let my friends know what music I am listening to in real time. The Gimp is still my favorite picture editor and

maker but Cinepaint and Showfoto have many useful functions. Kpackage has been replaced with Synaptic for my package management needs.

Although my Linux experiences have been more with the use of applications than trying different distros, I firmly believe that PCLinuxOS is the most user friendly and stable distro I have used.

A Simplified Guide to Multibooting for the Beginner

by ClareOldie

The following is based on using one PATA (IDE) Hard Disk Drive (HDD) connected as Primary Master in a computer and adding a few installations of Linux to it. The complications presented by distros that refuse to install the Bootloader to the Boot Sector of the partition are avoided simply by saying **do not use** these distros until you are more familiar with multi-booting.

Furthermore, I make the assumption that you can arrange free space on the HDD and create partitions of a suitable size for the installations. In this regard, the assumption is that you create an Extended

Partition to hold as many Logical Partitions as you wish to make.

What follows is just one person's opinion and is not the only, or necessarily the best method to achieve success.

Let us say that you have divided the free space on your HDD into a number of partitions of 10 GB each and have formatted them in ext3 filesystem.

First install PCLinuxOS to the first spare partition - hda5. Write the GRand Unified Bootloader (GRUB) to the Master Boot Record (MBR) of the HDD. If you

have Windows previously installed, GRUB should recognise that installation and make it bootable. For this exercise, please use the **GRUB** bootloader at install time, not LILO.

After installing PCLinuxOS and rebooting, you should now be presented with several boot options. One of these will be Windows, if installed, and the others, various boot options for PCLinuxOS. Boot, in turn, into Windows and PCLinuxOS to ensure that everything is fully operational.

When everything is satisfactory, reboot into PCLinuxOS, and from the PCLinuxOS Control Center > Boot > Configure the PCLinuxOS boot loader, install the bootloader (GRUB) to the boot sector of the PCLinuxOS install (hda5). This is useful in case of difficulties later but hopefully won't be needed. Take a note at this time of the partition number that PCLinuxOS is installed on. It will be useful later but if following this scheme, it will be hda5.

Choose your next distro for installation. Install it to the next partition and (very important) have it write its bootloader to the boot sector of that partition only, **not** to the MBR. If you cannot do this then abort the installation. Later, when you are more familiar with things it will be possible to install this type of distro. Having installed the new OS (let's call it distro R) you will not be able to immediately boot into it. Do the

same for each of the distros you wish to install – lets say three in all R, S, & T. This would give you five operating systems including PCLinuxOS and Windows if installed, but for the present you can only boot into PCLinuxOS or Windows. Take a note of the partition details for each install.

Now a small bit of explanation about how GRUB manages multiple boot options. The information is stored for GRUB in a file called **menu.lst** which is a text file and can be edited with just about any text editor. GRUB has the capability to boot the installed OS directly but this requires quite a bit of information about the kernel and such, to be known by you, if you wish to have GRUB do it this way. For this exercise that information is not required because it is contained in the bootloaders that we have installed on the boot sectors of the installations. What is required therefore is for GRUB to hand over the boot to the bootloaders of the OS that you select at boot time. GRUB does this by using a command called chainloading. So, all GRUB requires is the location of the other bootloaders that will handle the boot and the command to tell it to hand over.

As many will know, Windows names partitions with letters such as C, D, E, etc. Linux uses names such as hda, hdb etc for the physical HDDs and adds a number to this name which identifies specific partitions on a particular HDD. So we get names for partitions such as hda1, hda2... hda7, hda8 etc. GRUB

has a naming system which is slightly different. The first HDD is (hd0), the second (hd1) etc. As you can see, GRUB starts its numbering from zero – a bit confusing at first. When GRUB wishes to reference a particular partition on a HDD it does so like this - (hd0,0) for the first partition on the first HDD, (hd0,1) for the second partition and so on. It should now be clear why it was important to keep a record of what partitions you've installed the distros to.

So for GRUB to call the boot loader for a particular partition you must edit the **menu.lst** file and put in lines that it will understand – in other words, references to the partitions in the format that GRUB uses. If you have partitioned the HDD in the manner assumed at the beginning, then the first available partition is probably hda6, PCLinuxOS having used hda5, which is the first of the logical partitions. The Linux partition hda6 is the same partition as (hd0,5) in GRUB terms – remember GRUB starts at zero not one. So to boot the OS installed on hda6 we tell GRUB to call the bootloader on the boot sector of that partition. The instruction would look something like this:

```
title          "R" on hda6
rootnoverify   (hd0,5)
makeactive
chainloader +1
boot
```

What follows **title** will be displayed on the screen at boot time. **rootnoverify (hd0,5)** tells GRUB the partition you wish to boot – in this case hda6. **makeactive** does what it says – it makes the boot partition active. **chainloader +1** hands the boot control over to the bootloader on the specified partition. **boot** tells it to boot.

As you can see from the above, each partition can be booted simply by entering the above lines as many times as there are partitions to boot. In this case, once each for distros 'R', 'S', and 'T'. Just change the **title** to the name of the particular OS and also change the partition number to the one that is to be booted for each entry. It does not matter to GRUB what bootloader is on the boot sector of the partition, whether LILO or GRUB, as it hands control over in any case.

Now we know what we need to do to get access to the distros we've installed, and are, I'm sure, impatient to test them. The last stage is to edit the **menu.lst** file so that it contains all the entries necessary to allow us to boot them. To do this, boot into PCLinuxOS and go to KMenu > Applications > File Tools > File Manager–Super User Mode. This will require your root password, which hopefully you have changed from the default **root** for security reasons. Navigate to the **/boot/grub/** directory and open the file **menu.lst** for editing in an editor such as Kwrite. Now, with reference to your notes (you did make them, didn't you?) you put in the entries

discussed above for each new OS. When you have finished and checked that you have made the allowance for the GRUB naming system and changed the title, save the file. Do not make any changes to the existing entries, rather only add to them, leaving a blank line between each entry. This should ensure that PCLinuxOS and Windows (if installed) are both still bootable even if errors have been made in the new entries. All that is left to do is reboot and you should be presented with a list of choices to boot, including all the new entries you have made.

Boot each one in turn and make sure that you have the proper title given to each. If you have changes to make, boot into PCLinuxOS and follow the same procedure as before for editing the **menu.lst** file. You now have a multi-boot system. Congratulations!

Remember, as with all things Linux, there are many ways of doing things and the method above is only my opinion of what would be easiest for the first time multi-booter.

Further reading (this is a must):

<http://www.pclinuxonline.com/wiki/BootloaderFAQ>

For information and further testing, I have listed a few other boot entries to try out when you are more comfortable with the process.

```
# Call Bootloader on hda2
title          LILO on hda2 (hd0,1)
rootnoverify   (hd0,1)
makeactive
chainloader    +1
boot

# Alternate call LILO on hda2
title          LILO on hda2 (hd0,1)
root           (hd0,1)
chainloader    +1

# This calls the bootloader on the MBR
of the HDD – not a partition
title          GRUB on hdb (hd1)
rootnoverify   (hd1)
chainloader    +1

title          Windows on the 2nd Disk, 2nd
Partition (hdb2)
rootnoverify   (hd1,1)
makeactive
chainloader    +1
boot
```

As with all such things, you make changes to your computer entirely at your own risk.

Linux Distributions for Children

By Lea Hudson

I have a three-year-old son who cannot resist playing on my PC at every opportunity, whether I'm there to stop him pounding the keyboard and clicking everything in sight or not! Let me tell you now, that's never a good thing in Windows. I wrote a couple of simple educational programs for him in Windows, but after hearing about a Linux distribution specifically designed for children, I decided to try something out.

I have addressed three Linux distributions: **PCLinuxOS Kidsafe**, **Edubuntu**, and **FreeDuc**.

Aim: To find and install a Linux distro which provides a safe environment for my son. I'm looking for an easy install, a secure and child-friendly GUI,

strictly limited Internet access and a reasonable range of software to play with. It was hard to be unbiased, but I tried to be as objective and constructive as I can with my comments.

Test PC: Compaq Deskpro PIII 1GHz with 256MB RAM and an old 3Com network card I had lying around. A 19" Iiyama CRT monitor, generic Windows keyboard and a cheap Genius optical mouse. The 20GB Hard drive was partitioned as ext3 with 1GB for swap and the remainder for root. Graphics and sound are embedded on the motherboard.

PCLOS Kid-Safe LiveCD 0.21-beta - A nice, fast download, burned onto CD and I'm off. One of the first options I saw was whether to boot to the

Live CD or into installation mode. I chose the latter as I was already familiar with PCLOS and was confident the hardware would be fine. I logged in as root because I wanted to install, but noticed that there were additional options to log in as "guest" or "kidsafe, also."

The familiar KDE desktop came up with the standard PCLOS icons along the top and a pleasant looking wheat field with a stormy sky for the wallpaper. I'll spare you the details, except to say I installed PCLOS Kidsafe in around 35 minutes, selected to delete the guest account and immediately rebooted.

I then decided to logon using the predefined "kidsafe" account instead of root. Things looked very different! Firefox opened immediately after I logged in and showed a page listing many educational and

entertainment websites for kids with links to each. There were also pages giving a brief overview of this release, how to install and remaster it and contact details for the author. Very nice.



Wizard's Kid-Safe CD

First things first, seeing as Firefox was already on screen, I searched Google for the website address of Astalavista (hacking, cracking, exploits etc.) and "Page Blocked" was displayed. OK, on to Google images and typed a few indecent words! Again, "Page Blocked". In fact, I tried a few different things and failed to get through to any malicious website or anything porn related. I realize this is not

exactly the scientific way of doing things, but with the limited time I had to test the distro, it showed a level of safety I can be comfortable with. Ad and popup blocking were not installed. Whether this would be a problem considering the presence of the filtering software remains to be seen, but I'd be more

comfortable with some Firefox extensions preinstalled. I doubt it would be impossible to defeat the filtering software (DansGuardian) with perseverance, but it does give the parent some peace of mind to know that reasonable measures are already in place to help keep their child safe online. Very impressive.

Next, I checked the installed software and menu items available. I imagine it's hard to judge what to choose in a remaster like this, as the selection of software you'd install for toddlers will be vastly different from what is appropriate for school age children. From what I've seen, software applications for preschool children in Linux are fairly limited. The selection provided was fine, with text editors rather than a full word processor, a couple of applications and games specifically for preschool children, and various science and school curriculum type applications for the older ones. There were also lots of typical Linux games to keep them busy. A couple of things I'd like to see added to a future releases are media/mp3 players.

Conspicuous by their absence are all the other standard menu items you'd normally see. Other than those menu selections mentioned, about the only thing you can do with Kid-Safe LiveCD, configuration-wise, is alter the desktop settings. For that, I was grateful. I was able to gain access to the shell via CTRL, ALT, F1, etc. I don't know whether it is

possible or even wise to lock users out of the shell completely in the event of a crashed application though, so no complaints on that point. A key combination like this is unlikely to be pressed by accident and the shell won't allow the child to cause too much havoc without the root password anyway.

I expected Linux running KDE to be quite slow on this old PC, but it runs very well. Everything was responsive and programs opened quickly. One or two titles were slow to render on screen but only because of the on board graphics and low speed of the PC components.

Suitable for ages: 3+ for just moving and clicking the mouse pointer and typing random characters on the keyboard along with a couple of games and a paint program, also it is recommended for any age up to teen years without their getting bored too quickly due to more advanced games and school related applications. However, Brian does say on his site that this distro is aimed at younger children. The lack of an Office suite is probably testament to that.

Verdict: I have yet to try this distro with my son at the keyboard, but I will be happy to do so and am sure he'll have a wonderful time. Children in general will be unable to do any harm to the installation if logged on to the kidsafe account, and their Internet access is as restricted as it needs to be. I really think some kind of multimedia application selection should to be

added to complete this distribution. However, considering the version number for this release, I cannot fault it otherwise. It met all the requirements I was looking for, was (typical for PCLOS) very easy to install and detected and ran all the hardware correctly. Highly recommended!!

Edubuntu 6.06 - After a speedy download, Dapper Drake took almost two hours to install. Even with a relatively slow hard drive, this seemed too long for an installation from a CD. Fortunately, all went well. I doubt I'd have the patience to sit through it again though. This has to be the longest Linux installation I've ever seen and the first time I've had to input the IP address myself. All the other distros I've used have just picked one from the DHCP pool. It's not a major problem, assuming you know your network settings.

As it is stated on the Edubuntu home page that this distro is designed for classroom use, I expected there to be a restricted, predefined account for kids to use.

There wasn't. I logged in with the user account I was prompted to set up during install and was surprised to



Edubuntu 6.06

see that I had access to all the menu items, including system configuration and other applications not needed by or which are unsuitable for children to play around with. Obviously, they would still have to use root access for anything critical, but I feel leaving these menus intact would allow too much freedom for kids to mess things up.

After a quick look around the uncluttered Gnome desktop, I opened Firefox. Surprisingly, I was able to access any Internet site. I searched for the URL for the Astalavista website in Google and used the same

search terms in Google images again. Astalavista showed up in Google and the actual site opened with no complaints. I was also able to view some very interesting images in Google! That was not a good start. If this is a distro for kids, surely some kind of filtering provision out of the box is in order? Ad and popup blocking were also missing, as I found out when Astalavista opened. This was quite a disappointment because it means the parent or teacher has to spend time reconfiguring the security settings for the local account and install Firefox plugins to limit what a child has access to, both on and offline. Perhaps I was expecting too much, but I doubt it would be too difficult for the person creating the remaster to add these necessary tweaks.

The range of software available immediately after installation is good, with a few nice programs like gCompris for the younger children. There were enough games and educational titles installed to keep children happy for quite a while. One inconsistency is that many of the menu items have tooltips to explain briefly what the program is about, while others don't. It's not always clear from the name what the program is designed to do, and even opening some of them doesn't yield any clues, (e.g., Keduca and Kverbos). That is more a limitation of Linux naming conventions than the fault of the developers.

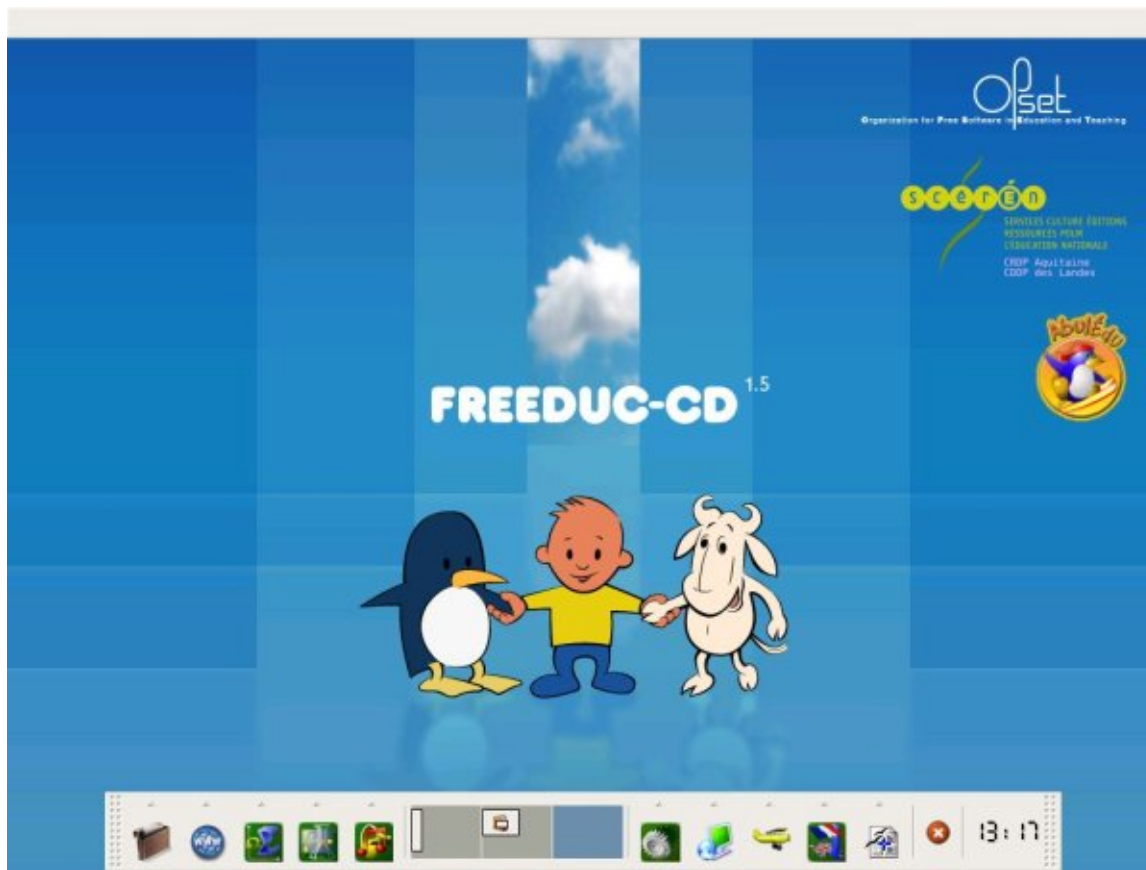
Edubuntu was noticeably slow on the test PC. I'm not sure whether this is because it was running Gnome or

the less than stellar system specs. Having said that, it was just about on a par with the performance I'd expect with Windows XP (also tested) on a PC this old and doesn't really cause any major problems. If I had 512Mb RAM to spare, I suspect it would run much faster.

Suitable for ages: I'd have to say the software is better for the younger children by a tiny margin because of gCompris, if nothing else. In terms of content, I think children aged 3+ are well catered for. As I stated in my verdict though, without close supervision, this distribution is not suitable for children of any age if the PC is connected to the Internet.

Verdict: This distro has a good selection of software for children but no limitation on what they can run from the menu, which is a problem for me. I really fail to see exactly how it has been customized for children. Other than adding a few educational/science applications and games with a world map wallpaper, it doesn't look any different from any other distro running Gnome. The fact that there are no restrictions in place for Internet access, no ad or popup blockers and a complete menu system is really unacceptable considering the target audience. I would have been a lot happier had there been a ready-made account for children to use. I cannot recommend this distro for children unless they are strictly supervised at all times.

Freeduc 1.5 - Freeduc is a Knoppix-based distro and designed for classroom use. I downloaded the "primary school version."



FreeDuc-CD

I booted the Live CD and was quickly dropped straight into an XFCE desktop. I had never seen this desktop environment before and was pleasantly surprised by the layout and speed. It ran very quickly on my test box. There was a nice wallpaper showing a

cartoon picture of a boy holding hands with a Gnu and Penguin. The bar docked at the bottom of the screen showed a number of icons and three virtual desktops. I began opening everything in sight and soon realized there was a problem: the whole thing was in French. According to DistroWatch, this distro is in both French and English. The official site is in English, but that's where it ends apparently.

Undeterred, I rebooted and used a cheat code to change the language to English. It didn't help. All the software and documentation I opened were still in French.

As I didn't see any initial login screen, I tried the main menu (accessed by right clicking on the desktop) to see what was installed: everything by the looks of it. It seems this distro logs the user in as root with full configuration access and full Internet access. The official site does state that it is more likely the teacher who will need access to the installed applications,

but I was a little dismayed by the idea of a primary school child having root privileges. Isn't it a cardinal sin for an adult to log into Linux as root? Allowing a child to do so is asking for trouble. And why is this distro called the "primary school version?" Who exactly is it aimed at? I doubt any teacher would be able to keep tabs on a class full of children using PC's

with this installed. It's a disaster waiting to happen. If it is aimed at the teacher who has only one PC and uses it with small groups of children to run educational applications and games, then it should clearly state this on the website.

As I don't speak much French, I quickly became lost and, gave up.

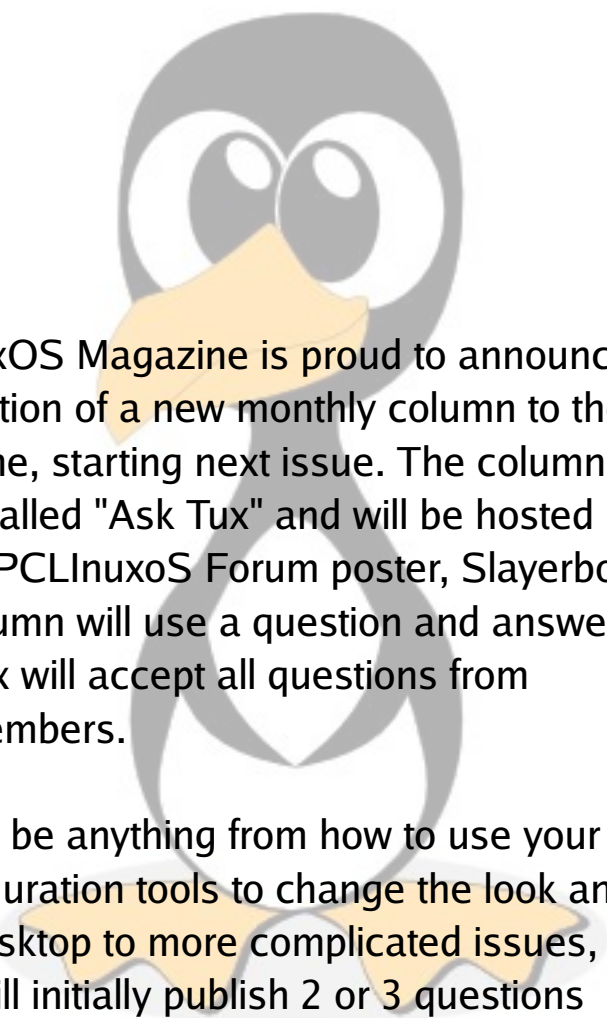
Suitable for ages: Hard to say. For small, closely supervised groups of French children, this distro is probably quite good!

Verdict: The GUI chosen is clean, fast and intuitive. My hardware was well supported and didn't hold it up at all. As for suitability, this distro doesn't seem to know who it is supposed to be aimed at. Either that, or I've misunderstood the comments on the official site. It isn't clear until you boot that English is not catered to, and to be logged in as root automatically really defeats the objective of having a distro for children. I cannot recommend this distribution as it meets almost none of my criteria.

The Winner

PCLOS is the final distro of choice for me after trying many others for some months before discovering it. Thanks to Wizard's Kidsafe LiveCD by Brian "Wizard" Burns.

ASK TUX



PCLinuxOS Magazine is proud to announce the addition of a new monthly column to the magazine, starting next issue. The column will be called "Ask Tux" and will be hosted by regular PCLinuxoS Forum poster, Slayerboy. The column will use a question and answer format and Tux will accept all questions from community members.

Questions can be anything from how to use your desktop configuration tools to change the look and feel of your desktop to more complicated issues, or just fun. We will initially publish 2 or 3 questions next issue. Please send any questions and your name or screen name to asktux@gmail.com. Who knows? Your question might be THE QUESTION that Tux will be answering in our November issue.

Thank you for your participation.

How Many Forum Users Does It Take To Change A Light Bulb?

Found at: <http://www.annoiances.org/exec/show/category09>
 and posted at <http://www.pclinuxos.com/forum/index.php?topic=9156.0>

Believed to be public domain. If you believe there to be any copyright infringements, please let us know.

- | | | | |
|----|--|----|--|
| 1 | to change the light bulb and to post that the light bulb has been changed, | 5 | about changing light bulbs, |
| 14 | to share similar experiences of changing light bulbs and how the light bulb could have been changed differently, | 3 | to flame the spell checkers, |
| 7 | to caution about the dangers of changing light bulbs, | 6 | to correct spelling/grammar flames, |
| 1 | to move it to the Lighting section, | 6 | to argue over whether it's "lightbulb" or "light bulb" ... another 6 to condemn those 6 as stupid, |
| 2 | to argue then move it to the Electrical section, | 2 | industry professionals to inform the group that the proper term is "lamp," |
| 7 | to point out spelling/grammar errors in posts | 15 | know-it-alls who claim they were in the industry, and that "light bulb" is perfectly correct, |
| | | 19 | to post that this forum is not about light bulbs and to please take this discussion to a light bulb forum, |
| | | 11 | to defend the posting to this forum saying that |

- we all use light bulbs and therefore the posts are relevant to this forum,
- 36 to debate which method of changing light bulbs is superior, where to buy the best light bulbs, what brand of light bulbs work best for this technique and what brands are faulty,
- 7 to post URL's where one can see examples of different light bulbs,
- 4 to post that the URL's were posted incorrectly and then post the corrected URLs,
- 3 to post about links they found from the URL's that are relevant to this group which makes light bulbs relevant to this group,
- 13 to link all posts to date, quote them in their entirety including all headers and signatures, and add "Me too,"
- 5 to post to the group that they will no longer post because they cannot handle the light bulb controversy,
- 4 to say "didn't we go through this already a short time ago?",
- 13 to say "do a Google search on light bulbs before posting questions about light bulbs," and
- 1 forum lurker to respond to the original post 6 months from now and start it all over again.

PCLinuxOS 0.93a Junior

Texstar announced the release of PCLinuxOS 0.93a Junior on August 9, 2006

PCLinuxOS 0.93a Junior was the next step up from MiniMe. Junior comes with just the basic desktop allowing full user customization.

PCLinuxOS 0.93a Junior is a self booting Live CD with advanced hardware detection. In addition to running Junior in Live CD mode, you can also install it to your computer. Easy to follow instructions are included on the Live CD as well as a chat channel for instant help.

Junior comes with a set of pre-selected programs for Web Browsing, Email, Instant Messaging, Blogging, IRC chat, Music, Graphics, Video (additional software required for encrypted DVD playback and proprietary formats), Digital Camera, Games, Ftp, Bit torrent transfer, CD/DVD burning and more.

If you are first time Linux user or someone migrating from Windows then PCLinuxOS 0.93a Junior is a great way to get started using Linux. After installing PCLinuxOS to your computer, you can access an additional 5000 programs and libraries from our free software repository.

The current list of programs on Junior can be found at <http://www.pclinuxos.com//page.php?12l>.

Read about PCLinuxOS 0.93a MiniMe on page 16.

The Freedom We Share

by Merlin Whitewolf

FOSS, **Free and Open Source Software**, is something we share. That is, for every application that is released as open source, there is an available source code. To this source code, you may add tweaks, plugins, functions, etc., or you may rewrite it to make something that could be considered a new program. This is the freedom that most people speak of when freedom in software is discussed. It is a very important freedom, beyond doubt, as it encourages improvements and new development in software. There is another dimension to this freedom. That is to share the freedom itself.

Freedom that is held tightly loses its value and becomes proprietary. The sharing of freedom needs to be as free as the access to source code for it be complete. When we share freedom, we are doing

"freedom needs to ... be complete."

much more than giving access to code: we are giving access to a way of life and a philosophy.

It may be hard for those who see everything in terms of ownership, but if our creations, as well as our creativity, are not shared freely, we lose, rather than gain. The software creator is an artist. Some creators proceed to lock away their creation as "Intellectual Property" that must be protected. Others willingly open their code to show their creativity.

You can find both views in the world of software creation. The difference between the two is that the proprietary creator feels the need to own his/her creation, while the open source creator owns his creativity. Owning a creation, especially after it has been passed on to another person, creates a denial of

rights and freedoms. Sharing your creativity creates an atmosphere of freedom in which, from the most minor to the most major, additions can be seen as an act of free creativity.

When a new house is built, the builder does not say to the buyer, "You may never make any alterations to this house. It may not be painted. No rooms may be added. No fixture may be replaced with newer or different ones. And you may never resell this house." If the builder said these things, the average home buyer would begin to look elsewhere for their housing needs. Customizing our homes to meet our needs and tastes is seen as an expected part of home ownership, as well as the right to resell.

In the software industry, we encounter those who wish to retain ownership and tight control over their applications. For them, the code must be locked down or they will lose, and preventing a resale is a must. To allow either of these may remove a source of income. The more times they can sell the software, via a license, the greater the profit they can have.

In the open source world, the outlook is entirely different. If the software is good and useful, one may purchase a service contract or make donations to the developer. This encourages keeping the software at as high a level of usefulness and quality as possible. Anyone may make additions or changes and share those additions or changes, as each creator owns only

his/her creativity; everything else is shared with everyone who chooses to have a look. The changes that were made may bring greater value to the software and make it more usable for more people. It then becomes a new work that is based on the older one. This new work may be as simple as a new version under the same name, or if the differences are great enough, it may be released as a new application.

Any piece of artwork, after it is completed, may be viewed by anyone who comes into contact with it. The brush strokes of the artist may be seen and copied, learned from and emulated and may encourage or inspire some new creation. When a beautiful piece of art is locked away, so that no one may view it, all of those that could have been inspired by it have lost that opportunity to create. In such cases, we have all lost. We lose not only the viewing of the original but the new creations it could have inspired.

The reason for locking away such works may be greed or fear. It may be for some monetary consideration. The reasons for it are not as important as the loss. Greed, etc., may keep one person's wallet fuller, but it does nothing for the creation and sharing of the art. Some important new work may never occur or be long delayed, when we suffer the loss of the choice to view.

No artist that I'm aware of has ever gained by locking away his/her creativity. For any artist to truly gain, the artwork must be viewed. That is, the freedom to

create, when brought together with the freedom to view and enjoy, brings the artist a gain. This is the way artistic reputations come about and are maintained. The greater and more deserved the artist's reputation, the higher his/her status and income potential becomes.

So, what does all of this have to do with the sharing of freedom? Think about it a moment: if you do not give the freedoms that you enjoy to others, have you gained your own freedom? Or have you bound yourself to a label of freedom without stepping outside of the locked up world of ownership?

Freedom isn't truly freedom until you have passed it on. We share our freedom, or we lock ourselves away and hide behind the bindings we place on ourselves.

In conclusion, let's share our freedom. In so doing, we become more free.


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Ben is the son of a vigilant Magazine volunteer. He is 8 years old and uses Wizard's Kid-Safe LiveCD (his current favorite) on his SONY Vaio – P3-600 MHz, 512Mb RAM, SoundBlaster 16, CD-RW 52x, 20Gb HDD with PCLOS .92. He prefers to boot the LiveCD but still uses PCLOS.

We've Come A Long Way, Baby!

by Tim Robinson

I didn't get in on the development of the very first personal computers; I came on board about the time of the Radio Shack (Tandy) TRS-80. Recently, I've been reminded of those times, and thought that many of our readers might not have been fortunate enough to have experienced the early days of personal computing. For some of you, this will be "memory lane," while for others it may be insight into the greatest technological development period in mankind's history.

I will not try to define exactly what a personal computer is, or identify which was the first personal computer. There are as many answers to those

questions as there are people pondering them. I'll jump in with a few names and dates from what most people would consider the origins of "practical" personal computers and we'll go from there. Here's a basic description of what a device must be to be called a personal computer: It must be a **digital** computer. It must be largely **automatic**. It must be **programmable** by the end-user. It must be **accessible**, either as a commercially manufactured product, as a commercially available kit, or as widely published kit plans. It must be **small** enough to be practical to set up by the average person. It must be **inexpensive** enough to be affordable by the average professional. It must be **simple** enough to use that it requires no

special training beyond an instruction manual.

MIT S Altair – 1975. This unit was introduced in January, 1975 as a construction project in Popular Electronics Magazine. And far as I can determine it was the first 8080 based microcomputer. Although the Altair was not the first available microcomputer, it started the industry on that long road to today's machines.



Technical Products produced the M6800, a Motorola 6800-based computer. They created their own bus, the SS-50, and provided a full range of peripheral kits. Remember, these were *kit* computers, so anything that made them easier to build or more reliable later was a definite plus. The SS-50 bus had only 50 pins which were spaced wider than the 100 pins of the S-100 bus. This made soldering in connectors and such much easier.



Imsai 8080. Developed by Imsai Associates it used the same I/O bus structure as the MIT S Altair, later known as the S-100 bus. Imsai spent time studying the Altair and identified many physical limitations in case design and component layout,

especially as it related to expansion, and then designed their product to eliminate them. Shortly, the Imsai 8080 became a major force in the early days of personal computing.

South West Technical Products Company M6800. About the time Imsai was making major progress with their personal computers, South West

All this time, personal computers had front panels with switches for entering the bootstrap programs, used teletypewriters and paper tape for data storage and entry. Keyboards as we know them were just beginning to make their appearance. Many were uppercase only. It was possible with the M6800 to connect a video terminal board and a television monitor. There were other computers available with similar designs and capabilities during this time. Most had anywhere from 2K to 16K of memory and no operating system as we understand that term today. Everything was done in machine language, though



there were assembler programs written that made it possible to create

your application by entering source code (after manually flipping switches to enter the bootloader). The source code was then converted into machine language which one then saved to paper tape for use later. Things were about to change.

Apple Computers Apple II. Introduced in 1977, the Apple II is probably deserving of the name "the first personal computer;" the Apple II caused a major revolution in this new industry. Not a kit, but a factory built unit, it came "ready to use." An extensive list of software and with a low-cost floppy disk system, the Apple II introduced the public to the idea of real

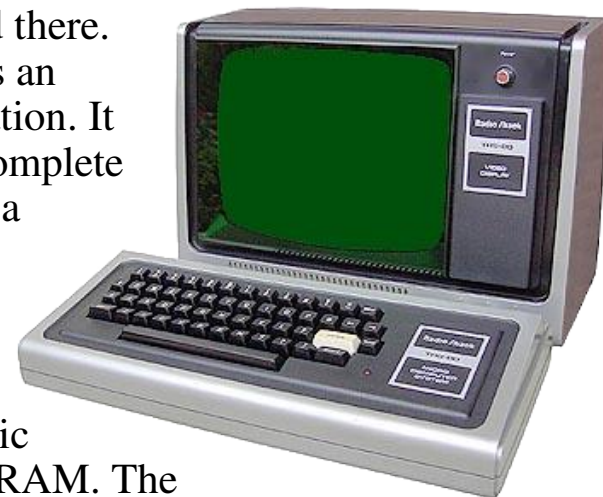


graphics and color. It came with a modem that made it possible to connect to other computers. When Visicalc, a spreadsheet debuted, the Apple II suddenly became

a staple in the business world. I'm not sure, but the Apple II may have been the first personal computer to offer a video monitor as standard.

Radio Shack (Tandy) TRS-80. The Radio Shack TRS-80 hit my city in late 1977, and I wound up with

the first one sold there. The TRS-80 was an immediate sensation. It came with the complete computer inside a slightly enlarged keyboard case, a 12 inch black and white monitor, 4K Basic



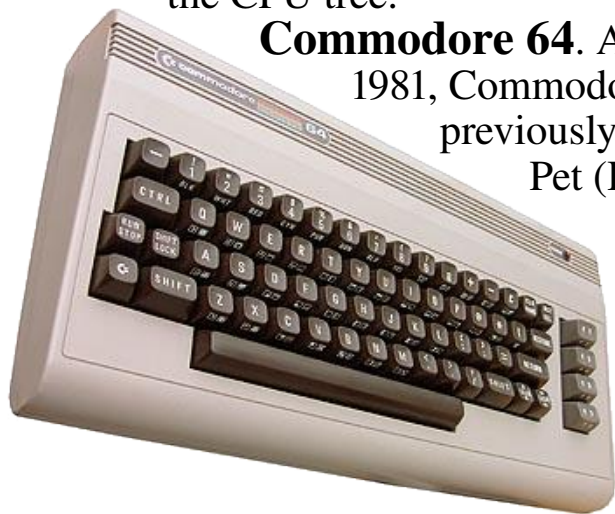
in ROM and 4k RAM. The CPU was initially an Intel 8080 running at 800KHz. Radio Shack quickly upgraded to an 8080 at 1.6MHZ, and then to a Zilog Z80, which offered improved performance at the same clock speed. For data and program storage, there was an optional slightly modified audio tape cassette machine and special high quality tapes. Unlike the Apple and other computers of that time that offered 80 character by 24 line displays, TRS-80s offered 64x16, and the first version, dubbed Model One, was uppercase only. In spite of its limitations compared to the concurrent Apple II, the TRS-80 was an instant success. Part of that success was the low price (less than \$500 USD), but the ubiquity of Radio Shack stores also contributed. Over the following years, the TRS-80 grew in capability and the physical design improved. But the handwriting was on the wall. A giant was getting organized.

Atari Model 400 & Model 800. For many years



(some will even suggest up to the present), Atari held a major place in the computer gaming arena. They had arguably the best graphics and were fast for that

era. Unfortunately, the Model 400 had a less than stellar keyboard (membrane, rather than full-motion). The Atari machines were based on Motorola 6502 CPUs at a time when Intel and Zilog were blitzing the market with the 8080 and Z80. Because of Atari's restrictive policies regarding "secrets" necessary for programming their machines, there was not the same development of applications as for the other branch of the CPU tree.



Commodore 64. Approximately 1981, Commodore, who previously had marketed the Pet (Europe and UK, later to schools in the U.S.) and the Vic-20, introduced the single unit Commodore 64. It had 16 colors in

place of the eight on the VIC-20. The video display was 40-columns wide. There was a built-in music synthesizer chip and Commodore introduced simple graphics called Sprites. Unlike most other machines of that era, it had 64K of RAM; Apple then had a maximum of 48K. Initially it sold for \$595 (USD), and soon appeared at K-mart for \$400.

There were many other personal computers than those I've mentioned during this period, too many to list. Each introduced some new or better way of operating or improved the physical aspects of designs. It was a time of great activity. But a giant was on the horizon: IBM.

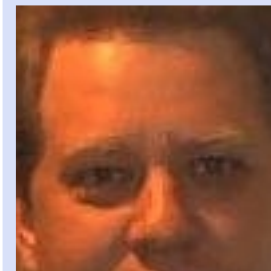
The IBM PC. All during the years I've described above, IBM was quietly watching. It has been said that IBM stands for "I Believe in Money." Probably not, but they were and are not stupid. They knew the handwriting was on the wall for mini and mainframe computers. Oh, there would always be a market, but the public was eating up these new microcomputers. IBM would not be left out. In 1981 they implemented "Project Chess" and the initial plans of the first IBM personal computer were laid. Development was swift with the initial release of the new machine on August 12, 1981. IBM named it the IBM PC, which stood for personal computer, and hence they are responsible for popularizing the term "PC."

The first PC ran an Intel 8088 CPU at 4.77 MHz,

came with 16KB of memory and could be expanded to 256KB, a huge amount at that time. The machine came with one or two 160KB floppy drives and a color monitor was optional. IBM made the decision to use off the shelf components, resulting in an "open architecture" system. Had they decided to keep their designs proprietary, the PC as we know it today might never have happened. Less than four months after the introduction of the IBM PC, it was named "Man of the Year" by Time Magazine.



We've come a long way, baby.



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