The PCLinuxOS magazine

Volume 50

March, 2011

e17: Running Ecomorph
e17: Configure The Everything Module To Do Everything
e17: Settings Panel, Part 3
Free At Last! LibreOffice 3.3 Released
Synaptic & The Repositories
Video - Part 1: Time Shifting TV Programs
Video - Part 2: Editing Your Recorded Video
Avidemux Under PCLinuxOS
Alternate OS: Icaros, Part 1
New Forum Launched: PCLinuxOS Kids
WindowMaker on PCLinuxOS: The Basics
Ladies Of PCLinuxOS: ms_meme
PCLinuxOS & Linux In Greece
Using Scribus, Part 3: Text! Text! Text!
And much more inside!

Table Of Contents

3 Welcome From The Chief Editor
5 e17: Configure Everything To Do Everything
8 Scribus, Part 3: Text, Text, Text
10 PCLinuxOS & Linux In Greece
11 Screenshot Showcase
12 e17: Settings Panel, Part 3
14 Ladies Of PCLinuxOS: ms_meme
15 Double Take & Mark's Quick Gimp Tip
16 e17: Running Ecomorph
19 Screenshot Showcase
20 Forum Foibles: Roman Holiday
21 Video - Part 1: Time Shifting TV Programs
24 Screenshot Showcase
25 New Forum Launched: PCLinuxOS Kids
26 Video - Part 2: Editing Your Recorded Video
29 Screenshot Showcase
30 Free At Last! LibreOffice 3.3 Released
33 Screenshot Showcase
34 Alternate OS: Icaros, Part 1
45 ms_meme's Nook: PCLOS Will Call You
46 Avidemux Under PCLinuxOS
50 Screenshot Showcase
51 WindowMaker On PCLinuxOS: The Basics
53 Disclaimer
54 Synaptic & The Repositories
58 More Screenshot Showcase

The PCLinuxOS Magazine

The PCLinuxOS name, logo and colors are the trademark of Texstar.

The NEW PCLinuxOS Magazine is a monthly online publication containing PCLinuxOS-related materials. It is published primarily for members of the PCLinuxOS community. The Magazine staff is comprised of volunteers from the PCLinuxOS community.

Visit us online at http://www.pclosmag.com

This release was made possible by the following volunteers:

Chief Editor: Paul Arnote (parnote)
Assistant Editors: Andrew Strick (Stricktoo), Meemaw
Consultants: Archie Arevalo, Tim Robinson
Artwork: Sproggy, Timeth, Mark Szorady

Magazine Layout: parnote, Meemaw, ms_meme, Stricktoo
HTML Layout: Galen Seaman

Staff:
Neal Brooks
Galen Seaman
Patrick Horneker
Guy Taylor
Andrew Huff
ms_meme
Mark Szorady
Darrel Johnston
Meemaw
Gary L. Ratliff, Sr.

Contributors:
Longtom
tschommer
Daniel Meiß-Wilhelm

The PCLinuxOS Magazine is released under the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-Share-Alike 3.0 Unported license. Some rights are reserved.
Copyright © 2010.

Welcome From The Chief Editor

Well, after a bit of doing, the ibiblio rsync "problem" has finally been ironed out. In the interim, we lost some mirrors but gained some new ones. On some, the directory structure changed. If you haven't already done so, you will need to download the new source.list file. Save the file to your **/home/[user]/Downloads** directory. Open a terminal and gain root access. As root, first enter **cp /etc/apt/sources.list /etc/apt/sources.list.orig**. This will create a backup of your original sources.list file. Then, enter **cp /home/[user]/Downloads/sources.list /etc/apt/sources.list**, and answer "Yes" when prompted to overwrite your old sources.list file. Alternatively, you can follow essentially the same instructions that are posted in the forum by pinoc. Once you've done either one of the methods above, you will need to launch Synaptic and click on the "Reload" button to read the new package list. Then, just update as you normally would.

Since we've lost some mirrors in the process, your "favorite" mirror may no longer be valid and active. At the same time, since we've also gained some new repository mirrors, so feel free to browse through the list and select one that's closest to you.

Meanwhile, those of us in the Northern hemisphere are preparing for the arrival of Spring. One of the most common thoughts that is associated with the arrival of Spring is the annual renewal that it delivers. In that vein, KDE 4.6 has hit the repository. Xfce 4.8 is nearing completion, and should be hitting the repository very soon. Work is actively occurring to bring the 2.6.37 Linux kernel to the repository, as well. The work of maintaining a distro like PCLinuxOS is never ending, and Texstar and the rest of the PCLinuxOS developers work tirelessly to bring you the most stable and up-to-date applications and components.

I'm going to depart from my usual rundown of the magazine contents this month. Instead, I want to talk a little bit about Gnome 3. Anyone who reads The PCLinuxOS Magazine knows that, for over the last year, we've been writing extensively about the desktop environments that PCLinuxOS is available in as ready-to-install LiveCDs. First, we started with KDE 4, then Xfce, LXDE, and finally, e17. Thanks to Patrick Horneker, we're even covering WindowMaker, one of the alternate desktops in the PCLinuxOS repository that doesn't have an ISO release. We've even produced special editions of the magazine featuring the desktops that we've covered. Knowing that Gnome 3 was "in the pipeline," I purposely held off on covering the Gnome desktop until the arrival of the new version.

It's appearing as if Gnome users are poised to endure a situation similar to what KDE users experienced when KDE moved from 3.5.10 to KDE SC 4.x, when the much anticipated Gnome 3 is released in April. Hopefully, the Gnome developers have used the faulty delivery of KDE 4.x upon KDE users as an example of how not to roll out a new major release. As you may remember, KDE 4.x was met with a lot of resistance from KDE users. KDE 4 was different in a lot of ways, and a lot of KDE 3.5.10 users didn't feel at home with those changes. Plus, KDE 4 ratcheted up the hardware requirements considerably, so many users who ran KDE 3.5.10 on older equipment could no longer run KDE 4 on that same equipment. In fact, there is a fairly loud minority of KDE users who still will not move to KDE 4.x, opting instead to hold onto still-working copies of KDE 3.5.x for as long as they can.

Just as what happened with KDE, the Gnome camp will experience many users who embrace the changes that are forthcoming in Gnome 3. Many of those changes are quite radical, like doing away with the minimize, maximize and close buttons on the window title bar, eliminating the window list and not giving laptop users a choice of suspending to RAM or suspending to Disk when closing the laptop screen. There will also be a very loud group of dissenters who will resist the changes that Gnome 3 delivers. At least under Linux, there are many more choices for desktop environments (Xfce, LXDE, FluxBox, OpenBox, e17, WindowMaker, etc.), and

those who choose to not adapt to the changes in Gnome 3 will have the opportunity to explore those other desktop environments.

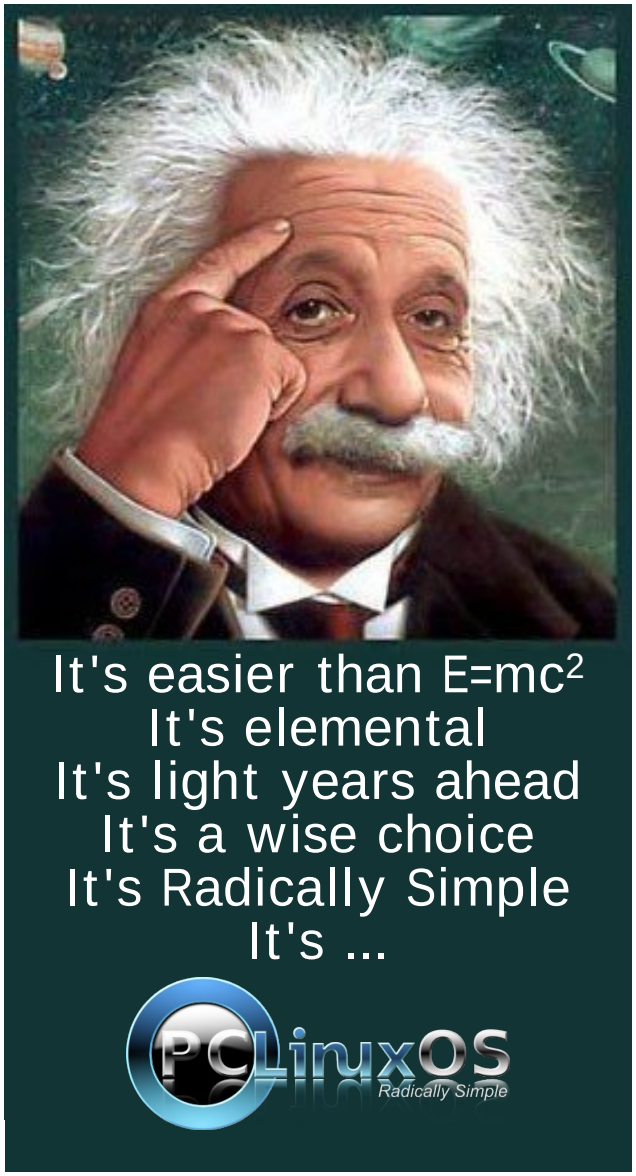
It's looking, early on, as if the move to Gnome 3 may not be much smoother than the move to KDE 4 was, after all. In fact, the Gnome developers may not have learned anything at all from observing the KDE 4 fiasco. There are already complaints among Gnome users that the Gnome 3 developers are not listening to the users. That's a situation that should sound quite familiar to any KDE user. Of course, there's always the "that's not me" and the "that was them and how they did it; we're doing it differently" mindsets among developers, when in reality, the end results are the same. Sometimes it seems that developers like to make change, just for the sake of change. My boss at the hospital has a saying that certainly rings true in this situation: "just because you can doesn't mean you should."

Of course, as with anything else that's new and evolving, it's always easy for those who don't do the actual work to be a critic, and to sit back and take pot shots at those who are doing the work. The flip side of that coin is that users must be heard. They are, after all, the ones who will be using the end product, and if it doesn't do what they need it to do, or if the changes are too radical, you will lose those users. They will flee and use another desktop environment that allows them to work as they are accustomed to, and that isn't as radically different from how users have used their computers.

One reviewer in the Linux press corps has what may end up being the best approach to Gnome 3, and it's quite similar to the approach of Texstar when making the move to KDE 4. Wait it out. Let the dust settle. See if the forthcoming changes in Gnome 3 actually pan out with users, and see how many of those eliminated features find their way back into Gnome 3. As you may remember, Texstar wasn't one of the early adopters of KDE 4, due to its early buggy releases. He chose to wait until it was more stable. In fact, he took some heat for not making KDE 4 more available to PCLinuxOS users, and for going with the more stable KDE 3.5.10 in the 2009 releases. This one reviewer speculated that the dust should settle for the Gnome camp by version 3.2 (at the earliest). Meanwhile, this particular reviewer is exploring two options that KDE users has to choose between a year and a half ago: keep his currently working, stable Gnome 2.x going for as long as he can, or use the opportunity to explore other desktop environments, such as Xfce. Sounds familiar, doesn't it?

There seems to be equal amounts of anticipation and anxiety among Gnome users over many of the changes that are coming. Even KDE users will be looking on, to see if the Gnome developers "get it right." It is definitely going to be interesting to watch as the melodrama of the Gnome 3 release unfolds, especially for Linux distros that primarily use the Gnome desktop, such as Ubuntu and Fedora. Brace yourselves. This could be quite a bumpy ride.

So, until next month, I wish each and every one of you peace, happiness, tranquility and serenity.



e17: Configure The Everything Module To Do Everything

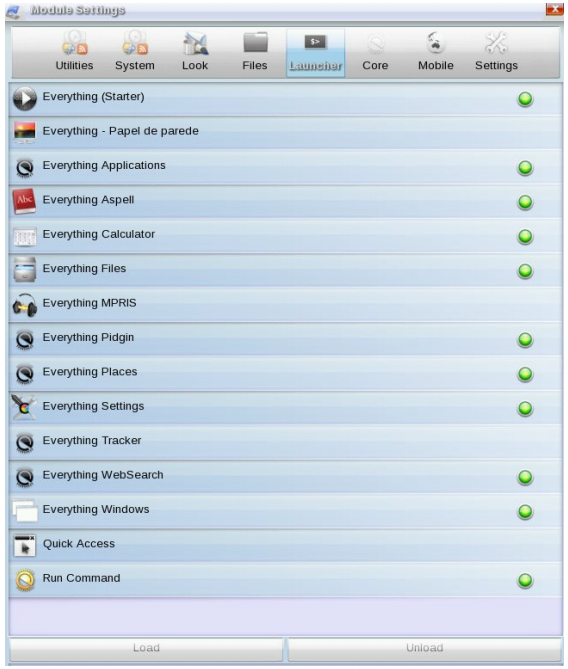
by coffeetime & smurfslover

Everything Module (from the website)
http://trac.enlightenment.org/e/wiki/Gadgets/Everything

This is a plugin based module that offers a broad number of tasks to perform, from running applications, directory browsing, managing music playlist, indexed file searching to browsing stuff from youtube.

Basically, Everything is like a fancy kickoff, where one can do everything using keyboard/key bindings, plus adding interesting stuff like quick access to Wikipedia, Google, YouTube, etc.

Some plugins can be called up by setting a trigger in the options, for example, you can configure it so you can type a 'y' to activate the YouTube plugin, type what you want to search for and Everything gives you a list with titles and thumbnails. However, you will have to load some of the modules. Go to the **Settings Panel > Extensions > Modules > Launcher** and load the ones you want if they aren't already loaded:



Everything configuration:

The default key to launch everything is **ALT+ESC**

To configure Everything, run it and type 'ev co', first item should be 'everything configuration'.

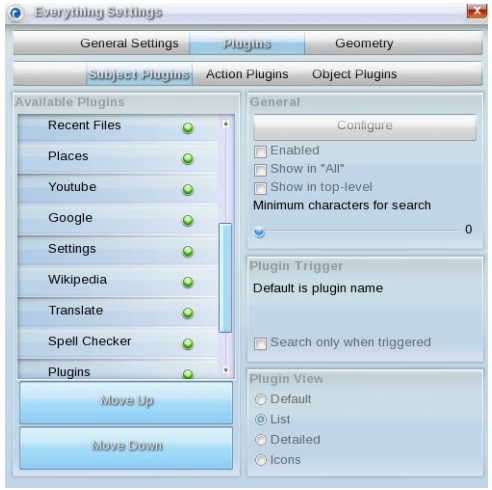
Code:

```
ev co
```

When you get the following window, double click **Everything Configuration**.

Here's an example. Let's add YouTube:

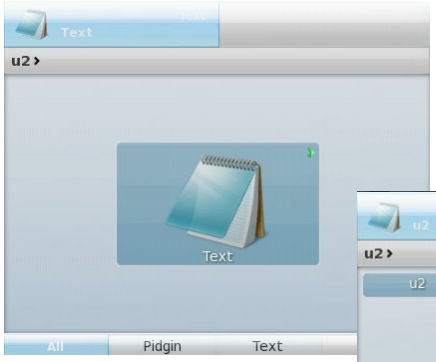
Press Enter. You should get the configuration window.



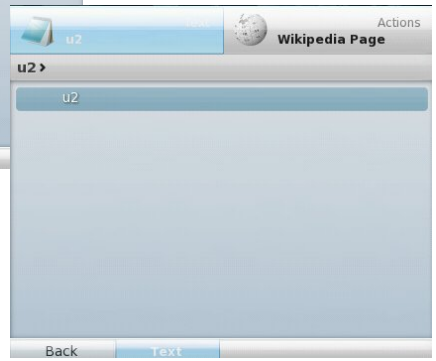
Click on Youtube to highlight it and check *Enabled* on the right side. Apply.

You should see it in the main window. When it is highlighted, press Enter.

Let's use it. For example type *u2*



Press Enter.



Use right arrow key and move to *Wikipedia Page*

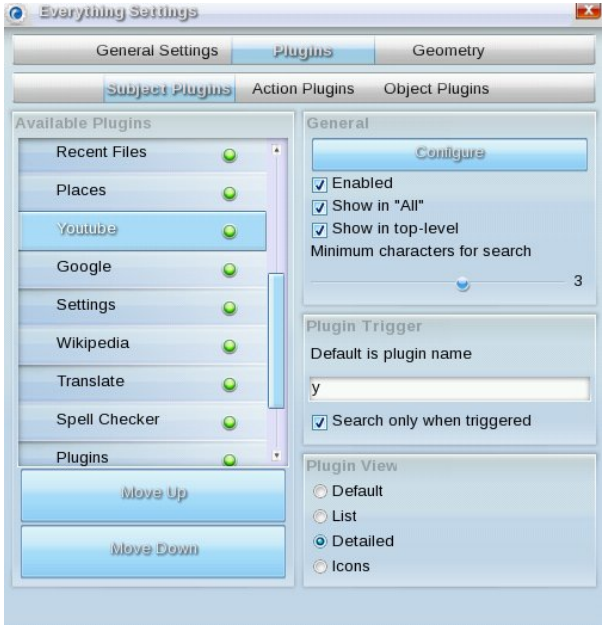
Scroll down to Youtube

Press Enter. You should see something like the next window (top right);

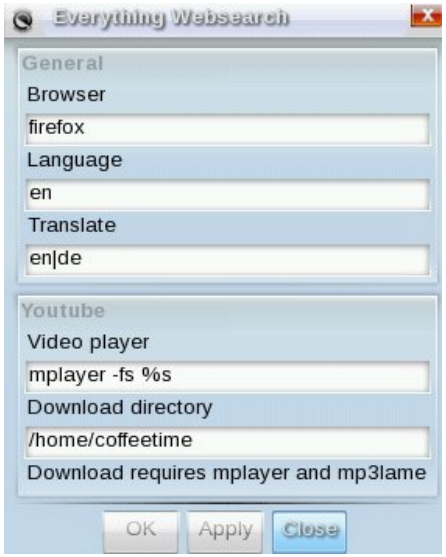
Right arrow key. Choose what you want. For example, Watch on Youtube will open Firefox.

Many times, just typing in what you are looking for will bring up the list and you can choose which one you want, click on actions and choose your action. Possible actions include watching your video on Youtube or even downloading and saving it. In the upper right corner of the window the launcher shows the default action, click the word **Actions** to get a list of possibilities. The chosen action will be defaulted.

If you want to configure Youtube, like setting or changing the browser you want to use, click on **Configure**.



When you do that, you will get the following window;



You can search for or browse through
- Files and directories
- Recently used files
- Places
- Apps
- e17 settings
- windows
- desktops
- commands you've run through the launcher (exebuf plugin)

Other plugins:

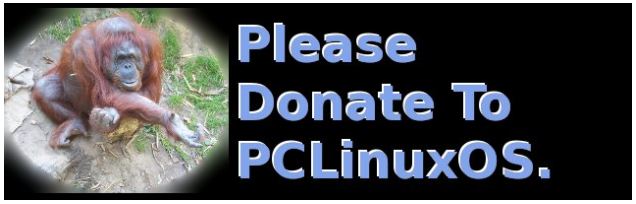
- Websearch: Google , Youtube (downloading and converting), Wikipedia, ...
- aspell spell checking
- calculator (trigger is =)
- mpris to control an mpris compatible media player (banshee, exaile,...)
- pidgin - open chats and send files
- Wallpaper - change or import wallpapers
- Tracker - support for tracker indexing service (gnome indexing service using nepomuk)
(I wouldn't recommend using tracker if you want to keep your e17 fast & light.)

You can configure Everything to run or open almost anything. Once you start configuring it, you may use it more than your normal menu. After you start using it a lot, you will find that all your most often-used items will be in the default window. All you will have to do is run Everything and choose what you want to use next.

If you arrow over to the Applications item (at the bottom) and press Enter, you will get a list of your most recently opened apps.

smurfslover said, "Since I discovered it and learned to use it, I use almost nothing else; the menu just becomes useless. It's very similar to KDE's krunner - it's fast and light and much easier to use."

Meemaw also contributed to this article.

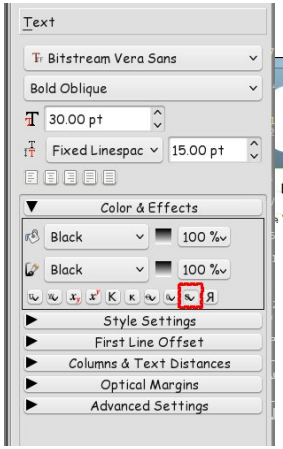


Using Scribus, Part 3: Text! Text! Text!

by Meemaw

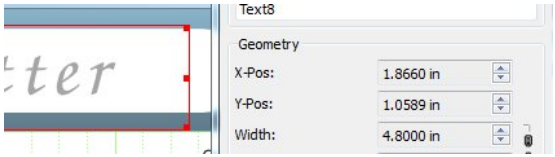
In the second part of our Scribus series, we did a basic header, and got started putting news stories into our newsletter. Since it is a newsletter, we should have lots of text frames that contain our stories. A few extra bits of knowledge will help make our newsletter easier to assemble and, hopefully, easier to read.

Title Shadow



When you created your heading 'Newsletter' or 'Club Newsletter' or whatever you chose, I'm sure you found the button in the text configuration that would automatically put a drop-shadow on your text. The line of buttons in Color & Effects has Underline, Subscript & Superscript and several others, even Reverse. The next to last button toward the right is **Drop Shadow**. However, we have found that some of the pdf readers (kpdf for sure) have problems loading and printing pdf's with the shadow made in this manner. Some computer lock-ups have even occurred. So, instead of just clicking the 'Drop Shadow' button, we do ours a little differently. It might take a few more seconds, but it is just as easy.

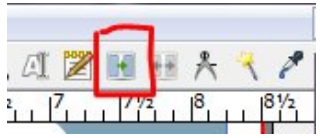
Make your text frame and get your title in it the way you want it to look. My header at work is color, but the background around the text is white, so my title will be black with a gray shadow. After you get your title the way you want it, click on **Item > Duplicate**. Now you have two text frames with the same thing in them. If the first was black, change the second one to gray (or whatever color you want to use. For the magazine, one is white and one is black.) Select the one you want to be in front, and in **Properties**, click on the up arrow with the line across the top of it (bring to top). Note what the X-pos and Y-pos of your text is, then choose the other text frame. Your drop shadow can be in any position and as close or as far away as you wish, just by manipulating the X-pos and Y-pos of the other text.



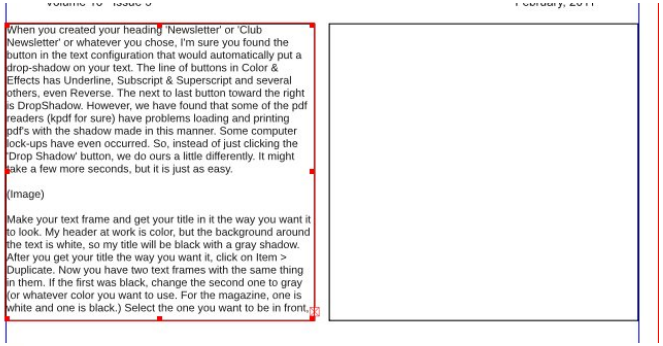
My drop shadow here is done by adding 0.03 inches to the X-pos and 0.02 inches to the Y-pos of the top text. That makes the shadow underneath and to the right of the main text. With some experimentation, you can get them in many positions, close to the main text or farther away, whichever you want. After you get them positioned, you should group and lock them so they won't get moved by accident. (You could actually move these off the page and get them positioned there if you wish. After they are locked together you can move them back onto your page and position them properly in the header, then lock them to the page.) Save your work.

Text Flow

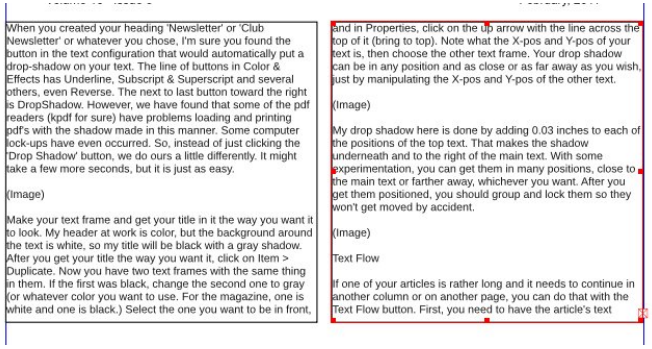
If one of your articles is rather long and it needs to continue in another column or on another page, you can do that with the **Text Flow** button.



First, you need to have the article's text frames already in place. (In the illustrations, the text frames have borders around them for visibility.) In my newsletter I generally have two columns. Choose the first text frame, then open the story editor screen and put in your text. When you click the ok button (checkmark) your story editor will close and you will see your text in the frame. Since you have too much text for that one frame, you will see a box with a red X in the bottom right corner of your frame.



Click on the **Text Flow** button (hovering your mouse over it will show '**Link Text Frames**'), then click the text frame where you want the rest of your text. You should immediately see your text in that frame.



You can flow it to yet another frame, or resize the two frames you are using, whichever works best for your document. Just remember to click the frame you are going from, then the Text Flow button, then the frame you are going to.

Fonts

While we are talking about text, it might be a good idea to mention that, although you want to 'dress up' your newsletter, you probably shouldn't make it too 'busy'. What I mean is that there are thousands of fonts you can use, some plain and some fancy, but it's a better idea if you stick to two or three readable fonts for most everything, and only use one or two 'offbeat' fonts to draw attention in a certain spot in your newsletter. That way you preserve the flow of the newsletter while giving it an added spark here and there. In my work newsletter, I have used a couple of different fonts for article titles, but left the standard font for the body of each article so it's easy to read. The title font draws the reader's eye, and then they read that article easily. Using a different font for each article may sound good, but it would distract the reader too much, so it is probably best not to do it. After all, that's why you are doing a newsletter; so people will read it.

Next month, we'll talk about layers.

Advertisement

ibiblio

The PCLinuxOS Magazine

Created with Scribus 1.3.9

The PCLinuxOS Magazine

MY PCLinuxOS

Your Community Projects Forum

PCLinuxOS.

Radically Simple.

PCLinuxOS & Linux In Greece

by Efstathios Iosifidis (diamond_gr)

Greece!!! The country where many people want to visit the Acropolis and many other sites. But what is happening on the FOSS area? There are plenty of Linux Users Groups and distro communities, many forums and blogs and only one printed magazine. What about the famous distros? Ubuntu is organized with a forum and mailing list (most of the users migrate to Mint), Fedora has a mailing list and lately they created their community portal and openSUSE is a dynamic developing community with a forum and mailing list. Finally, FreeBSD has a quite an organized community. There are some other smaller projects as well.

Unfortunately, LUGs across Greece promote only Ubuntu. Their reason is quite simple. It comes all set up complete with Greek documentation and help, it's easy to use and, of course, it's the most famous. Personally, I think the easiest distro is the one that the user will start with. Most advanced users characterize a distro as easy, compared to their taste. A Windows user that wants Linux installed must make the final decision. Some friends tell me "things are easier with Windows, and there are more programs (they mean cracked)." They claim that "they don't use Linux because it's difficult and it's for developers and hackers." They express a negative opinion for something they haven't even used. It's difficult for me, (a Linux user), to prove to them that Linux is easy.

Here comes PCLinuxOS. You all know the pros and cons of the distro.

The next step is to promote and present it to many people. How to do that?

1. Write to as many forums as possible.

2. Also write to blogs and magazines.

3. Translate some documentation to Greek language.

4. Install it for many users.

5. Set a common place (forum, mailing list) where questions can be asked, and maybe create documentation for new users.

In my personal opinion, it's better to post in non-Linux forums or blogs. That way Linux "earns" new users. The advanced Linux users can search for themselves about PCLinuxOS.

What I've done so far in Greece?

1. I have a blog under http://www.pclos.tk where I add news, links to the magazine and documentation. Maybe it's not the only one out there. If so, other PCLinuxOS users can contact me.

2. I write to as many forums as I can about the magazine, documentation.

3. I write on the OSArena Blog (http://osarena.net), which is one of the high traffic linux blogs. The administrator wants to host the iso files and maybe host a repository server, if possible.

4. I inform people about LUG's events.

5. I install PCLinuxOS for as many people as possible, who want to migrate from Windows to Linux, so I get questions asked and can create a good documentation.

Last month, the only printed magazine in Greece, called Linux Format (Greek edition) changed to Linux Inside (http://www.linuxinside.gr/). I didn't have much time to contact them due to personal problems, but I will soon.

So what needs to be done? First of all there must be a Greek forum (it's better to be under the international forum), where Greeks can find help. The question is “Why create a Greek subforum? There are not enough people”. The answer to this question is that a forum is a tool for new users where they can find help. Also, it will be a place where all Greek users can gather, as there are not many other Linux forums.

So what do new users think about PCLOS? What are their reactions?

- Can I do this? What about that?

- Why isn't it more popular than Windows? It's so powerful!

- Why is it free? Is that legal?

Eliza T. (after using PCLinuxOS for two weeks) comments:

Fast, flexible, easy to use, no fee to buy, many free-legal programs. I feel comfort, I feel everything will be safe and nothing will go wrong. That feeling is great because I'm a person that I need my computer to do the basic tasks and achieve various things on business and personal level. Compared to Windows, PCLinuxOS gives me the impression that it's radically simple and operational. Maybe it has the same speed but I'm not sure yet since I had an old version of Windows XP. I feel “strange” that I don't use an antivirus program and many other programs to protect my computer after many years I used Windows.

To be continued soon!!!

Screenshot Showcase

Posted by coffeetime, February 18, 2011, running WMii.

e17: Settings Panel, Part 3

by Meemaw

The last four sections in the Settings Panel are **Advanced, Settings, Extensions and System.**

Advanced

ACPI Bindings - This is a configuration you can uset o tell the system what to do for certain keystrokes. For example, you can designate that the computer be suspended or shut down immediately if the power button is pressed. You can also choose what you want to do if your laptop lid is closed (shut down or hibernate or suspend). There are several defaults already in place.

Performance - Sets things like frame rate and cache size.

Search Directories - Sets the default directories for data, images, icons, themes, fonts, modules and backgrounds. You can change or add locations.

Engine - Enables or disables Composite

Configuration Panel - You can configure the whole Settings Panel to appear in your menu if you wish. You will get a menu item under Settings called 'All' which will have each section in the settings panel.

Settings

Dialogs - Confirmation dialogs can be enabled or disabled here.

Profiles - Profiles are different screen configurations you can choose, from default to minimal, and even for a phone or touchscreen. There is a short explanation for each.

Extensions

Modules - Many of the modules you will use are already loaded. However, others (like Drawers) need to be loaded and you do it from here. It comes up as a small window, but enlarge it because the majority of your module loading and settings are in this window.

Screenshot - Your e17 installation has a screenshot program already on a shelf...(unless you removed it.) It can be configured here.

Shelves - New shelves can be added and configured from here.

Mixer - Designates which sound card to use, and will launch the mixer so it can be configured.

Pager - Configuration for your pager (multiple desktops.)

Everything Configuration - This starts the configuration for Everything, which is a 'plugin-based application' that lets you run almost anything.

Itask NG - This a more advanced taskbar and app launcher, with zoom effect.

Everything Plugins - Configure which plugins you want to use

Everything Start - There is a gadget called Everything Start which you can load. It puts an icon on your desktop which will start Everything with a single click.

Everything Files - This is to edit your recently opened files list in everything. You can clear the list and start over if you wish.

Everything Applications - For configuring which applications should be included.

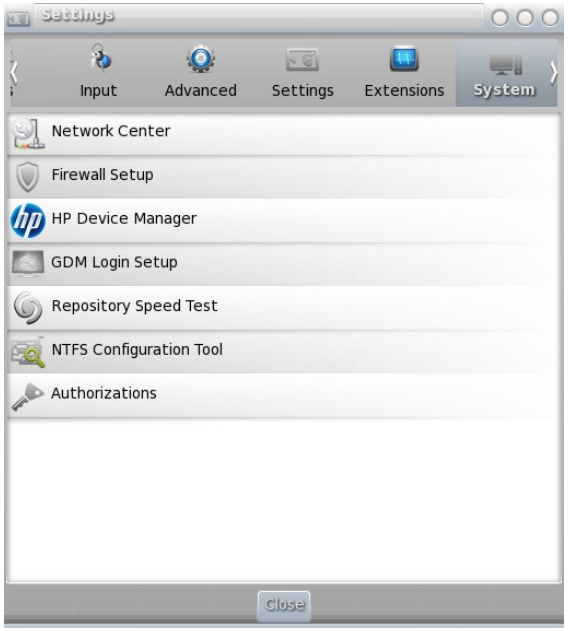
Everything Aspell - Aspell is a spell checker which can be one of the applications you run in Everything

Everything Websearch - If you add the websearch module, this configuration item will show up in the section, allowing you to configure it.

Gadgets - Extra gadgets can be loaded and configured here.

System

This section contains many of the same things that PCLinuxOS Control Center (Configure Your Computer) includes. You'll need to enter your root password on many of them.



Network Center - Configuring your Internet connection.

Firewall Setup - Configure your firewall.

HP Device Manager - Help with your HP printer

GDM Login Setup - Configure your login screen to show a certain wallpaper, and what you want it to include.

Repository Speed Test - You can run this to find the fastest repo for updating using Synaptic.

NTFS Configuration Tool - Configure your system to read the NT file system used with Windows

Authorizations - You can use this section do designate which user is authorized to perform some functions, such as killing a process or unmounting a drive.

Although it's not in the picture, after I updated through Synaptic, the following item appeared in this last section;

Update Package Sources List - I haven't tried it so I'm hoping it does just what we all had to do in a terminal not long ago when the repos changed.

Have fun with e17!!!

Ladies Of PCLinuxOS: ms_meme

by ms_meme (In her own words)

Editor's Note: *This month, we feature our beloved ms_meme in our spotlight of the Ladies Of PCLinuxOS column. In typical ms_meme style, she provides her own "interview" of sorts, in her own way, and in a way that you would expect ms_meme to respond: in a poem.*

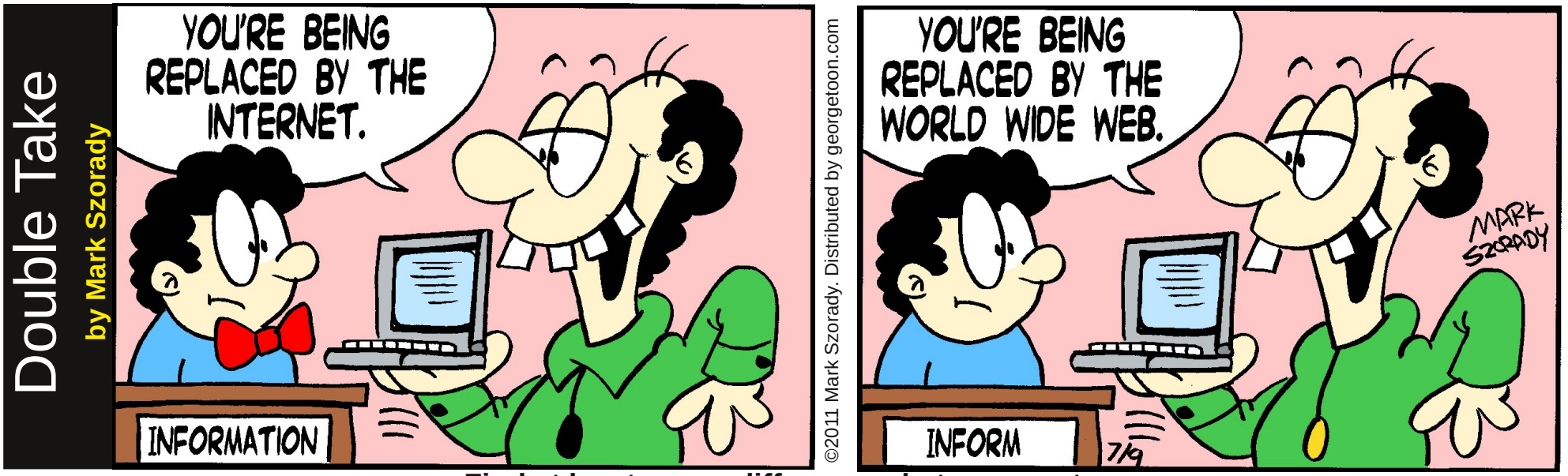
ms_meme martha marty to me it's all the same
Married 39 years to one man who gave me my last name
Two grown children each with a computer science degree
Whatever interests them always interests me

Got my first computer the date was Y2K
I never knew the difference just another day
In 2008 to Linux I decided to change
Looking back that other seems so very strange

I might be like a palm tree some say just the nut
To fun and new activities my mind is never shut
Or perhaps a daisy flower whose petals are a lot
And I toss out any new things if they love me not

The New PCLinusOS Magazine said meme we want you
Ok I replied but there's only one thing I can do
So they put me in a corner called ms_meme's Nook
To sing PCLinuxOS praises but never by the book

Double Take & Mark's Quick Gimp Tip

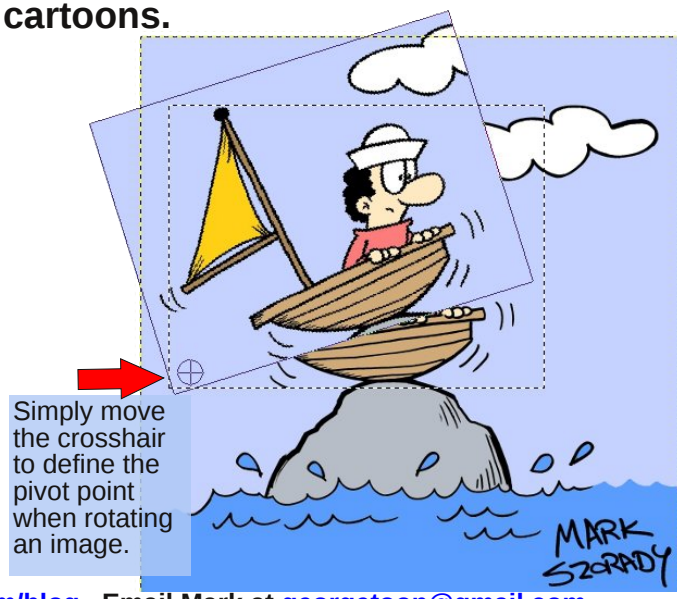


Answers on Page 24.

Find at least seven differences between cartoons.

Mark's Quick Gimp Tip

The Gimp allows you to adjust an image in a multitude of ways. You can crop, align, resize, flip, brighten, darken, etc. I make frequent use of the rotate tool when I'm creating my comic features. (I sometimes need to straighten the artwork after scanning, or I simply want to adjust an element within the comic panel.) The Gimp's rotate tool is very versatile and easy to use. You can rotate a layer, selection or path. I especially like it's ability to change the pivot point of the image being rotated. When you select an image or area to be rotated, you're presented with the marching ants outline defining the selection, and a cross-hair in the middle of the selection. Simply move this cross-hair anywhere within the selected region and it then defines the point from which the image is going to be rotated. In the example at right, I moved the cross-hair to the lower left of the selection. You can see how the image is then rotated up and to the left, but the cross-hair point stays stationary.



-Mark Szorady is a nationally syndicated cartoonist with georgetoon.com. He blogs at georgetoon.com/blog. Email Mark at georgetoon@gmail.com.

e17: Running Ecomorph, Part 1

by Darrel Johnston (djohnston)

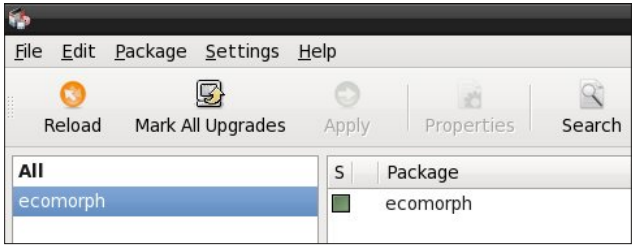
The e17 window manager has plenty of eye candy. One aspect that was missing for some time was a 3D desktop display, such as Compiz. Because the enlightenment libraries aren't compatible with Compiz, the more adventuresome e17 developers set out to create their own 3D display manager. Their creation is called ecomorph.

The e17 creators state that e17 will run on a PC with as little as little as 64MB of RAM, a 100mHz CPU, and a VGA video card capable of 640x480 resolution. However, that is cutting it very close. I'm going to err on the side of caution for a PC running a PCLinuxOS version of e17 and a version of e17-Ecomorph.

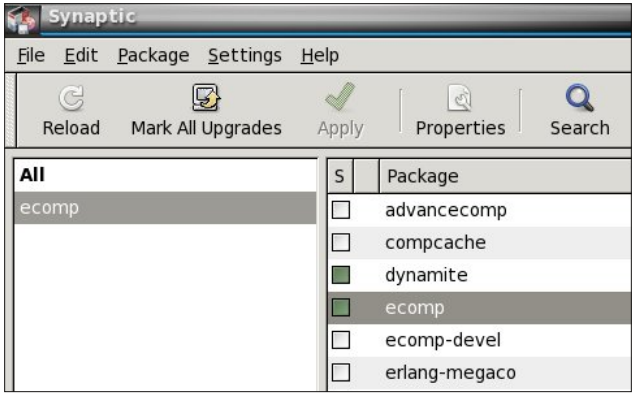
For the full e-17 version, which is based on KDE4 and Qt libraries, I would recommend a minimum of 512MB of RAM, a 500mHz CPU, and a video card with 32MB of video RAM. The light e-17 version, based more on Gtk+ libraries, would need 256MB of RAM and a video card with 8MB of video RAM.

However, either PCLinuxOS e17 version running an e17-Ecomorph desktop session would need at least a 3D-capable video card with 32MB of RAM, at the absolute minimum. And that may be stretching it a bit. Ecomorph is a modified version of Compiz, so a 3D-capable video card is a necessity. An nVidia card is also recommended. ATI may work, but I don't have one and cannot verify whether it will. Intel embedded graphics chipsets would not be recommended. As a general rule of thumb, if you can run Compiz on your PC, you can run e17-Ecomorph.

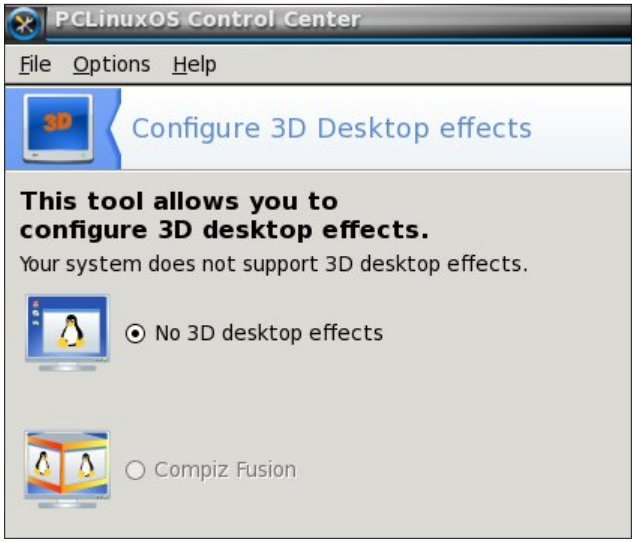
In order to run ecomorph, there are some software prerequisites. The first, of course, is an installed e17 desktop. The second is the ecomorph package. A Synaptic search for the terms "e17" and "enlightenment" will not show the ecomorph package. Search for the package in Synaptic by its name, then install it.



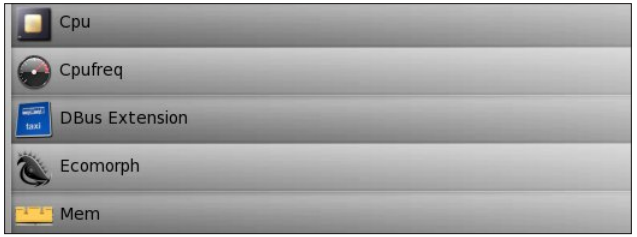
The third prerequisite for running ecomorph is the ecomp package. Once again, a Synaptic search for the terms "e17" and "enlightenment" will not show the ecomp package. Search in Synaptic for the package by its name, then install the package.



After the ecomorph and ecomp packages are installed, we can begin configuring ecomorph. First, be sure Compiz is not running. Open the PCLinuxOS Control Center, click on Hardware in the left panel, then click on Configure 3D Desktop effects in the right panel. Be sure "No 3D desktop effects" is selected.



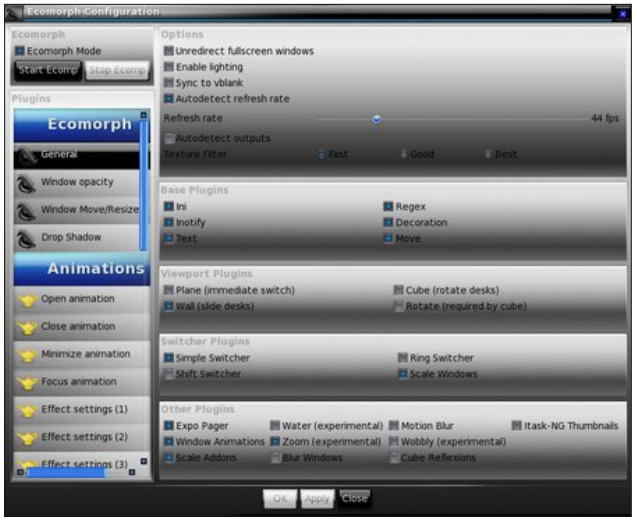
For the next step, go to the PCLinuxOS menu, select Settings > Modules. Click the System tab at the top of the window. Select the Ecomorph module, then click the Load button at the bottom.



Click the Look tab at the top of the Module Settings window. For ecomorph to work correctly you need to disable the Composite and Dropshadow modules.

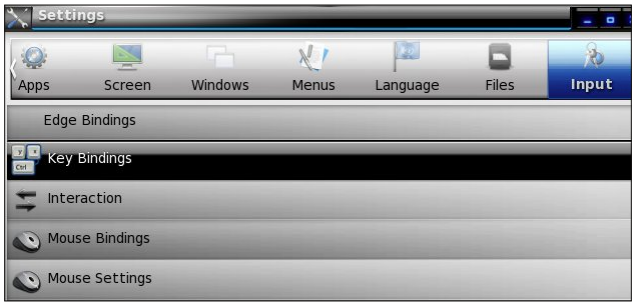
Close the Module Settings window. From the PCLinuxOS menu, select Settings > Ecomorph. Do not click the Start Ecomp button. Ecomorph will be started later by logging out, then changing the desktop session to Ecomorph. When you login to the Ecomorph session, Ecomorph should be running out of the box. Next, tick the Ecomorph Mode box just above the Start Ecomp button. Then, click the Apply button at the bottom of the window. The screen may flash for a second or two. If the Apply button at the bottom of the window is selectable again, click it.

I now want to enable two particular 3D effects, Expo and Cube. The Base Plugins were already all enabled. I left them as is. In the Viewport Plugins section, I enabled Plane, Cube, and Rotate. In the Switcher Plugins section, I enabled Ring Switcher,



as I want to use that option later. In the Other Plugins section, I enabled Wobbly (windows effect) and Cube Reflexions. Then I saved the settings by clicking the Apply button.

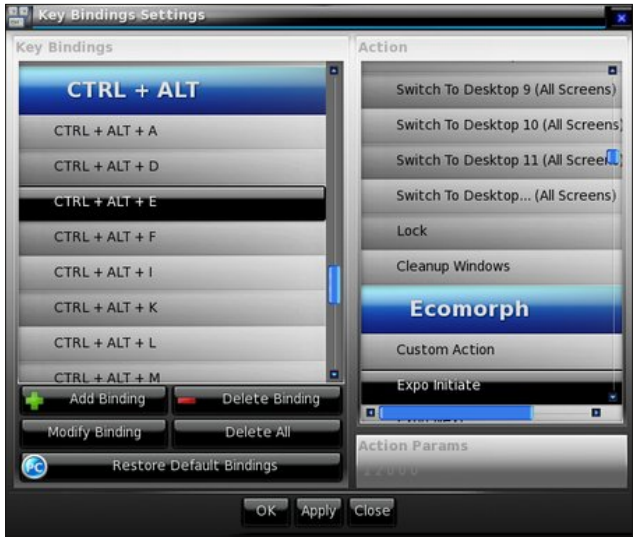
In order to use the Expo and rotating Cube effects, I need to add Key or Mouse Bindings. From the PCLinuxOS menu, select Settings > Settings Panel. At the top of the Settings window, click the right arrow button to scroll the tabs until the Input tab appears. Then select the Input tab. For the Expo effect, I chose to use key bindings. Select the Key Bindings button.



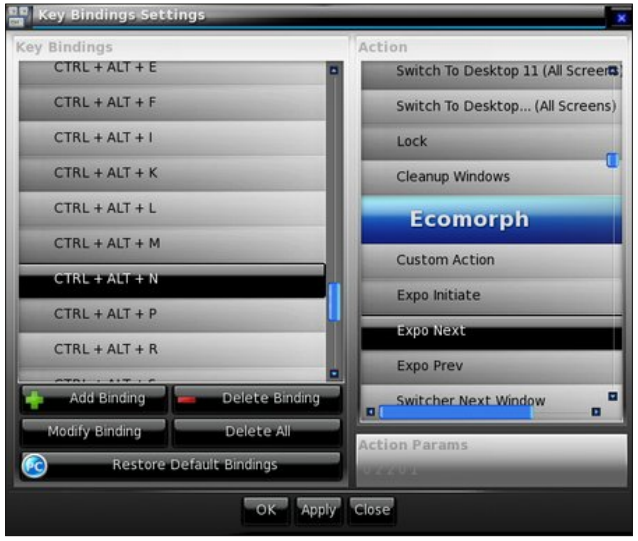
I wanted to use key combinations which were easy for me to remember. irst, I scrolled down to the CTRL+ALT section in the left window column to see if the E, N and P combinations were already in use. They weren't, so I chose those. First, click the Add Binding button in the lower left corner of the window. A small message appeared (not shown) stating to "Please press key sequence or Esc to abort". I pressed Ctrl-Alt-E. To assign the key sequence to an action, I scrolled down in the right column of the screen to the Ecomorph section. I clicked the Expo Initiate button to assign the key sequence. I wanted to be sure the setting was saved, so I pressed the Apply button.

Advertisement

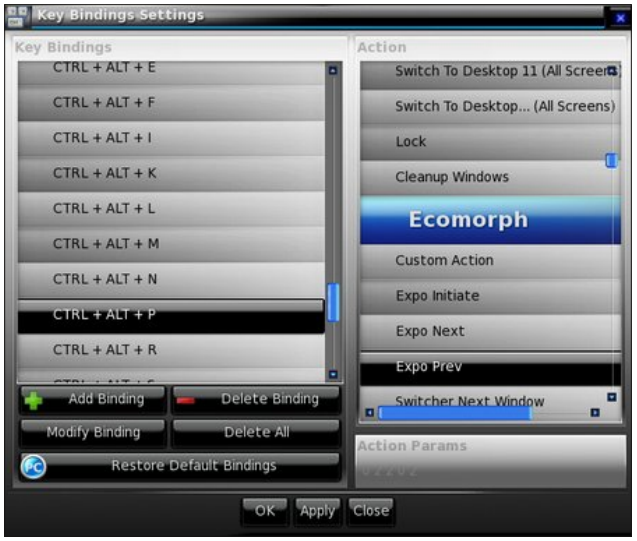
powered by ENKI



Moving on the to the next key sequence, I clicked the Add Binding button, and pressed Ctrl-Alt-N. I

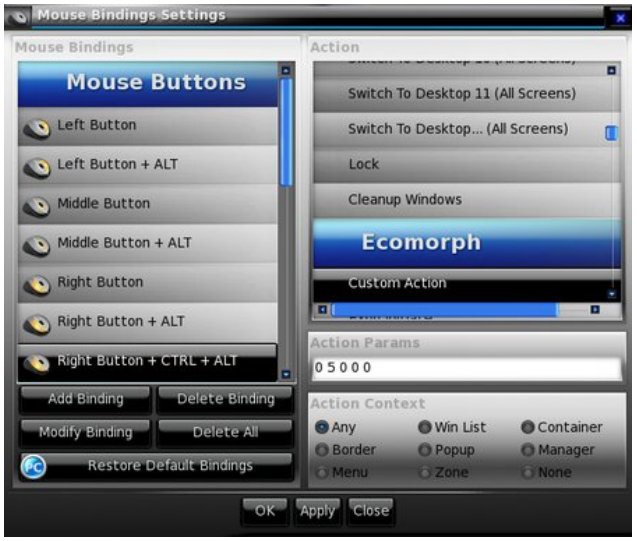


then clicked the Expo Next button in the right column, then clicked the Apply button.



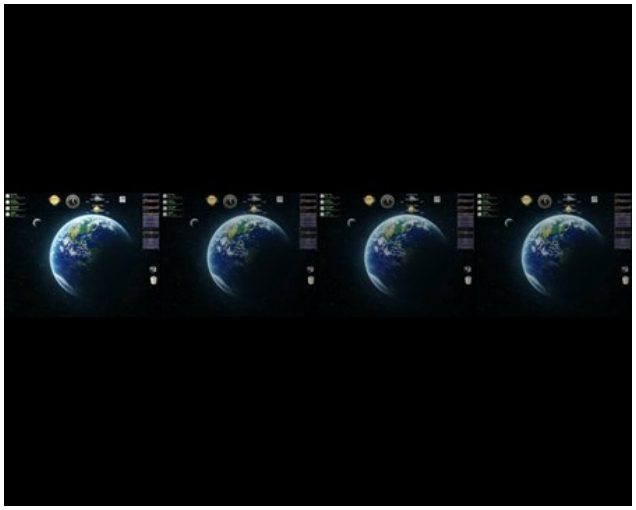
For the last Expo key sequence, I clicked the Add Binding button, then pressed Ctrl-Alt-P. I then clicked the Expo Prev button in the right column, then clicked the Apply button to save the key sequence settings.

To activate the Cube effect, I chose to use a mouse binding. From the Settings window, with the Input tab selected, click on the Mouse Bindings button. I chose a Ctrl-Alt action again. First, I clicked the Add Binding button. A small dialog window appeared explaining how to input the mouse selection, or to “Press Escape to abort”. I pressed Ctrl-Alt on the keyboard, then the right mouse button. Note that the selection shows the mouse button first (Right Button+CTRL+ALT). In the right column of the



window, there are no cube options in the Ecomorph section. Using the method posted on the forum by rpmTECH, I clicked Custom Action in the right column. In the lower right corner of the window, an Action Params input box appeared. As per instructions, I deleted the default text in the input box and entered 0 5 0 0 0. I then clicked the Apply button to save the mouse binding.

Once I had finished adding the Ecomorph settings I wanted to use and test, it was time to try them out. I closed all open windows, then logged out. At the login window, I selected E17-Ecomorph session, then logged in with my username and password. The screenshot below (next page) shows the Expo effect.



The screenshot below shows the familiar rotating Cube effect.

There are many, many special effects configuration options available in the Ecomorph Configuration window. In the next article, I will delve into some of them.

Special thanks go to Agust and smurfslover for their many e17 and Ecomorph tips and tricks in the forum.

Screenshot Showcase

Posted by ghostbunny, February 2, 2011, running LXDE.

Forum Foibles: Roman Holiday

'Twas the middle of February the weather still was cold
The posts in the forum were stale and getting old
Synaptic was broken so no one could update
The bacon was rancid just sat there on the plate

Texstar counting his money said "Hip Hip Hurray
I'm inviting everybody for a Roman Holiday"
The forum was a twitter as they started to pack their bags
"Nothing to wear "said the gals "all we have is rags"

"Not to worry" said our leader "because all that you need
Is an old Roman name and then you may proceed"
You can tell by the tags we really went gung ho
Had a lot of fun spending all Texstar's dough

PCLinuxOS users are really a great bunch
They're game for anything if someone pays for lunch
The memories that we share nothing else can compare
We enjoy it all and never ever leave our chair.

Video: Part 1 - Time Shifting TV Programs

by Paul Arnote (parnote)

I have to be perfectly honest. I ***do*** have a computer with WinXP on it still in the house. It's there for one special reason: to record television programs for later viewing, and to edit videos. Until quite recently, I had not been able to find a suitable Linux application to perform either task. Most "television" applications in Linux, like the popular TVTime, allow you to only ***watch*** television programs. Sure, some applications exist to allow you to record television programs, but only after you've earned your PhD in that application are you then able to perform (what should be) this relatively simple task. As for editing those video recordings, the tools are definitely there (and have been all along), but it isn't until you dig deeper into these tools that you uncover their hidden (and often well disguised) capabilities.

While I'm being honest here, the lack of support for video recording (from a TV tuner card, or otherwise) in Linux, along with the lack of adequate video editing software, has been a "sore spot" for me ever since I started with Linux over four years ago. Before I was "enlightened," back when I was a Windows user, I was knee-deep into video recording and editing. When I started with Linux, there was virtually nothing that allowed me to perform these tasks – tasks that I had become accustomed to performing with my computer.

Our Windows counterparts, like it or not, have a much easier time with both of these tasks. There are many, many choices for video recording applications, as well as many, many options for video editing applications. Our OS-X brethren (I call them brethren, since OS-X is somewhat based on BSD, another *nix-like system) also have a lot more choices for well written applications to perform these tasks. Meanwhile, we Linux users are the red-headed step-children of the software world, when it comes to video recording and editing applications.

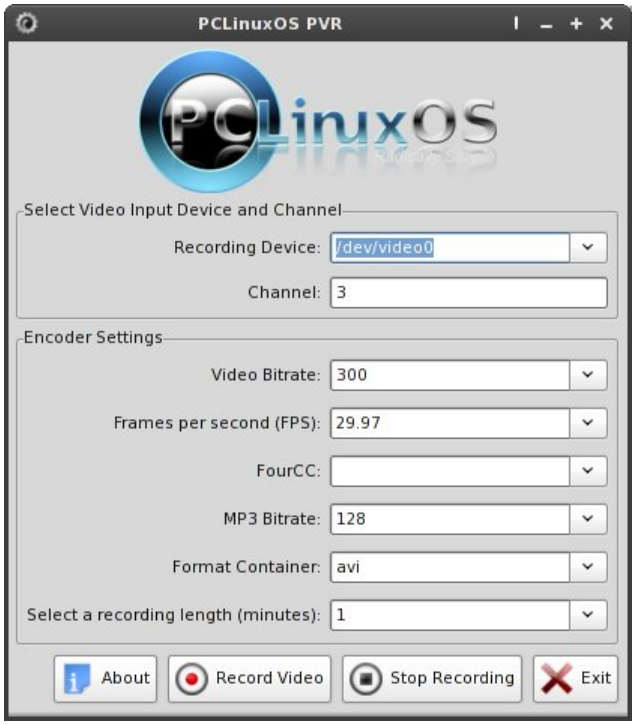
So, like any self-respecting Linux user, I sought to find solutions to these problems, these, these software omissions. Being the self-respecting Linux user that I am, the kind who cringes and feels "dirty" whenever he has to use a Windows computer in his own home, I did the only thing I could do, after not finding any suitable video recording applications: *I made my own*. I also have to admit that I was inspired to see this through by Leiche's efforts on his MyMencoder application (which we'll be taking a look at next month, by the way).

PCLinuxOS PVR

Amazingly enough, it wasn't as difficult to make the recording application as I had thought it would be. PCLinuxOS PVR (Personal Video Recorder) is simply a bash script that's been dressed up with a GUI, thanks to gtkdialog. Take a look, and see what it looks like (top of the next column).

PCLinuxOS PVR can be installed on your computer running PCLinuxOS, via Synaptic.

Before we can record video from our TV tuner card, we first have to pass some instructions and parameters along to control the resulting video file.



Selecting Video Input Device & Channel

At the top of the window, we select the video recording device. Some users may have web cams attached to their computers, and others won't. Some users may even have two TV tuner cards installed on their computer. Because there is no way to

predict the wide variety of hardware configurations a user may have, the user will have to select which V4L or V4L2 (Video For Linux and Video For Linux 2) device they want to use to record from. This also allows the user to record from their web cam (if they choose), since the user has the ability to choose that web cam as the input source for their video recording.

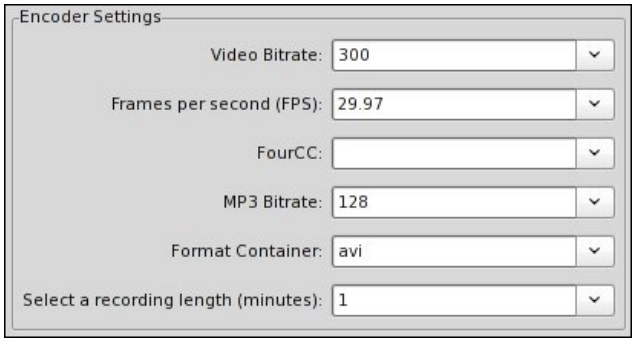
On my system, the TV tuner card is labeled as /dev/video0. If you don't know how the label for your TV tuner card (or any other video output device) on your system, open a terminal and simply type lshal |grep video on the command line. Scroll back through the output, until you find the line linux.device_file =. The information on the right side of the "=" is the label for your video output device.

We also have to tell the TV tuner card what channel to tune to so we can capture our video. In my case, since I'm recording everything from a digital cable converter box, my channel is always set on channel 3. Obviously, if you are recording off-the-air programming using rabbit ear antennae or an external TV antenna, you will need to specify the channel that you wish to record from.

Encoder Settings

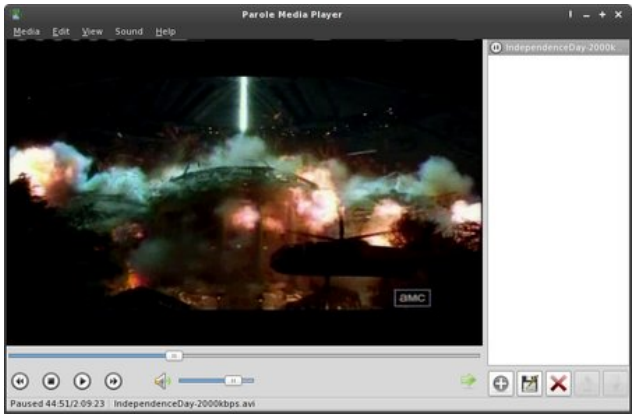
In the next section of the PCLinuxOS PVR window, we need to pass along some parameters to control our video recording.

The first entry is "Video Bitrate." Before you go and automatically choose the highest video bitrate you



can, a word of caution is in order here. The higher the video bitrate, the higher the quality of the recorded video. But that also means that you will have a MUCH larger file. Higher video bitrates = higher quality video files = larger video file sizes. PCLinuxOS PVR defaults to a video bitrate of 300 kbps. This results in a small file, but also one with quite marginal video quality. Videos recorded at this low video bitrate are suitable if you are recording a television program to view later on your computer monitor, and you're not looking to save it. If you are looking for better quality video (say, you want to record it to DVD later on), video bitrates between 1000 and 2000 kbps typically give pretty good results, and allow you to fit close to 4 hours of video onto a DVD. If you are looking for the best quality video, then video bitrates of 5000 kbps and higher are what you are looking for. You can enter any number you want here, but I definitely would not recommend entering a value less than 300 kbps, nor higher than 8000 kbps. The easiest is to simply select a video bitrate from the drop down list that is provided.

Below is an example of the output of a video recorded with PCLinuxOS PVR, recorded at 2000 kbps video bitrate, played back in the Xfce Parole Media Player.



Under the second entry, "Frames per second (FPS)," you can set the frames per second that is used for your region of the world. In the United States and Japan, NTSC is the standard, and it presents video at 29.97 frames per second. In most of Europe, PAL is the standard, and it presents video at 25 frames per second. Films are typically shot at 24 frames per second. Can you see how confusing this becomes? It gets even worse when you factor in HD recordings. For now, just choose the frame rate that is most suitable for your region of the world.

The next entry, "FourCC," can be skipped for now. It has not yet been fully implemented. The FourCC code is used exclusively by the AVI file format, and identifies the codec used. Once implemented, this will allow users to record video that can be played back on a DVD player that recognizes and plays back DivX encoded AVI files. Many DivX encoded AVI files will fit about 2 hours of decent quality video on a regular CD-R. Also, users who choose to use

XviD (an open source alternative to DivX) can "trick" those DVD players into thinking it's a DivX encoded AVI file, merely by changing the FourCC code.

The fourth entry, "MP3 Bitrate," allows you to set the quality level of the sound you record. The default value is 128 kbps, which typically produces acceptable stereo quality sound. Just as with the video bitrate discussion above, the higher the MP3 bitrate you set, the larger amount of space (within the video file) your sound will occupy, but also resulting in a higher sound quality. Fortunately, the sound of a video only occupies a fraction of the space within a video file, compared to the video. This entry field allows you to either select from the preset values in the drop down list (128, 160, 192 or 256), or enter your own MP3 bitrate. Currently, the MP3 sample depth in PCLinuxOS PVR is locked at 41,400 Hz, or 41.4 KHz.

While I'm talking about the audio, let me give you a tip here. My TV tuner card has a stereo patch cord that outputs the audio from the card to the Line In input on the sound card. If you start getting video recordings without sound, check to insure that you have your Line In capture activated in your audio manager.

Under the "Format Container" entry, I recommend (for now) just leaving it set for AVI. I have future plans to include the ability for the user to choose to record video as MPEG 1, MPEG 2 and Ogg-Theora (*.ogv) files. It is not yet fully implemented at this time.

Under the final entry, "Select a recording length (minutes)," you set how many minutes you want to record from your TV tuner card (or other video output source). Enter ONLY minutes here, and enter ONLY whole numbers. Thus two hours becomes 120 minutes. Four hours becomes 240 minutes. Three hours and 36 minutes becomes 216 minutes. You can either select from the preset recording lengths listed in the drop down list, or enter your own values. Your recording will automatically terminate after the number of minutes you specified has elapsed.

The "button" controls

At the bottom of the PCLinuxOS PVR window are the buttons that control the starting and stopping of a recording, along with exiting the program and getting more information about PCLinuxOS PVR.

The "About" button brings up the dialog shown above.

Selecting the "Record Video" button starts the video recording at the instant that you click it, and using the parameters you specified in the "Encoder Settings" section of the window.

If you want to stop a recording before the specified amount of time has elapsed, simply click the "Stop Recording" button. Your recording will immediately cease.

Selecting the "Exit" button exits the PCLinuxOS PVR application.

Future Plans

I've already revealed some of my future plans for enhancing PCLinuxOS PVR: implementation of the FourCC code, and the ability to record to video file formats other than just AVI. I also want to allow the user to choose the MP3 sample depth (48,000, or 48 kHz audio is typically required for DVD authoring).

The really big thing to add (and most important, at this point) is the ability to set up timer recordings. In its current state, you have to be sitting in front of PCLinuxOS PVR to start the recording. What I want is the ability to set a timer to record a program in the future, without the user sitting in front of the computer, and without any additional user interaction with PCLinuxOS PVR. With this addition, it will be possible for you to set a timer that will automatically record Wheel of Fortune on Friday evening, while

you are out having dinner with your family. When you return from dinner with your family, you can sit and watch Wheel of Fortune at your leisure, just as you can with a VCR or DVR. I am beginning to get my head wrapped around all the stuff that is needed to implement this feature (believe it or not).

Summary

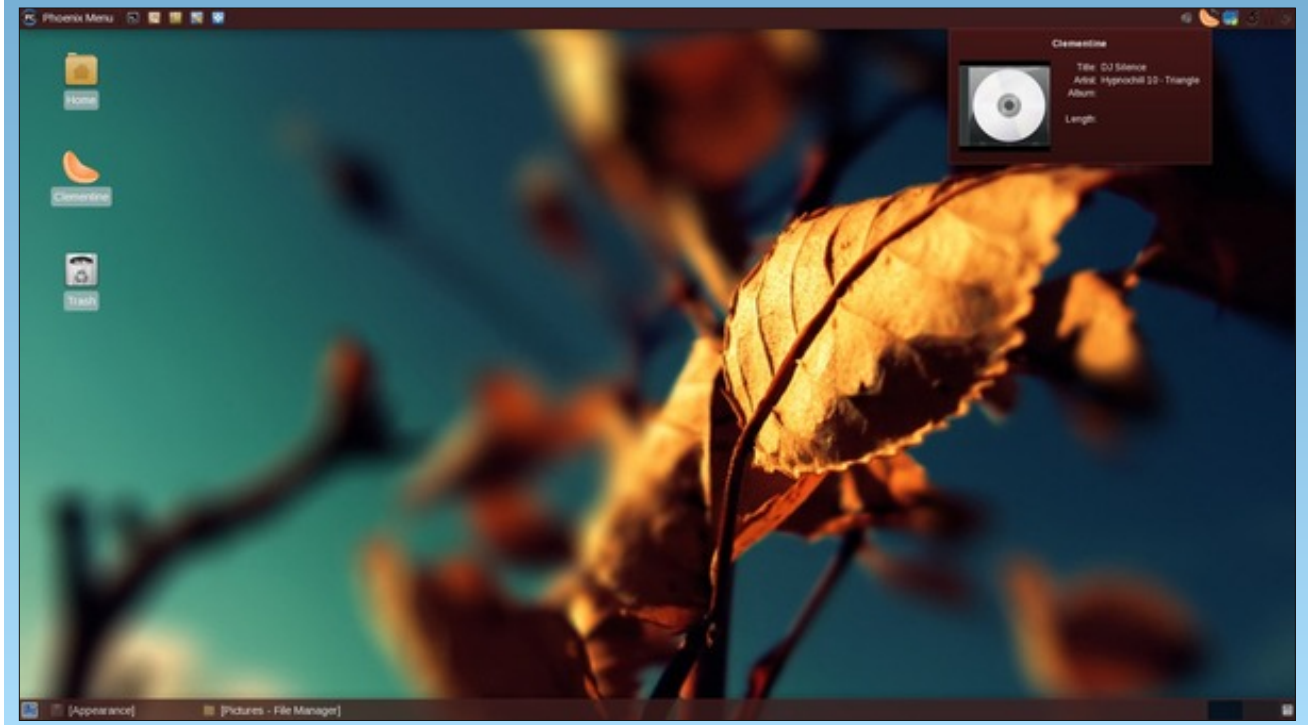
As you can see, PCLinuxOS PVR has the potential to grow, and I'm currently working on implementing that growth. Still, as it sits today, it gives me something that I never had before: an easy to use, reliable way to record quality video from my TV tuner card, with minimal effort. Sure, it only records in the AVI format at this time, but it gives me more than I had before, which was nothing. That alone is a milestone, at least for this Linux user.

See? There's not much that a self-respecting Linux user can accomplish, once he or she puts their mind to it. Sometimes, it just takes an unwillingness to be shunned by the rest of the computing world to spark those accomplishments.

Answers to Mark Szorady's Double Take:

(1) Hair shorter; (2) Bowtie missing; (3) Tooth missing; (4) collar missing; (5) Word balloon different; (6) "information" changed to "inform"; (7) Shirt cuff missing

Screenshot Showcase



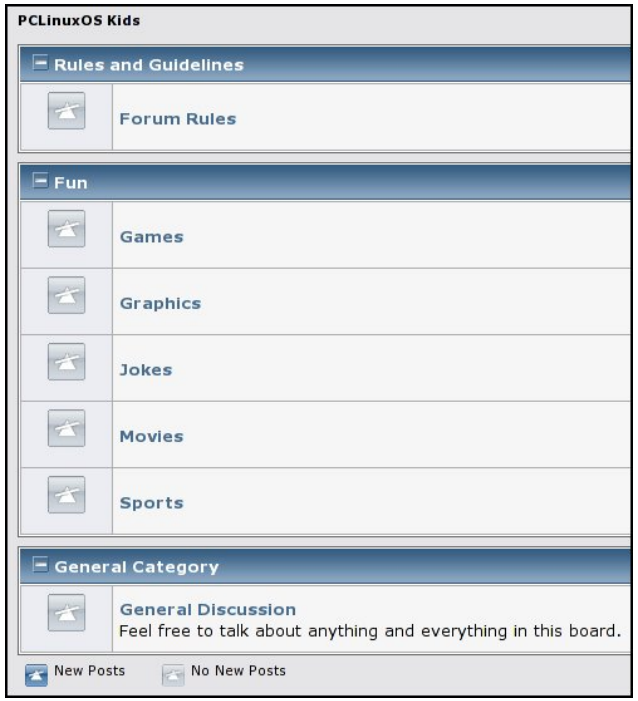
Posted by coffeetime, February 8, 2011, running Phoenix-Xfce.

New Forum Launched: PCLinuxOS Kids

by Paul Arnote (parnote)

In January, Sproggy launched a new PCLinuxOS forum. No, don't worry. Your regular forum hangout hasn't changed. It hasn't even moved. This new forum is targeted at kids.

Since there are a number of PCLinuxOS users with kids, Sproggy thought it would be a good idea to have a safe place where those kids could hang out and socialize with the kids of other PCLinuxOS users. Sproggy is hosting the forum on his own website.



Since getting started, PCLinuxOS Kids has grown to include 20 regular members, so far. Four moderators help maintain order in the forum, insuring that the short list of rules is adhered to. Those moderators are blindschLeiche, GuypronouncedGuynotGuy, longtomjr and SproggyJnr2. As you might imagine, longtomjr is the son of longtom, and SproggyJnr2 is the youngest son of Sproggy. The forum has three administrators to assist with the day to day running of the forum. Those administrators are longtom, Sproggy and parnote.

As you can see (left), the forum is currently broken down into three areas. The first lists the few simple rules of the forum. The plan is to keep the rules minimal and simple, at least to start off.

The second area is the "Fun" area, where discussions can occur about favorite games, graphics, jokes, movies and sports. Thus far, forum members can be found sharing their latest graphic creation, as they learn about the various graphics tools available in PCLinuxOS, or sharing their latest favorite jokes.

The "General Category" fills in the third area of the forum. Here, general discussion of just about anything and everything occurs. Users there have already expressed an interest in expanding the areas of the board to include a coding section,

The PCLinuxOS Kids logo created by longtomjr.

where they can help one another learn various coding techniques and share tips and tricks of coding.

Of course, you don't have to actually be a kid yourself to join the PCLinuxOS Kids forum. This forum appeals to the "kid" that exists in all of us, and is open to "kids" of all ages. Feel free to join in on the fun. Plus, if you have kids of your own and you are looking for a safe place where your children can socialize with others their own age, they are more than welcome to join in on the fun, as well. After all, the kids are our future. The earlier we help them to get started with PCLinuxOS, the better prepared they will be whenever they head out on their own ... and the better prepared they will be to carry the PCLinuxOS legacy into the future.

Video: Part 2 - Editing Your Recorded Video

by Paul Arnote (parnote)

Once you have finished recording your new video from your TV tuner card, you will most likely want to edit it. I'm not too sure about you, but I can barely stand to sit through all of the commercials one time, much less multiple times. Do you remember how, in Part 1, I talked about some Linux applications that have well-hidden, and often well disguised, features? Well, I found one, that once you figure out how to unleash its capabilities, works as well as (if not better than) anything offered in Windows.

In fact, one of the Windows programs that I still relied on was a video editor called Video Redo. Up until very recently, I didn't find anything in Linux that performed in a similar manner. Video Redo focused mostly on being able to edit MPEG1 and MPEG2 video files, without re-encoding the output video. This is a huge consideration, since re-encoding the video can result in a loss of quality. Each time a video is re-encoded, more and more details are lost, since the compression algorithm is applied with each re-encoding. It's just like if you keep saving the same JPG image over and over again, recompressing it with each pass. After only a few passes, the quality of the JPG image starts to noticeably deteriorate, due to recompression artifacts becoming more and more visible.

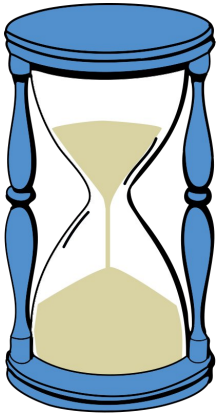
A large number of users have been asking the makers of Video Redo for a Linux version of the program for over five years. Despite one of the developers moving to Linux during that time, and another moving to the use of OS-X as his primary OS, Video Redo remains firmly entrenched as a Windows-only application. Unfortunately, there are mixed reports of being able to run it under Wine.

This is where Avidemux comes to the rescue. If you set it up properly, Avidemux will perform the exact same task as Video Redo. In fact, I've found it easier to use than Video Redo for clipping out the commercial advertisements from recorded TV programs. As an added benefit, Avidemux will open and edit almost ***any*** video file that you are able to view on your desktop, and not just MPEG1 and MPEG2 files, as Video Redo restricts itself to. Sure, there are other video editors for Linux, like Cinelerra, but the complexity of Cinelerra makes it overkill for what we want to do. The number of Linux users who have taken a look at Cinelerra and ran the other direction screaming with horror, are legendary. I'm firm in my belief of the K.I.S.S. principle (Keep It Super Simple), and Avidemux fits within those beliefs quite nicely.

Some background

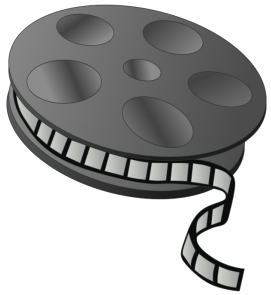
Under Windows, video editing applications came in two basic flavors: time-based editors and frame-based editors. For editing the commercial advertisements from time shifted recordings, time-based editors just don't work well. What you really need is a frame-based editor. These are a lot harder to find and tend to cost more than the time-based editors (remember, you have to buy software for Windows). To understand why frame-based editors outperform time-based editors, you have to have a basic understanding of how video is stored in a video file. There are some subtle differences between the various formats, but the general principle applies to all. The explanation that follows is only a general overview. Realize that this information is much more detailed than what I provide below. If you want to learn more about the structure of various video files, visit VideoHelp.com or Doom9.net.

The video image is created as a GOP, or Group Of Pictures. Within that GOP, there is the GOP Header, followed by the I-frames, B-frames, and P-frames. I-frames are basically "index" frames. That means that the I-frame is encoded as a single image, with no reference to any other frame, past or future. B-frames, on the other hand, are bidirectionally predicted from the preceding and subsequent frames. Basically, only the bits that change are recorded, resulting in B-frames saving the least amount of data, helping to reduce file size. Meanwhile, a P-frame is a video frame that is encoded relative to the past reference frame, which can be either another P-frame or an I-frame, depending on which frame is the closest preceding reference frame.



With time-based editors, video is typically cut at the closest reference frame to the time that you choose, either the I-frame or P-frame. You might not think that this would make a huge difference, since there are typically a set number of frames per second within a video file, depending on the broadcast standard used in your area of the world. However, programming content that is recorded from

over the air (or cable) broadcasts has the commercial advertisements inserted without regard to the video reference frames. Thus, more often than not, you either get the last small bit of an advertisement or you chop off the first part of the video you are attempting to save. You can liken it to trying to stop an hour glass's flow on a particular grain of sand. Trust me. It doesn't result in "clean" edits.

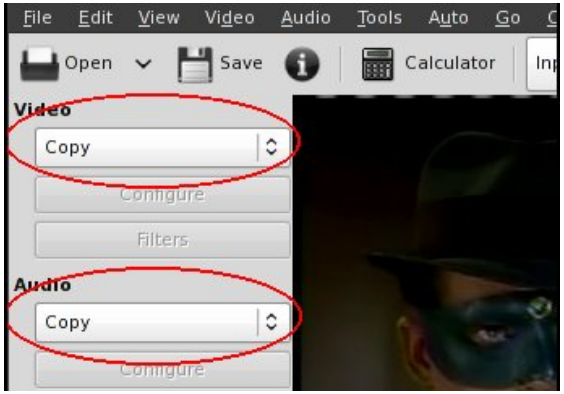


Now, with frame-based editors, you can make your edits on any frame of the video. Thus, if the broadcast image fades to a commercial that does not occur at a reference frame, you can still make precise cuts, eliminating the "flash" of the last fraction of a second of an advertisement that precedes your cut point. With frame-based editors, you can make much cleaner edits. Video Redo and Avidemux fall into this latter category of video editors.

Chop, Chop! Editing With Avidemux

Avidemux is an open source, cross-platform, multi-format video editing application, with versions available for Linux, Windows, Mac OS-X and BSD. Almost without exception, if you can play a video file on your computer, Avidemux can edit it. It is available in the PCLinuxOS repository as a command line tool, with a Gtk+ interface, and with a Qt4 interface. Since I'm using Phoenix Mini (Xfce), my screen shots will feature the Gtk+ version. The Qt4 version is identical in functionality to the Gtk+ version.

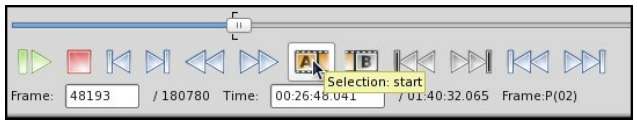
Keep in mind that this is not going to be a full-blown Avidemux tutorial. Rather, for now I'm only going to focus on the use of Avidemux to edit the video that you might have recorded from your TV tuner card.



The key to preserving the video quality is displayed in the screen shot above. Set ***both*** Video and Audio to "Copy" (circled with the red ovals). This prevents both the audio and video from being re-encoded when you save the file, and simply copies the audio and video data to the new video file, without recompressing the output. Re-encoding will cause the video to be recompressed, which is something we do not want to happen, since it will most likely result in a loss of quality from compression artifacts. You can always choose to recompress the video later, after you've made your edits. In this way, it's similar to doing all of your edits on your graphics files in the PNG format (which uses lossless compression), and then saving your final version as JPG (which uses lossy compression) to achieve the smaller file size that JPG graphics provide. The goal is to minimize the introduction of those compression artifacts, which become increasingly visible with each pass through a lossy compression algorithm. For what it's worth, virtually all video compression algorithms use lossy compression. Otherwise, the file sizes would be many, many times larger than they currently are.

The six keys highlighted with red are all you need to successfully navigate through a video file with Avidemux. Of those, there are only four that I use the majority of the time: Shift, Control, Left Arrow and Right Arrow. I find that I have much more precise control of my positioning within a video file by using the keyboard over the mouse. Pressing the left or right arrow keys steps backwards or forwards (respectively) through a video one frame at a time. Shift + Left arrow moves backwards in the video file 25 frames, while Shift + Right arrow moves forwards in the video file 25 frames. Ctrl + Left arrow moves backwards in the video file 50 frames, and Ctrl + Right arrow moves forward in the video file 50 frames. Pressing the Up arrow key moves to the next key frame in the video file (Shift and Ctrl have no apparent affect on this action), while pressing the Down arrow key moves to the previous key frame in the video.

I tend to use a combination of the key presses I described to get me close to the edit point in a video. Once I get close, I then use the Left arrow and Right arrow keys to make the fine adjustments, and to bring the video right to the frame that I want to start my cut.

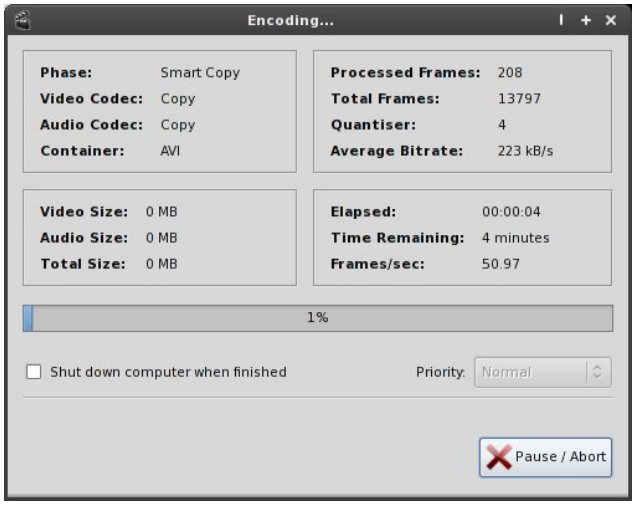


There are similar controls on the Avidemux control bar. From left to right, the buttons are: Play/Pause, Stop, Previous frame, Next frame, Previous key frame, Next key frame, Start selection, End selection, Previous black screen, Next black screen, Beginning of file, End of file. You ***could*** use the mouse and navigate through the file using repeating mouse clicks on the appropriate buttons, but it is much easier to use the keyboard to navigate through a file. For what it's worth, I find that the "Previous black screen" and "Next black screen" buttons don't really work all that well. It is slow to search through a large video file for the black screens, and Avidemux only seems to find them when the black screen that precedes a commercial advertisement falls on a reference frame within the video. The majority of the time, that does not occur.

When you come to a section of the video that you want to cut out (such as the start of commercial advertisements in the middle of a video), use the Left or Right arrow keys to navigate to a black screen right before the advertisement, and select the "A" button to mark the beginning of the selection.

Now, navigate to the end of the advertisements, to the black screen that immediately precedes the resumption of the video you want to keep, and select the "B" button to mark the end of the selection. Once you have the start and end of the commercial block marked (indicated by the brackets superimposed on the video position slider), simply press the "Delete" key on your keyboard. Voila! The commercial block is gone. Repeat this process throughout the rest of your video file for each of the commercial blocks that you want to edit from your finished video. When you are finished, you'll have your own copy of the movie or television show, free of commercial advertisements.

Don't worry if you make a mistake, since none of your edits are committed to the file until you specifically tell Avidemux to save your file. Simply reload your video and start over. The entire process is very easy, and you'll have the hang of it quite quickly.



Once you reach the end of the file, then save your video with a ***new*** name. You will want to do this, just in case something gets messed up during the save file process, or you later discover that your edits weren't exactly correct. If you use a new file name, you can always go back to the original and repeat the process to make things "right." You can always delete the original file at a later time, after you are sure that your edits are correct and as you like them. Sit back and wait while Avidemux saves your new, commercial free video file. While you are waiting, you can watch the progress in the dialog box (above) that appears. Remember that video files are

quite large, so it does require a bit of time to work with them and to save them. Also remember that the longer the video file (say a two hour movie, versus a 30 minute sitcom), the longer it will take to process, since we're talking about 4x as much data in the two hour movie, compared to the 30 minute sitcom.

Summary

Avidemux is one of those Linux gems with hidden talents. As you can see, it's relatively easy to perform frame based edits on a video file, without having to re-encode (and potentially degrade) the video. Now that I have discovered Avidemux's hidden abilities (well, they were hidden to me until I starting digging into it), I have finally found a very capable replacement for the last Windows application that I relied upon, Video Redo. With a free, open source solution available, I couldn't care less if the Video Redo developers ever make a Linux version of their commercial application. Avidemux suits my needs perfectly, as I'm sure you will find it able to perfectly meet your video editing needs.

Looking for an old article?
Can't find what you want? Try the

PCLinuxOS Magazine's searchable index!

The PCLinuxOS magazine

Screenshot Showcase

Posted by El Gallo del Cielo, February 6, 2011, running Zen-Gnome.

Free At Last! LibreOffice 3.3 Released

by Paul Arnote (parnote)

Less than five months after the creation of The Document Foundation, LibreOffice 3.3 has been released. As with many Linux distributions, LibreOffice has become the default office suite in the PCLinuxOS repository. The Document Foundation has spent their time well, and have made several enhancements to the free office suite.

Background

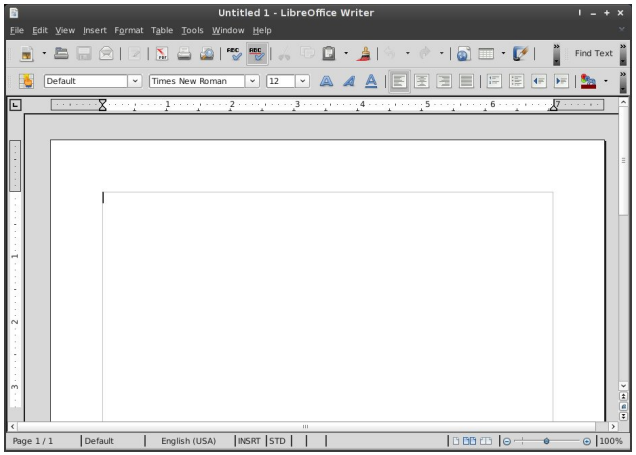
On January 27, 2010, Oracle acquired Sun Microsystems. For the previous 10 years, Sun Microsystems had developed and maintained a whole suite of free, open source applications that included OpenSolaris, VirtualBox and OpenOffice. On August 13, 2010, an internal Oracle memo was leaked that spelled the end of OpenSolaris. As you might be able to imagine, this sent shockwaves throughout the FOSS (Free Open Source Software) community. Fear grew that Oracle would also abandon OpenOffice.

On September 28, 2010, several developers of OpenOffice formed The Document Foundation. The new foundation received backing from Google, Red Hat, Novell, Canonical, and others. Despite being invited to join the new foundation, Oracle chose to have nothing to do with sponsoring The Document Foundation. Subsequently, the OpenOffice developers who had formed the new foundation were asked to resign from the OpenOffice project, for "conflicts of interest." On November 1, 2010, 33 OpenOffice developers tendered their resignations from the OpenOffice project, and began developing LibreOffice, based on the OpenOffice 3.3 beta code.

Meanwhile, the Go-OO project was merged into the LibreOffice project, and improvements made in other forks of OpenOffice are expected to be merged into LibreOffice in the future. You may recall that Go-OO was the version of OpenOffice that was in the PCLinuxOS repository.

The birth of a new office suite

LibreOffice 3.3.0 Beta 1 was released on September 28, 2010. Two additional betas were released in October and November, 2010, one each month. The first release candidate came out in early December, 2010, followed by an additional release candidate just before Christmas 2010, and two additional release candidates coming out in January, 2011. Finally, on January 25, 2011, the stable version of LibreOffice 3.3.0 was released.



Many new features have appeared in the latest stable release, and many of those new features are exclusive to LibreOffice. The new and exclusive LibreOffice features include:

- The ability to import SVG files
- Editing of SVG files in LibreOffice Draw
- Lotus Word Pro import filter
- MS Works import filter
- Improved Wordperfect import filter
- New "presenter view" in LibreOffice Impress
- New, easier-to-use dialog for title pages
- Make online help available, via WikiHelp
- "Experimental mode" allows testing of unfinished features

This is just an overview of some of the enhancements that have been made in LibreOffice 3.3.0. To see a full list of the enhancements in LibreOffice 3.3.0, visit their web site. One of the things that can't be seen in a list, that's been included in the reports of nearly all the reviewers, and that must be experienced, are the speed enhancements. Without a doubt, LibreOffice 3.3.0 launches much faster than previous versions of OpenOffice. LibreOffice 3.3.0 also feels much more responsive, with perceptible speed enhancements across all the applications in the office suite.

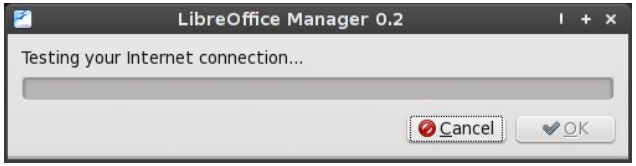
Aside from that, LibreOffice 3.3.0 works and behaves exactly like OpenOffice. The controls are in the same location that you've become accustomed to them being in. The same open document formats are supported. You can import the same file formats as usual, including the latest docx, xlsx and pptx files from that "other" office suite.

Installing LibreOffice 3.3: LibreOffice Manager

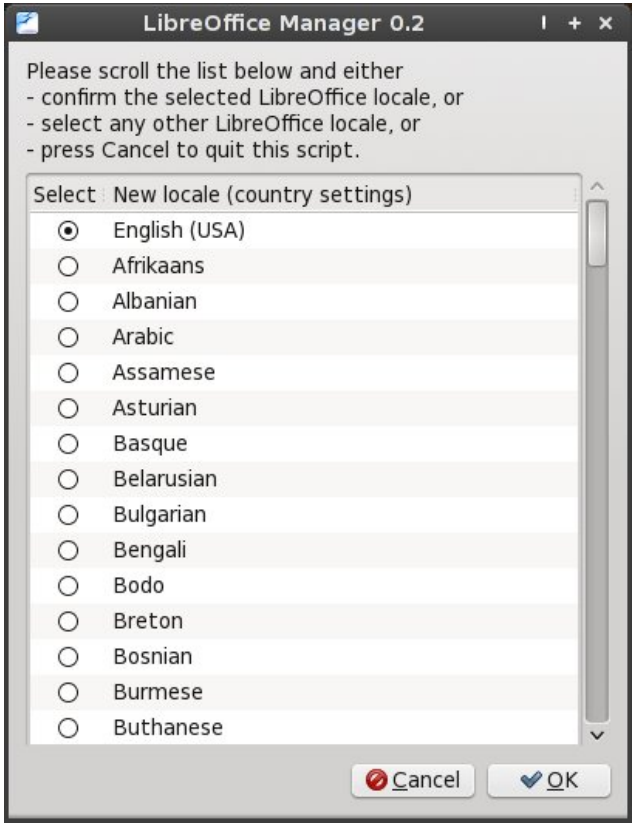
PCLinuxOS users have a unique situation. Unlike users of other Linux distros, who must download and install LibreOffice through their package manager, or even worse, who must install LibreOffice from source, PCLinuxOS users have a dedicated installer to install LibreOffice 3.3.0 for them, with a minimum of interaction required. Created by pinoc, the LibreOffice Manager is included on most default installations of PCLinuxOS (starting with the 2011 ISO releases). Pinoc must have fed some steroids to the LibreOffice Manager, because I have found it to run much faster than the OpenOffice Manager that it replaces.

The current version of LibreOffice Manager will be downloaded with your regular updates from Synaptic. Running LibreOffice Manager requires that you first exit Synaptic, if it is running, as well as any running OpenOffice applications. Mysteriously, LibreOffice Manager identifies Mozilla Firefox as a running office suite application, and will not run until you exit Firefox (dialog box below). In that case, simply exit Firefox, then relaunch the LibreOffice Manager.

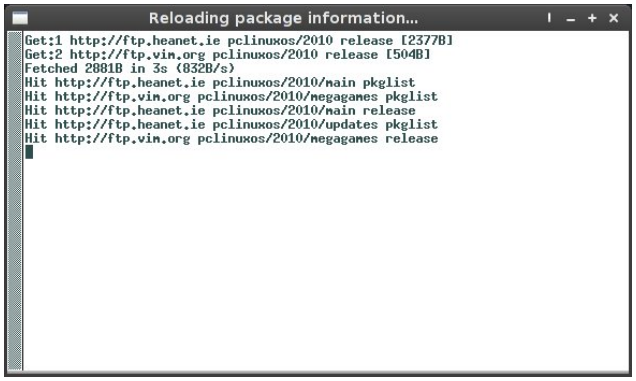
Just a word of caution here: **LibreOffice Manager will remove your copy of OpenOffice, if installed!** OpenOffice's status in the PCLinuxOS repository has been changed to unsupported, with the release of LibreOffice. So, if you (for whatever reason) do not want to remove your installed OpenOffice applications, then you should not run LibreOffice Manager. Realize that there will be no further updates to your OpenOffice applications, since PCLinuxOS now officially supports LibreOffice over OpenOffice.



Next, LibreOffice Manager will test your Internet connection, to insure that your internet connection is up and running.

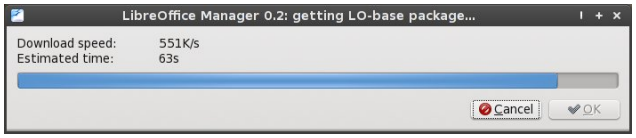


You can now select the language and localization for your installation of LibreOffice. On my machine, the default selection was for English (USA). If you want something different, select the radio button next to the language you want to use, then select the "OK" button to proceed with the next step of the installation.

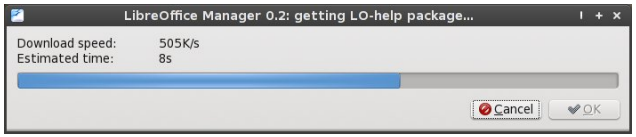


An Xterm window will open, showing the progress, while loading the package information from the special repository where the LibreOffice package files are stored. No interaction is required from the user at this stage.

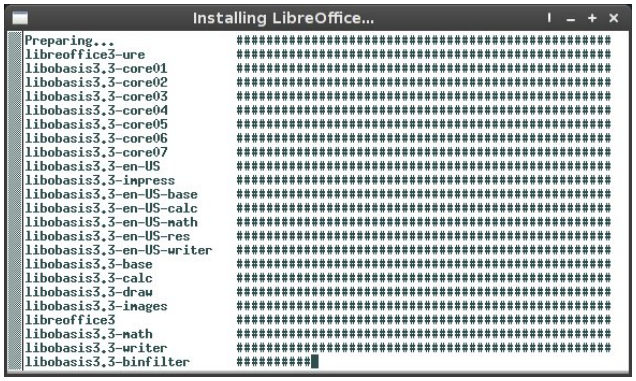
In the next step, Java will be installed, if it doesn't already exist on your computer. Again, no user interaction is required at this stage.



Next, LibreOffice Manager will download the LO-base package. Users now have a nice progress bar displayed across their screen. No user interaction is required at this stage, either.



After the base package, LibreOffice will download the LO-help package. Still, no user interaction is required at this stage.



Once all the packages have been downloaded, another Xterm window opens and displays the progress of unpacking and installing the LibreOffice files. Again, there is no need for any user interaction at this stage.

Finally, you are given the chance to keep or discard the LibreOffice RPM packages. If you want to keep a copy of them in /tmp/LO-rpms, simply select the "No" button. This might be helpful if you have multiple computers that you want to install LibreOffice on. In that case, you can simply copy the RPM packages and copy them to the other computer (same location as here, /tmp/LO-rpms). Now, you won't have to download the packages again. Most users will, however, most likely select the "Yes" button, which will delete the LibreOffice RPM files from their computer.

Summary

The creation of The Document Foundation, and their subsequent development of LibreOffice, insures that there will always be a capable, high quality, free office suite available to computer users. It liberates that free office suite from the whimsy of a single corporate entity, who may choose to cancel the project at any time, for any reason. It frees the development model from the often constraining development environment of a large single corporate entity with large overhead that may not be able to

adapt to a rapidly changing software environment. It makes that free office suite an open collaboration of many contributors, exemplifying the free and open ideology that is embraced by supporters of FOSS, and one that is responsible to the users, rather than the interests of a single corporate entity.

Built upon the strong legacy of OpenOffice's 10 year history, the new LibreOffice 3.3.0 Office Suite is a definite step forward, both in the terms of features and in speed. The LibreOffice Manager represents a large step forward for PCLinuxOS, making the installation of LibreOffice faster than the OpenOffice Manager that it replaced, with a minimum of user interaction required throughout the installation process. Pinoc has done an exceptionally good job making a capable, fast installer for LibreOffice, limited only by the speed of your computer and the speed of your internet connection.

Does your computer run slow?

Are you tired of all the "Blue Screens of Death" computer crashes?

Are viruses, adware, malware & spyware slowing you down?

Get your PC back to good health TODAY!

Get

PCLinuxOS

Download your copy today! FREE!

Screenshot Showcase

Posted by bones113, February 11, 2011, running KDE 4.

Alternate OS: Icaros, Part 1

by Darrel Johnston (djohnston)

Most who used Amiga computers in the 1970s and 1980s came to love the capabilities of the machines. A well equipped Amiga would “run circles” around any other personal computer of the time. But, the history of the Amiga and Commodore Business Machines is a long and contentious one. And PC hardware and software has come a long way since then. Since Commodore declared bankruptcy in 1994, ownership has changed hands many times.

AmigaOS is the default native operating system of the Amiga personal computer. It was developed first by Commodore International, and initially introduced in 1985 with the Amiga 1000. Early versions (1.0-3.9) run on the Motorola 68k series of 16-bit and 32-bit microprocessors, while the newer AmigaOS 4 runs only on PowerPC microprocessors.

On top of a preemptive multitasking kernel called Exec, it includes an abstraction of the Amiga's unique hardware, a disk operating system called AmigaDOS, a windowing system API called Intuition and a graphical user interface called Workbench. A command line interface called AmigaShell is also available and integrated into the system. The GUI and the CLI complement each other and share the same privileges.

AmigaOS can be divided into two parts: the Kickstart (ROM) and Workbench disks. Versions of Kickstart and Workbench used to be released together, for use with each other. Since Workbench 3.5, the first release after Commodore International stopped development, however, new Kickstart revisions stopped being produced, relying instead on a 3.1 ROM that is patched during boot.

The AROS project, started in 1995, has over the years become an almost "feature complete" implementation of AmigaOS. This was achieved by the efforts of a small team of developers. AROS used to mean Amiga Research Operating System, but to avoid any trademark issues with the Amiga name, it was changed to the recursive acronym AROS Research Operating System.

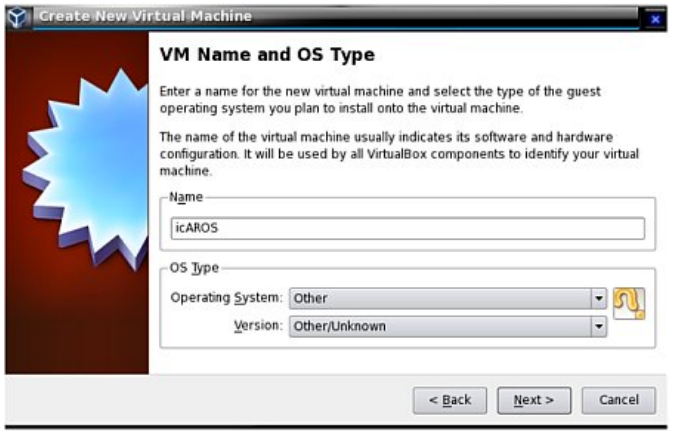
It can currently be installed on most IBM PC compatibles, and features native graphics drivers for video cards such as the GeForce range made by Nvidia. As of May 2007 USB keyboards and mice are also supported. While the OS is still lacking in applications, a few have been ported, including E-UAE, an emulation program that allows 68k-native AmigaOS applications to run. Some AROS-specific applications have also been written. AROS has TCP/IP networking support. The Poseidon USB stack has been ported to AROS.

AROS is designed to be source-compatible with AmigaOS, but not binary-compatible. Source code that will compile on AmigaOS should compile on AROS, but binaries already compiled for AmigaOS will not run, even if they are compiled for the same family of CPU. This means that, unlike MorphOS or AmigaOS 4, AROS is not capable of running legacy software directly, only applications compiled for AROS. There are plans to integrate the Amiga emulator E-UAE directly into AROS to run AmigaOS applications, and even a bounty to run MorphOS software on the PowerPC build of AROS.

The aim of AROS is to remain aloof of the legal and political spats that have plagued other AmigaOS implementations, by being independent both of hardware and of any central control. The de-facto motto of AROS, "No schedule and rocking" both lampoons the infamous words "On Schedule and Rockin'" from Amiga, Inc. CEO Bill McEwen, and declares a lack of the formal deadlines.

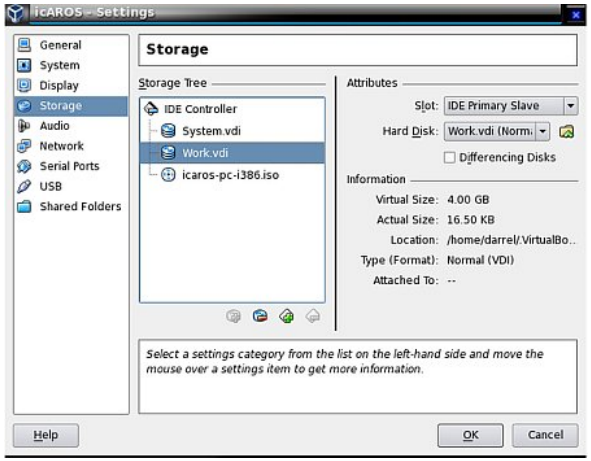
Paolo Besser develops the Icaros desktop as an enhanced version of AROS. He recently released version 1.2.6, which can be downloaded at: http://www.icarosdesktop.com/icarosfiles/IcarosLive_1_2_6.7z.exe. The file is actually a self-extracting 7zip. So, after downloading, Linux and Mac users should delete the .exe portion of the file name before extracting. Extracting the 7zip file results in a folder containing an iso image, some document files, and another folder with Windows executables and configuration files for the Bochs emulator. To run Icaros in VirtualBox, we only need the iso, which is named icaros-pc-i386.iso, and is 1.8GB in size.

I began the installation as Operating System Type: Other, and Version as Other/Unknown.

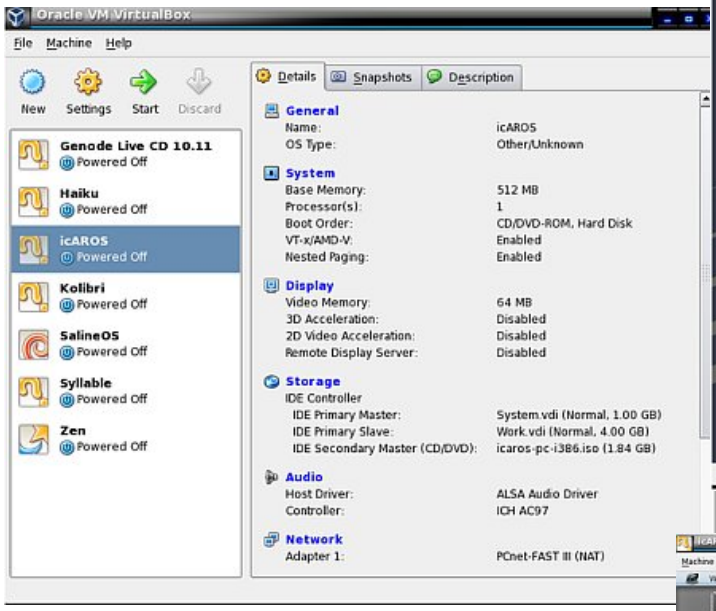


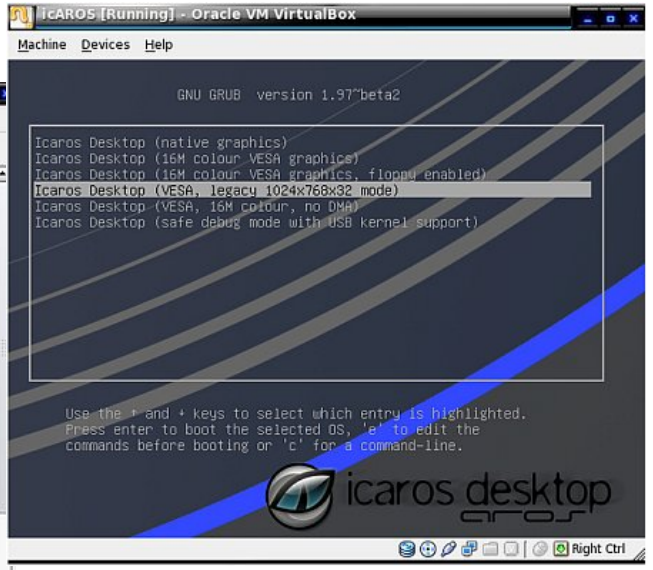
On a real Amiga system, the partitions are named System and Work. Note that the partitions can actually be created as one drive, with the logical Work partition being defined as an Amiga assignment. For this project, I created two separate VM hard disks.

The System drive is the IDE primary master, and the Work drive is the IDE primary slave. The CD/DVD drive is the IDE secondary master.



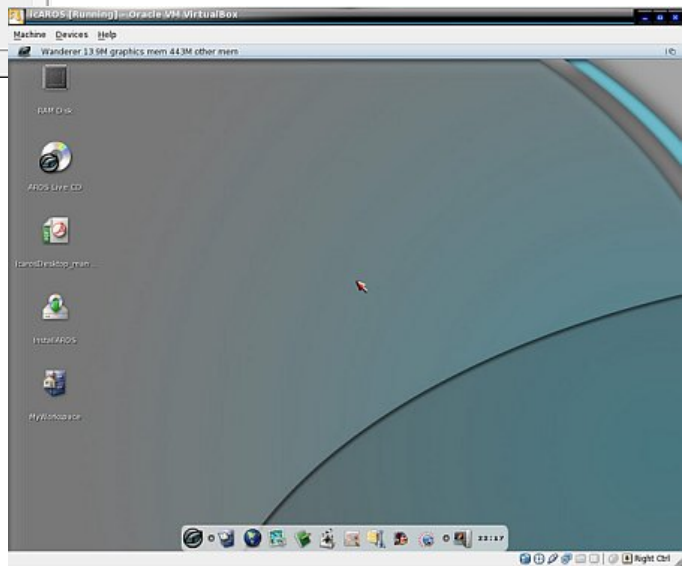
I also assigned the VM 512MB of RAM, and 64MB of video memory.





Booting from the CD/DVD, we first see the GRUB screen (top right.) Note that the default option is the second line, “Icaros Desktop (16M colour VESA graphics)”. Using that option will result in a VM screen size of 1600x1200. Since my real screen size is only 1280x1024, it’s not very convenient having to use sliders to move around inside the virtual machine. I chose the 1024x768 option instead.

First boot from the DVD (right.) Note that there is an “InstallAROS” icon on the desktop. It looks as though we can simply just launch that application to begin the installation. However, looks can be deceiving. If we begin the installation now, we will

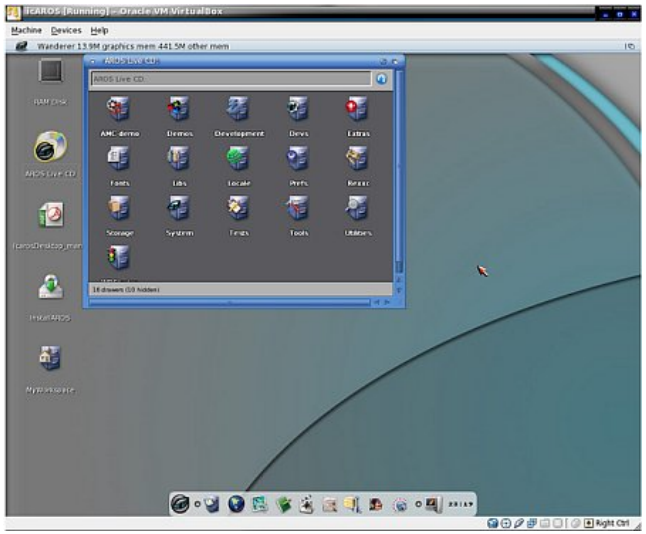


get nowhere fast. The installer offers an option to wipe the drive, specify the drive type, and specify the partitions and partition sizes. However, I've found no way to make the wipe drive option work correctly. I believe the option is actually a "placeholder" for future implementation of the feature.

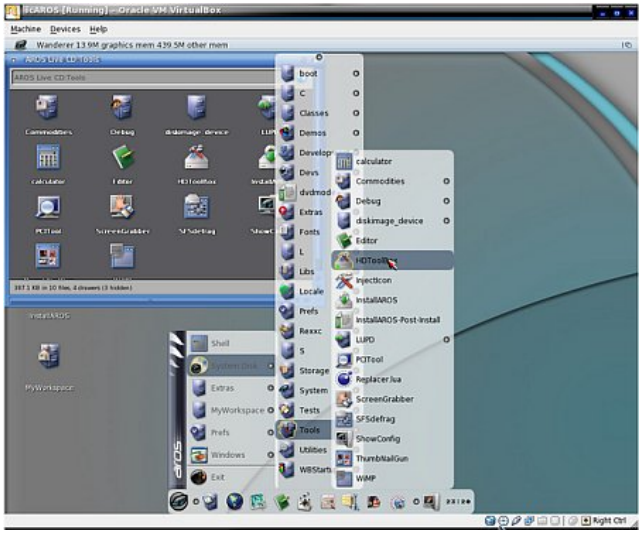
We are going to manually create the drive partitons, using the provided AROS tools. This is where it gets a little tricky. The reason is that the original Amigas use a rigid disk block (RDB) to store store the disk's partition and filesystem information. The PC equivalent of the Amiga's RDB is the master boot record (MBR). Unlike its PC equivalent, the RDB doesn't directly contain metadata for each partition. Instead it points to a linked list of partition blocks, which by itself contains the actual partition data, their start, length, filesystem, their boot priority and their buffer memory type. Because there is no limitation in partition block count, there is no need to distinguish primary and extended types and all partitions are equal in stature and architecture. The data in the Rigid Disk Block must start with the ASCII bytes "RDSK". Furthermore, its position is not restricted to the very first block of a volume, instead it could be located anywhere within its first 16 blocks. Thus it could safely coexist with a Master Boot Record, which is forced to be found at block 0.

The AROS partitioning scheme will combine the RDB and MBR partitioning methods. We will begin by double clicking the AROS Live CD icon to open its contents (at right top.)

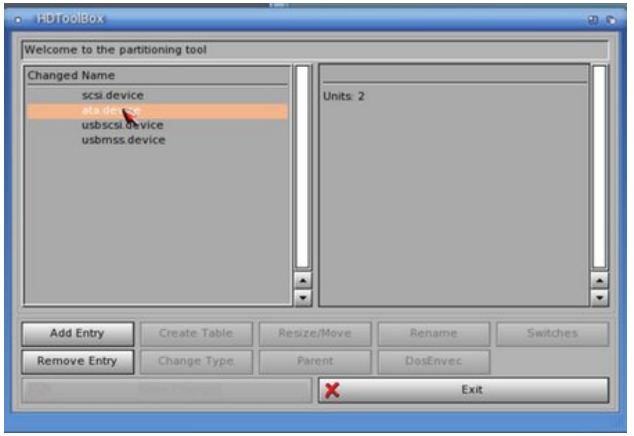
We then double click the Tools directory, which looks like a file cabinet. In Amiga terms, directories are drawers, instead of folders. We can accomplish the



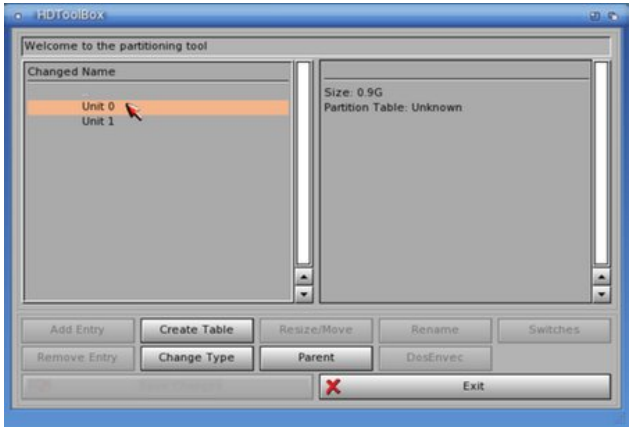
same task by using the Icaros menu, and selecting System Disk > Tools > HDToolBox, which is the partitioning tool.



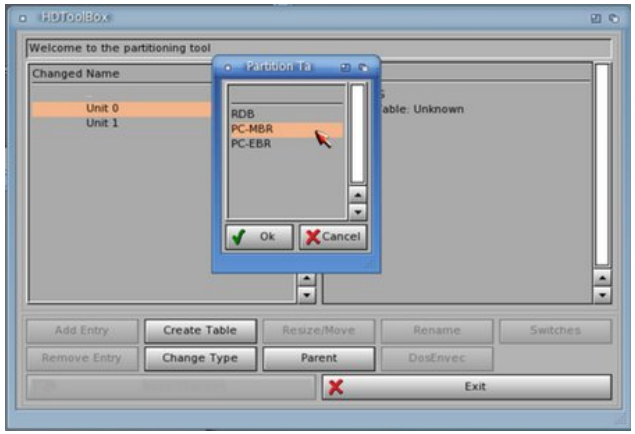
The root level of the HDToolBox shows us the possible devices. We are only concerned with the ata.device, which contains 2 units. Double click the ata.device.



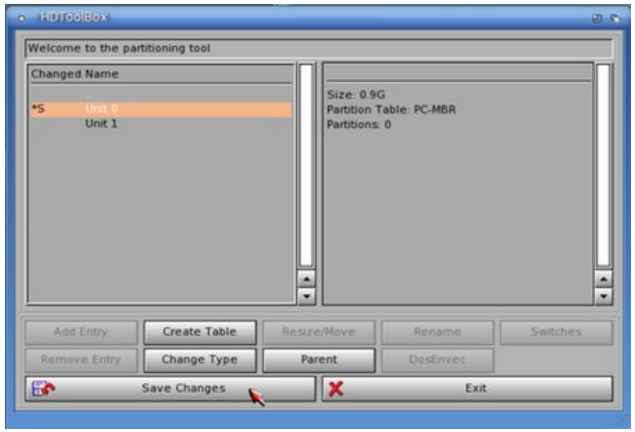
Unit 0 corresponds to the System hard drive and Unit 1 corresponds to the Work hard drive.



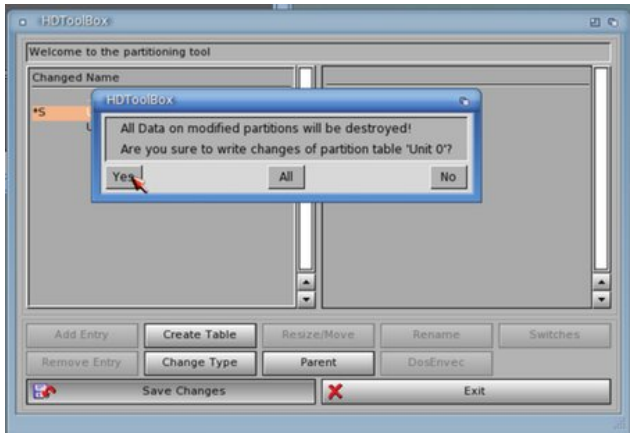
We must first create a partition table for the drive. The partition type is PC-MBR. Click the Create Table button. Select PC-MBR in the Partition Table window, then click OK.



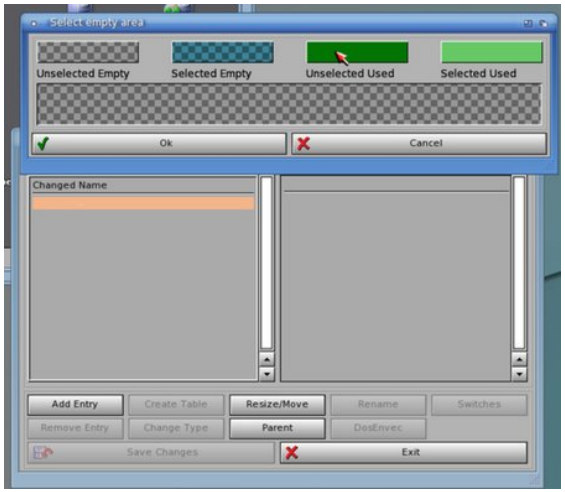
Before proceeding further, we need to save our changes. Click the Save Changes button.



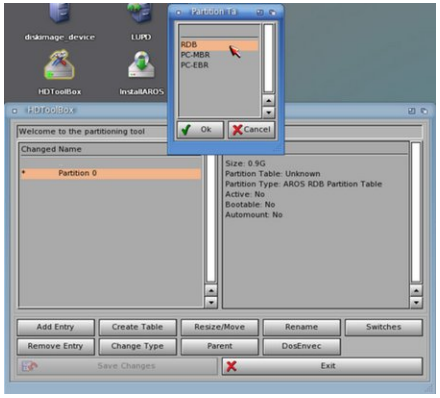
Verify we wish to save the changes by pressing either the Yes or All button.



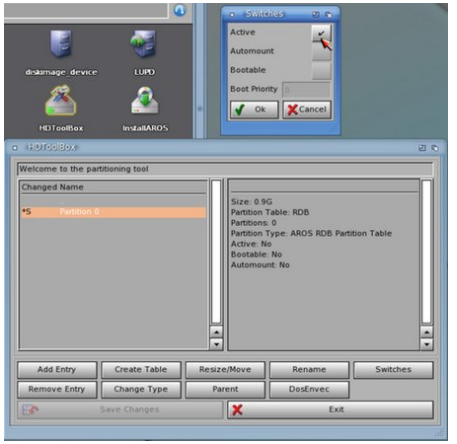
Next, we double click on Unit 0. Click the Add Entry button to begin creating a partition table. The default window shows Unselected Empty. Click Selected Empty to create a partition table of the entire disk, then click the Ok button.



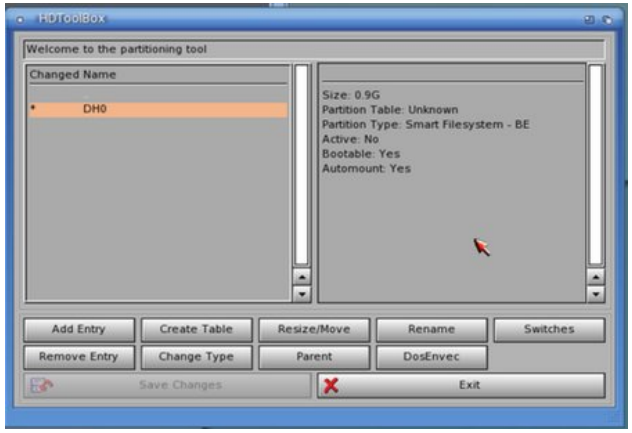
We now have a Partition Type of AROS RDB Partition Table, but the Partition Table is Unknown. Click the Create Table button. Select RDB in the Partition Table window, then click the OK button.



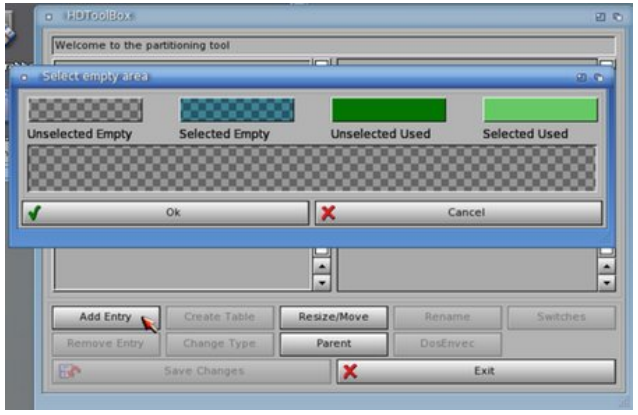
Next, we have to make the partition active in order to be able to boot from it. Click the Switches button. Click the Active button in the Switches window, which results in a check mark, then click the OK button.



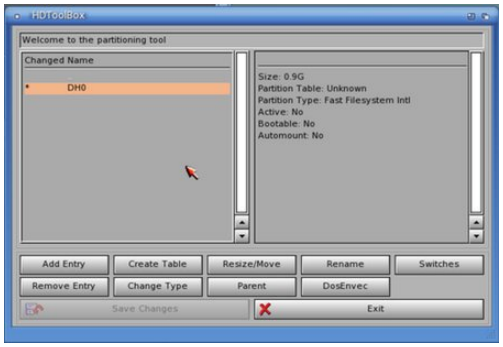
Note that we still have no defined partitions, just a partition table. Double click Partition 0.



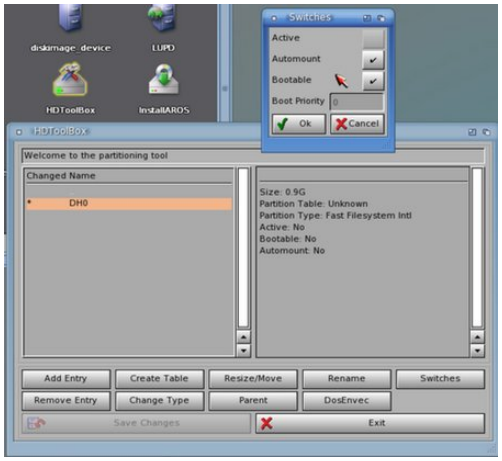
Click on Selected Empty to create a partition size of the entire disk. Then click the Ok button.



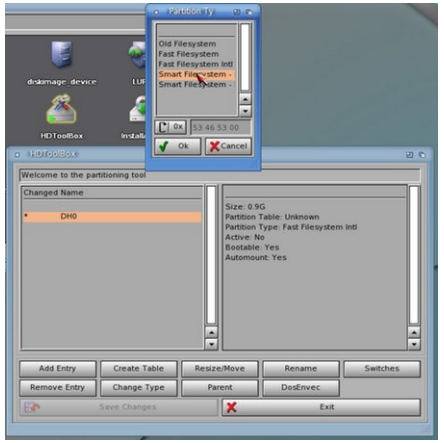
DH0 is automatically inserted as the first partition designation.



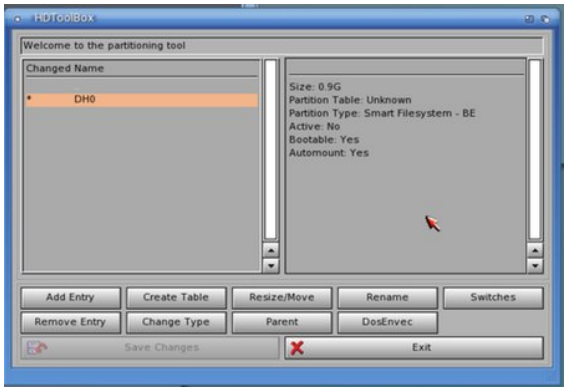
Click the Switches button. Click the Automount and Bootable buttons, resulting in check marks. Click the Ok button.



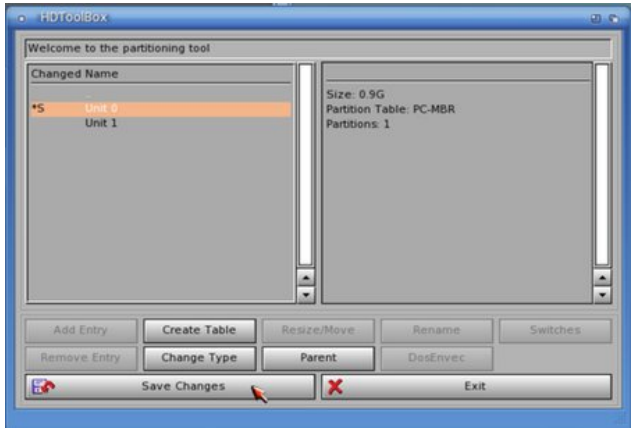
The default filesystem type is Fast Filesystem Intl (International). From past experience, the FFS has proven to be very unstable and worrisome. A sudden reboot or powerdown can result in the loss of the entire partition's contents. Click the Change Type button. In the Partition Type window, select Smart Filesystem. The first SFS option listed is BE (byte encoded) and the second SFS option is LE (length encoded). Choose SFS BE, then click the OK button.



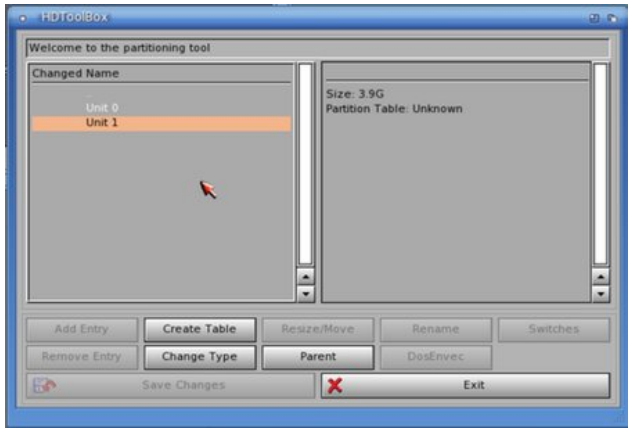
At this point, we have made a lot of changes which have not been saved yet. But the Save Changes button is ghosted out, and is not selectable. Click the Parent button until we come back to the window showing Unit 0 and Unit 1.



Note the *S to the left of Unit 0. It's an indication that there are unsaved changes. Click the Save Changes button.

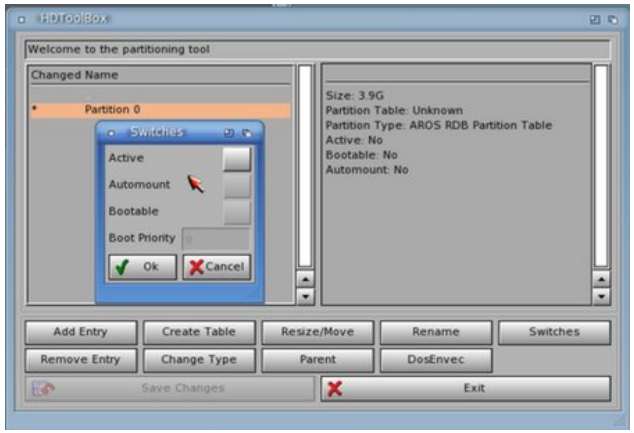


We must now repeat the same steps in order to create a partition for Unit 1.

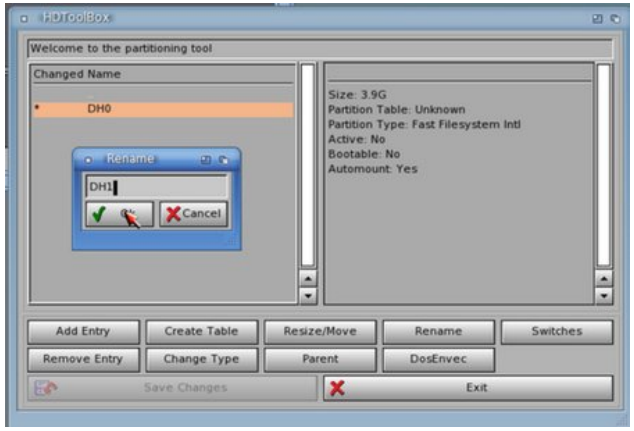


We only need one bootable disk, so we will leave the Active button unchecked in the Switches window.

Click the OK or Cancel button. Then, double click Partition 0.

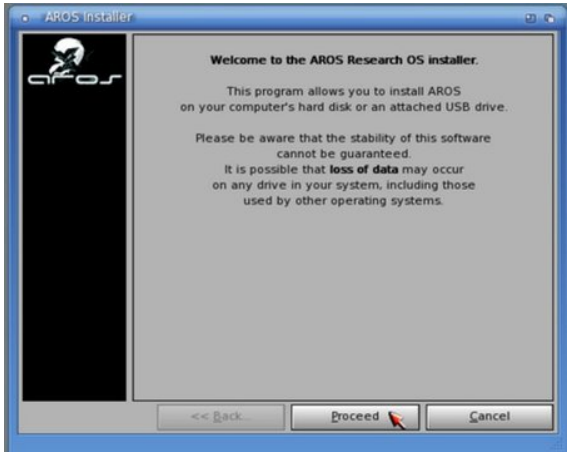


Again, DH0 is inserted as the default partition designation. But, we already have a DH0, and we don't want two. Click the Rename button, change the name to DH1, then click OK.

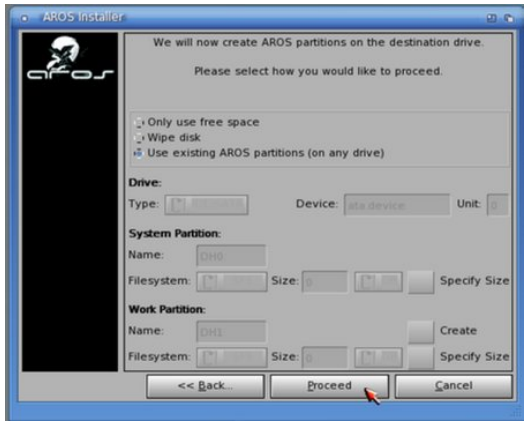


Once again, we have made changes that are not yet saved. Click the Parent button until you are at the window showing Unit 0 and Unit 1. Be sure Unit 1 is highlighted, then click the Save Changes button. After all this work, it is a temptation to now run the AROS installer. However, the system won't recognize the hard drive partitions until the OS has been rebooted. Click the Icaros menu button and select Exit. In the User Request window, click the Reboot button

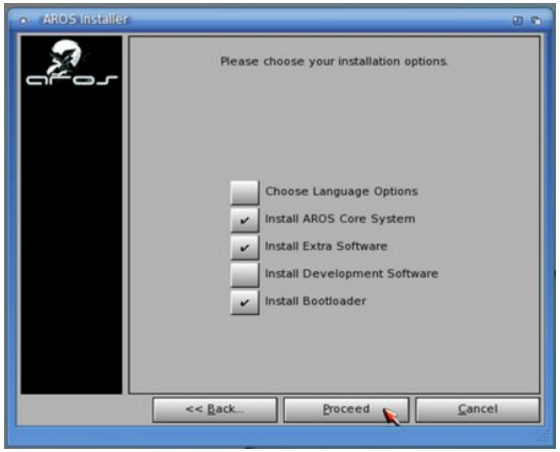
Once we have rebooted, we can begin the AROS installation by double clicking the InstallAROS icon on the desktop. Please take heed of the warnings in the AROS Installer window. We're running in a VM, so we're not particularly worried about data loss. But data loss is a distinct possibility when running on real hardware.



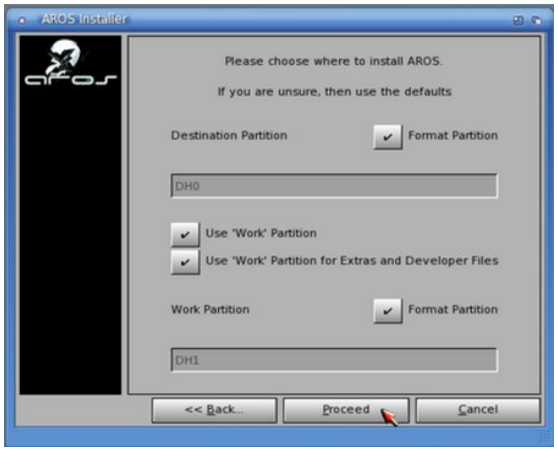
We've already created the AROS partitions needed, so the default selection is to use the existing partitions. Click the Proceed button.



I'm only going to use one language, so I leave that option unchecked. Non-English users, or those wishing to use more than one language will want to check that option. I'm not a developer, so I leave that option unchecked. Developers, developers, developers! (Shades of Steve Ballmer. See here: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8To-6VIJZRE&feature=player_detailpage. WARNING: Video is scary!) Click the Proceed button.

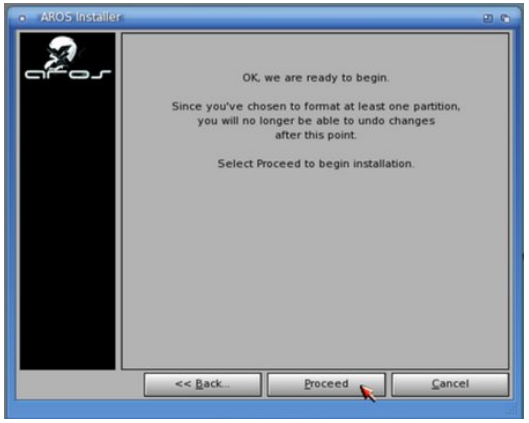


The partitions are unformatted, so we want to select those options. We also want to use the Work partition, and put all the Extras files there, so select those options.

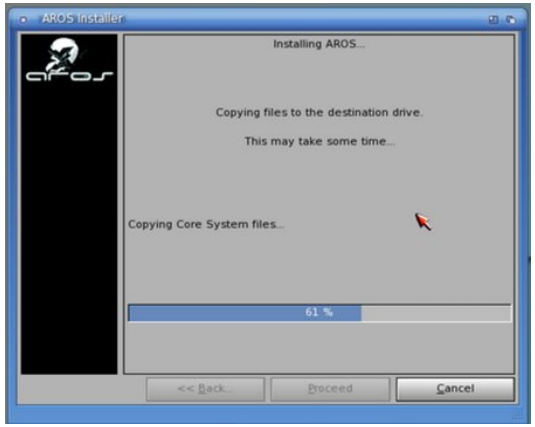


GRUB will be installed to the MBR on ata.device. Its configuration files will be placed in /boot/grub. I changed the Menu Mode from Text to Graphics. Click the Proceed button.

If you're sure you wish to continue, click the Proceed button. Otherwise, click the Back button to review the options.

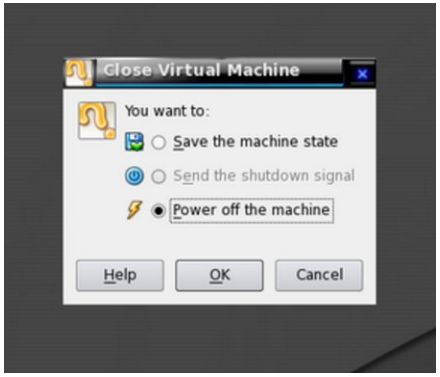


The installer is running.

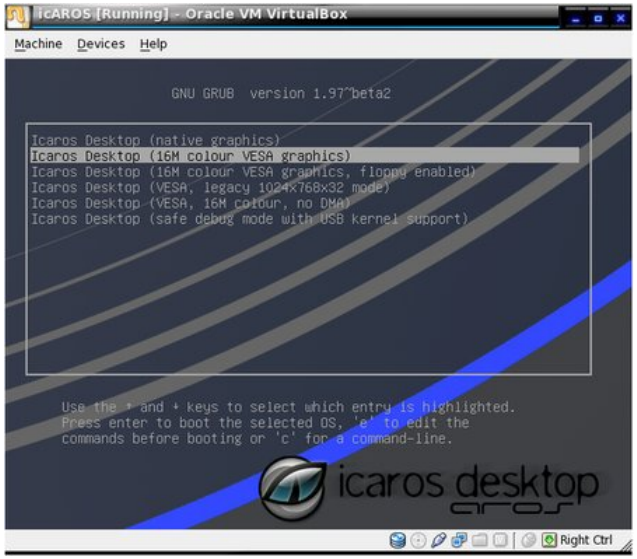


The installation is almost complete. Click the Proceed button to finish the installation (top of next page.)

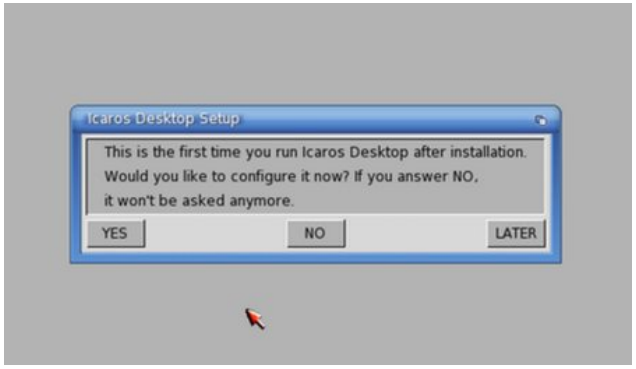
At this point, selecting to reboot from the Icaros menu will simply restart Icaros, but will not restart the VirtualBox virtual machine. (You may have to see this in action to fully understand.) We now wish to detach the DVD from the VM and boot from the System hard drive. For that reason, we will power off the VirtualBox VM.



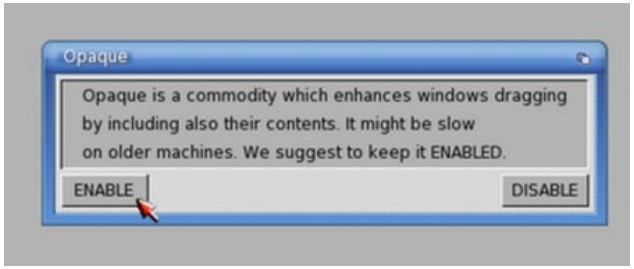
We have now detached the icaros-pc-i386.iso DVD from the virtual machine. The default GRUB boot option is still not the one I want. I will edit the /boot/grub/grub.cfg file later to change the default boot option.



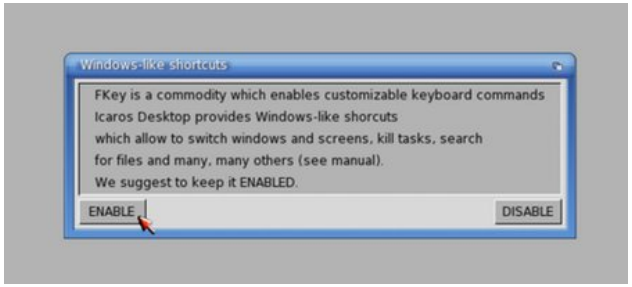
On first run, you are offered the option to configure the installation options. I chose to configure them.



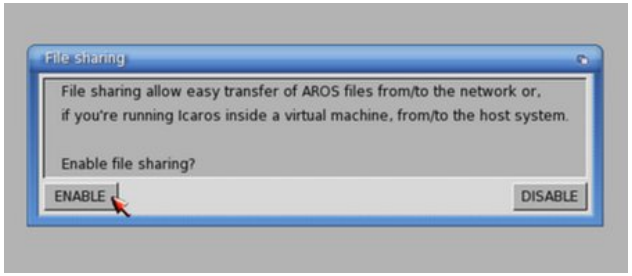
This is self-explanatory.



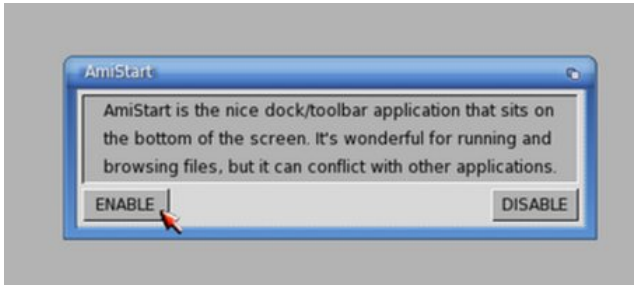
I chose to keep this option enabled.



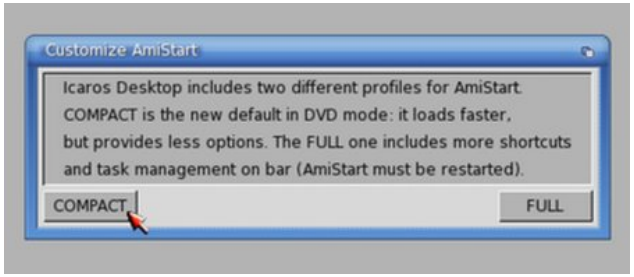
I may want to share files between the VM and the host, so I chose to enable this option.



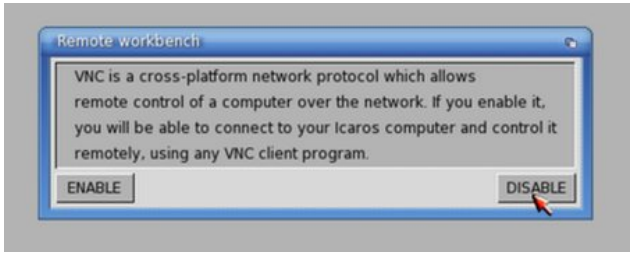
AmiStart is the menu bar we have already seen at the bottom of the Icaros desktop. I chose to keep it (next page.)



I chose the compact menu mode which is also used on the live DVD.



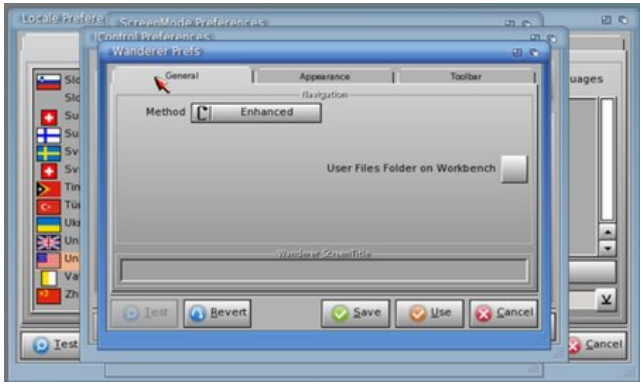
I don't wish to control the Icaros desktop remotely. Life is complicated enough, as it is.



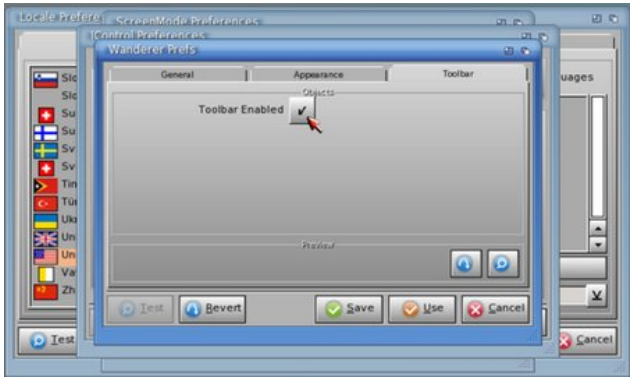
More options windows eventually appear, stacked upon one another. Music unit is the default option for sound playback.

The only other option shown to me for a sound source is Unit 0. That shows the ac97 option, which is what the VM uses. Clicking the Play a test sound button produced an audible two second tone.

Wanderer is the menu toolbar which is accessed by right-clicking the "Workbench Screen" bar at the top of the desktop. I left the General tab with the default options.

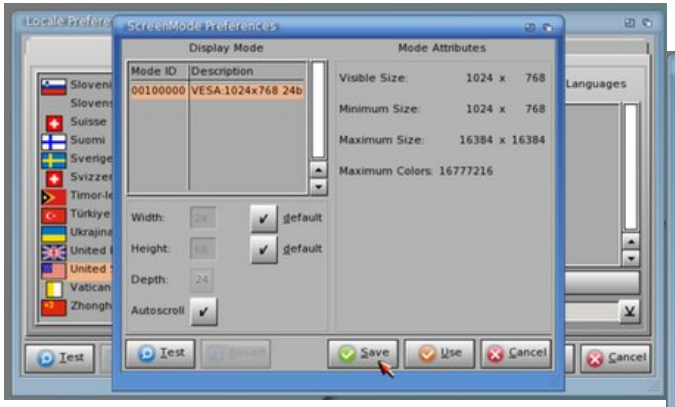


Clicking the Toolbar tab in the Wanderer Prefs window shows an option to enable the toolbar. I selected that, resulting in a checkmark.

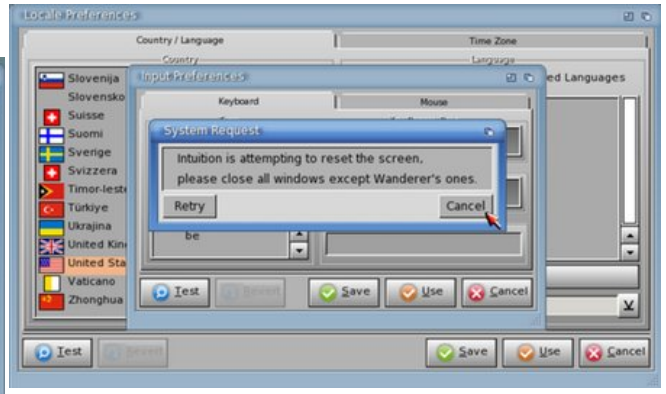


I left the IControl Preferences at the defaults.

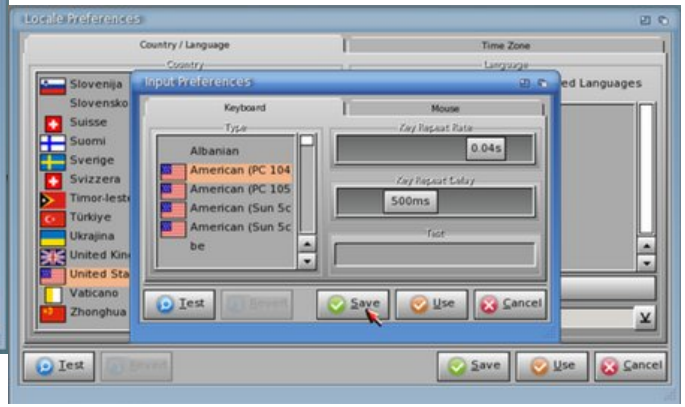
I left the ScreenMode Preferences at default.



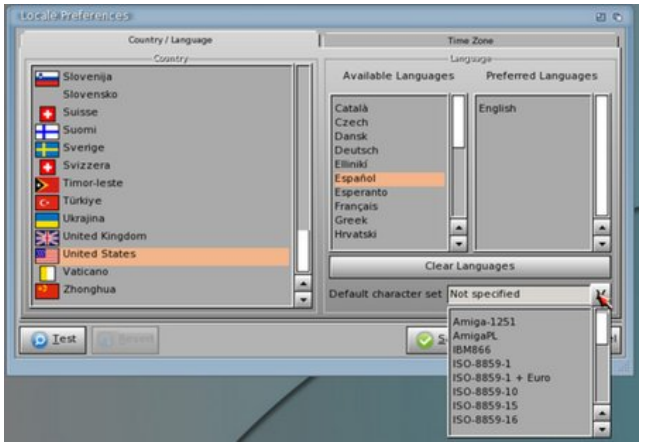
After saving the ScreenMode Preferences, Intuition (window manager) will attempt to reset the screen. Because we have two more preferences windows still open, select Cancel here (top center.)



I chose the default American PC 104 keyboard. (There are lots of keyboard options, as well as a Mouse options tab.)

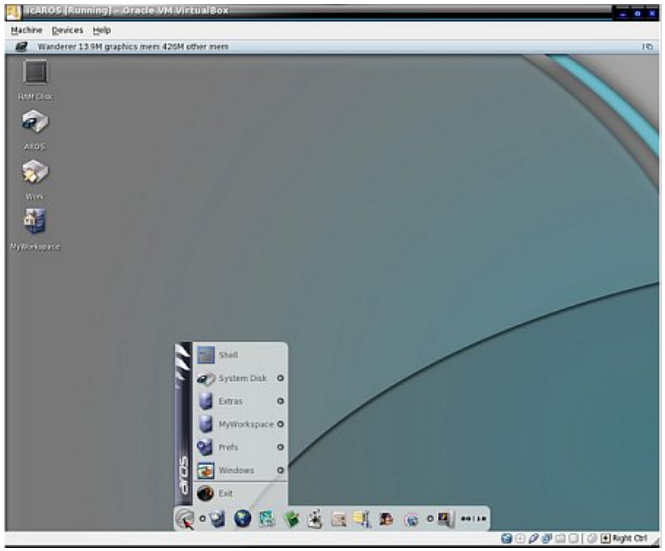


I left the default character set at its default option. Double clicking English in the Available Languages column moves it into the Preferred Languages column. You can select more than one preferred language.

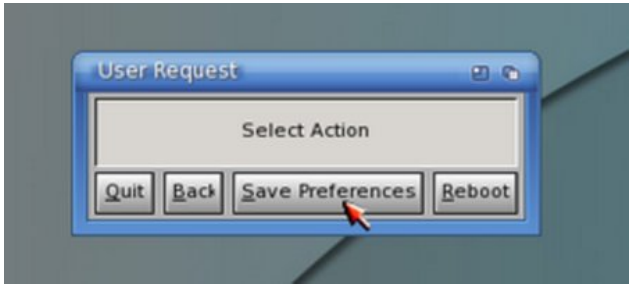


I changed the default U.S. Eastern time zone to U.S. Central by clicking the appropriate spot on the world map.

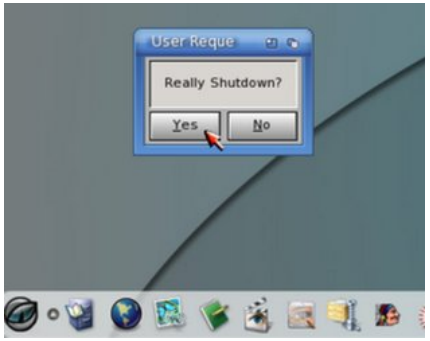
Here I am going to restart the Icaros desktop, without leaving the virtual machine. I start by clicking the Icaros menu button.



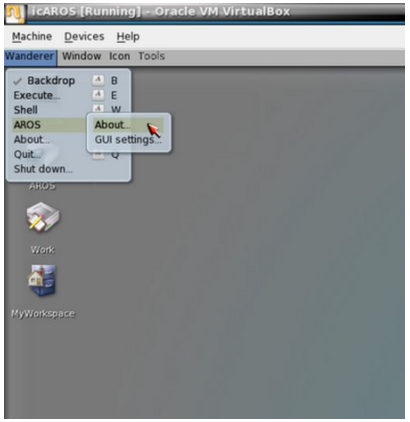
I select Exit from the menu. Just to be on the safe side, I saved the preferences.



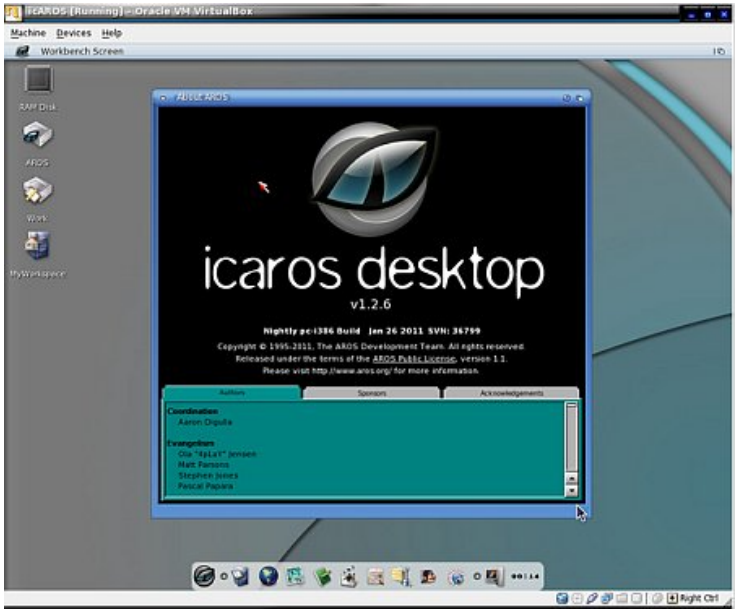
Next, I clicked the Icaros menu button again, selected Exit, and clicked the Reboot button. Again, this will restart the Icaros desktop, but not the VirtualBox session. (NOTE: There is no Shutdown option. Clicking the Quit button will simply end the Icaros toolbar session at the bottom of the desktop.)



After restarting the Icaros desktop, I selected the Wanderer (file manager) menu by right-clicking on the “Workbench Screen” toolbar at the top of the screen. I then selected Wanderer > AROS > About...



The installed version is 1.2.6, released January 26th, 2011.



Next month, we will take a look at some of the capabilities of Icaros. Note that all of the preferences which were set on the first run can also be changed later, from the Prefs section of the menu, or by opening the Prefs drawer (directory) of the System hard drive. Also note that the System hard drive is labelled as AROS on the desktop. I’m not sure, but I think that’s a newer feature.

ms_meme's Nook: PCLOS May Call You

MP3

OGG

PCLOS may call you no matter where you roam
In your heart you'll hear it call you

Come on home
Come on home

PCLOS will whisper no matter where you may be
Here am I your special OS

Come to me
Come to me

Your own special desktop the choice of your dreams
Try all those widgets and choose your own themes

If you try PCLOS you'll become a devotee
It will be your special OS and that's a guarantee

PCLOS
PCLOS
PCLOS

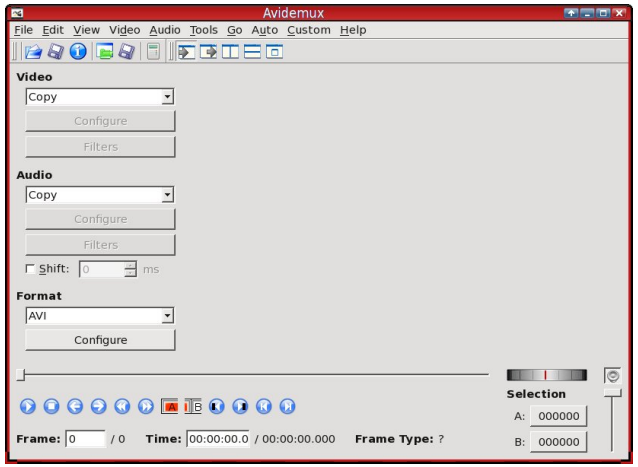
Avidemux Under PCLinuxOS

by Daniel Meiß-Wilhelm (Leiche)
Translated from German by Longtom

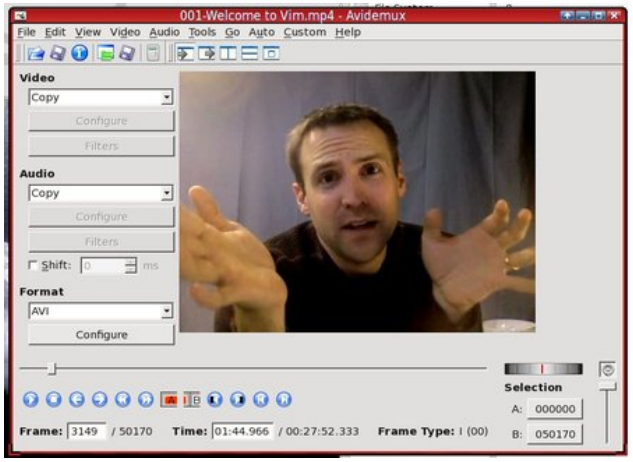
When it comes to editing video, converting video files, or preparing video to burn to a DVD, it's hard to beat the capabilities of Avidemux.

Avidemux is in the PCLinuxOS respository, and it comes in three flavors: a command line version, a Gtk+ version and a Qt4 version. Functionally, the latter two GUI versions are identical.

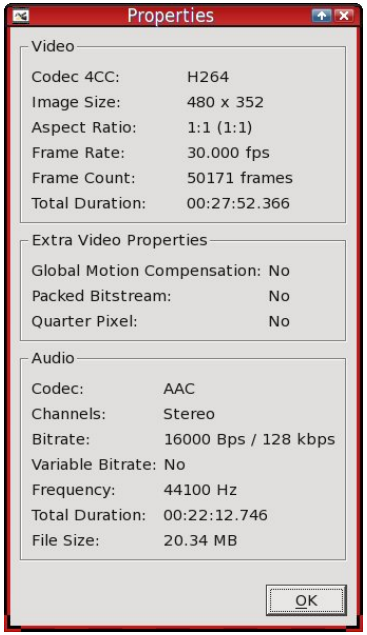
Once you open AviDemux for the first time, you will see the following window:



Use “Open” to start the file browser and find video or picture files. Video formats would be mpg, vob and, as the name indicates, avi. Picture formats (like jpg, bmp, png) will also be listed, and possibly others.



I have chosen a screen cast from Derek Wyatt.



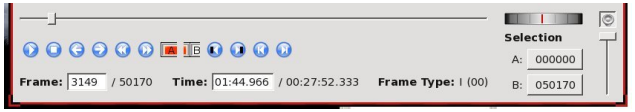
A click on “File > Information” reveals some details concerning the loaded video. When you make a DVD, keep in mind that there are certain standards that apply. One of those would be resolution. Under PAL, we use the following:

720×576 very good quality depending on compression 2h video
704×576 very good quality depending on compression 2h video
352×576 good quality up to 4h video
352×288 satisfactory quality up to 6h video

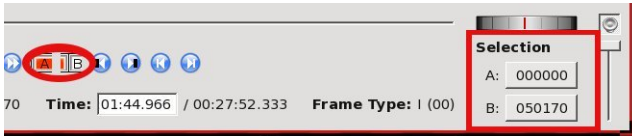
Under NTSC, we use the following resolutions:

720x480 very good quality depending on compression 2h video
704x480 very good quality depending on compression 2h video
352x480 good quality up to 4h video
352x240 satisfactory quality up to 6h video

It all depends on the rate of compression.



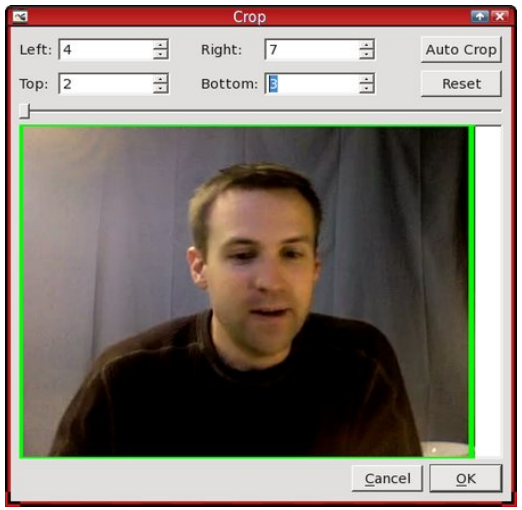
You can jump back and forth with the slider, or define a part of the video you intend to work with. We mark the beginning of such a part with “A” and the end with “B”.



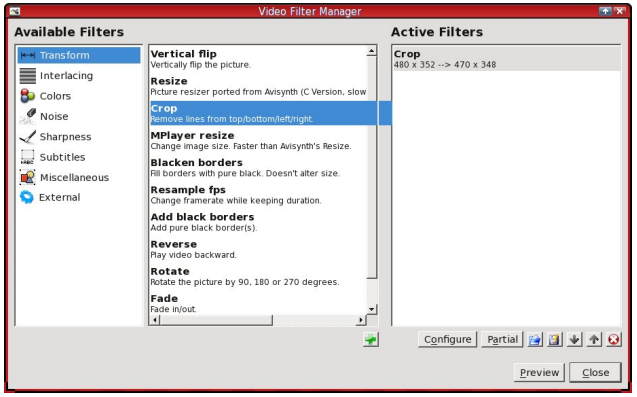
The selection is displayed again in the bottom right hand corner (marked in red). Since the selection is done, we can focus now on the different filters available. We choose “Video > Filter” and get the following window:

The “Crop” filter is for cutting off unsightly edges.

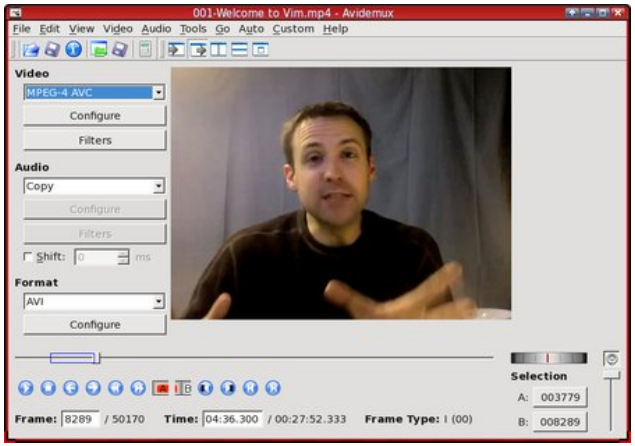
Click on “Crop” and the following window appears:



The edges to be cut off are marked green. We click “OK” and we are returned to the “Video Filter Manager.”



In the right pane of the window, we see that our first filter has been activated. To make sure the filter works as desired, switch from “input” to “output.” All filters will be applied in real time. Depending on the intensity of the filter, this can place a heavy load on your CPU.



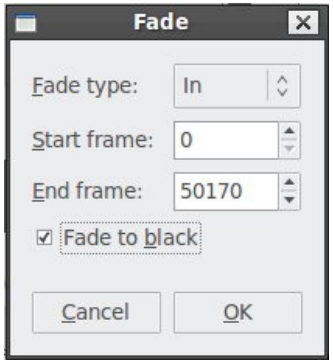
That means the video can not be played back fluently. The video is not standards compliant any more. This could be rectified by “Add Black Borders.” Add the appropriate number of vertical lines, as well as horizontal, in order to arrive at a standard size. I suggest adding similar amounts for top and bottom, as well as left and right, in order to keep the visible part of the video in the middle.

Original Picture

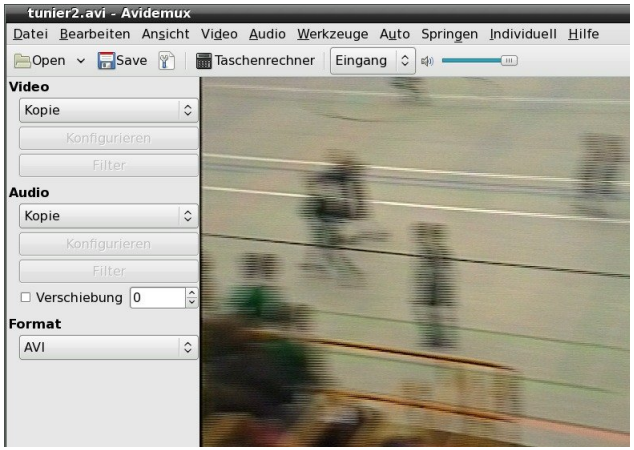
Add border bottom only

Add border top and bottom

If you scroll down in “Transform” in the Video Filter Manager, you'll find the filter “Fade.” This filter can be used to blend your video in and out whenever desired. Please make sure that you use the frames which have been previously marked only.

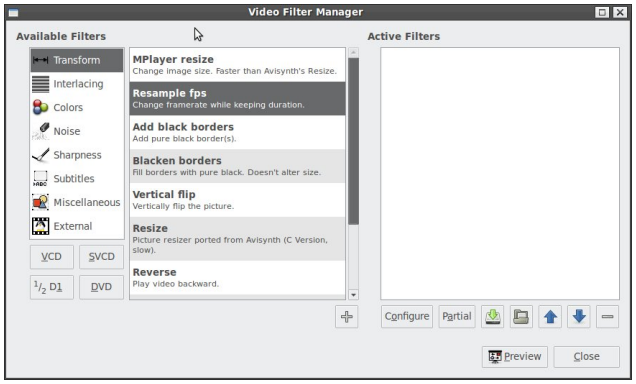


Don't forget to tick “blend to black.” The fading time can be chosen freely and according to taste. We are now entering an area where opinions differ. Some would do it one way, others a different way. Just be sure the result is what is you desire.

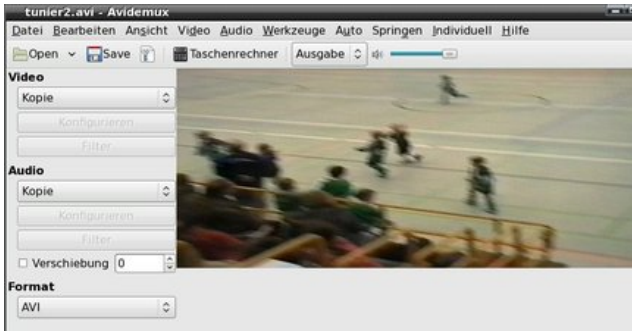


In this picture, (bottom of previous column) we see some comb filtering forming. How that happens and why is something I will explain later, together with all the other filter options. In the Video Filter Manager, I chose “Interlacing” in the left field, and chose “Separate Fields” on the right. Unfortunately, this filter has a side effect. The resolution changes from 704x576 to 704x288 and the frequency from 25.000fps to 50.000fps (29.97 to 59.94 in NTSC). Especially the 50.000fps (25.000fps = 25 frames per second in PAL, and 29.97fps in NTSC) are not standard.

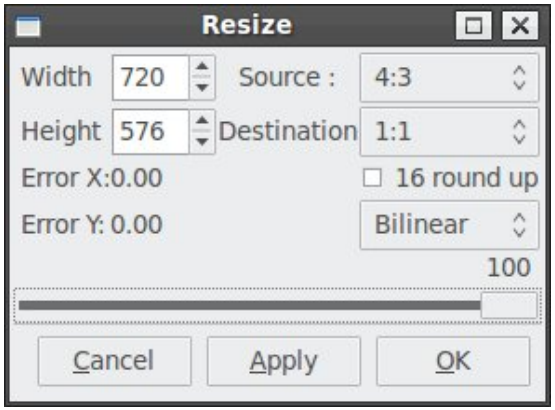
In the Video Filter Manager, we need to go back to “Transform” on the left and choose “Resample fps” in the right frame. Now we can adjust the frequency.



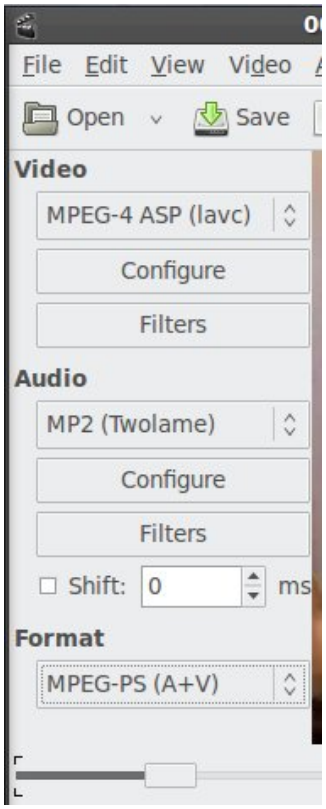
The resolution is still not right, and the display is out of focus. We will leave the video interlaced, so we will have to choose this accordingly with the encoder codec later.



To save time authoring the DVD later, we correct the proportions of the picture sides. In the Video Filter Manager, choose "Mplayer resize" function under “Transform.”

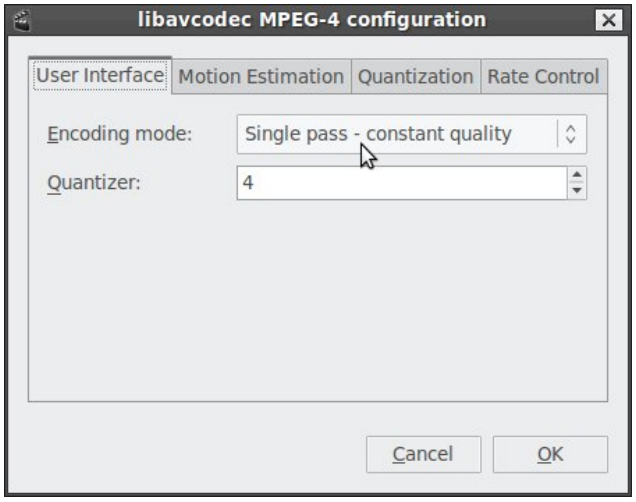


Now choose the size 720x576 (720x480 with NTSC video). We need a ratio of 4:3, and not 16:9. Let's have a look at the encoder options.



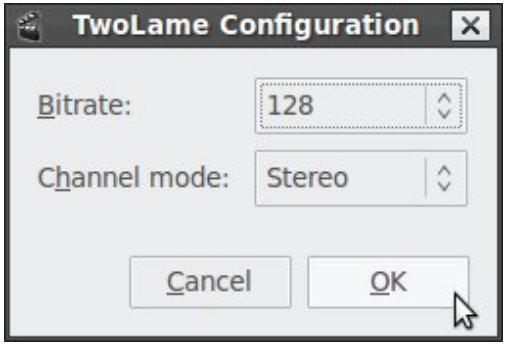
Underneath “Video” choose the DVD (lavc) codec. Afterwards, choose “Configure,” and choose a setting possibly like this one in the screen shot at the top of the next column.

With a standard DVD, the GOP size in PAL is 15. The GOP size for NTSC video is 18. As mentioned before, change Interlacing from “Progressive” to “Interlaced TTF.” The aspect ratio should be 4:3. We will leave the other settings as they are.



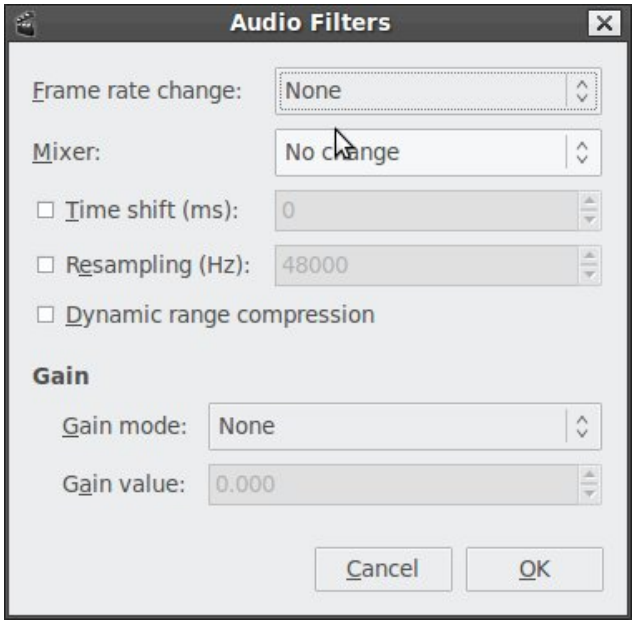
Audio Options:

In Audio, the standard for DVD is 48.000 kHz and MP2. AC3 and Wave can also be used. Wave should only be used if you want to fill up the DVD, since it uses a lot of space. Let us choose configure:



With MP2 (Twolame), a bitrate of 128 is standard. This is also standard for MP3. However, I prefer to use a bitrate of 192 kbps.

In Filters:



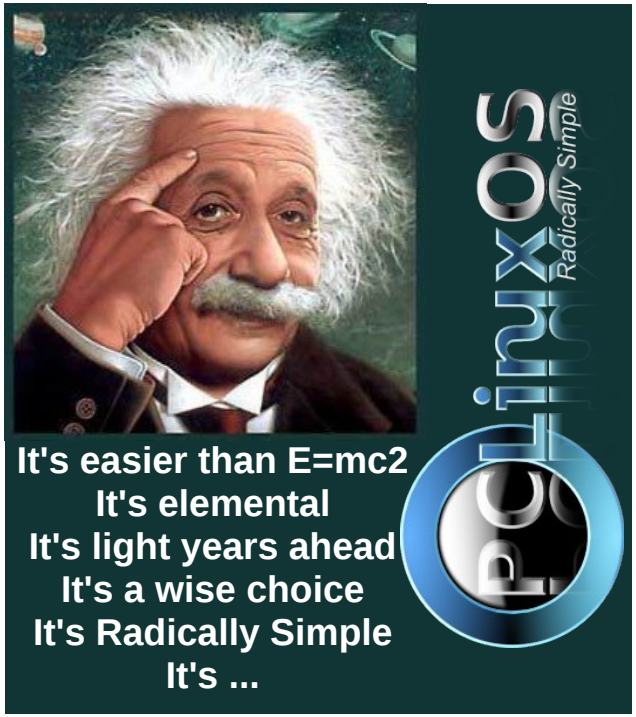
These settings are self-explanatory. I learned that if the audio remained at 44.100kHz, that it would not be DVD standard compliant any longer. The DVD standard requires a 48,000 Hz sampling depth. As a result, I would then have to change the setting to 48,000. Because of this, we check the “Resampling” check box.

In “Format” we choose the setting MPEG-PS (A+V).

Once all the settings are completed we click “Save” and we are returned to the file browser.

Now name your video and sit back. Depending on which filters you have chosen, this can take a while. Remember that working with video files can be a lengthy process.

Now, let the creativity flow.



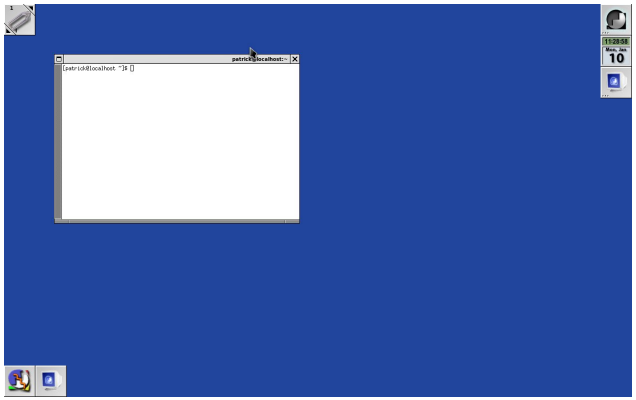
Screenshot Showcase

Posted by Ramchu, February 4, 2011, running KDE 4.

WindowMaker on PCLinuxOS: The Basics

by Patrick G Horneker (phorneker)

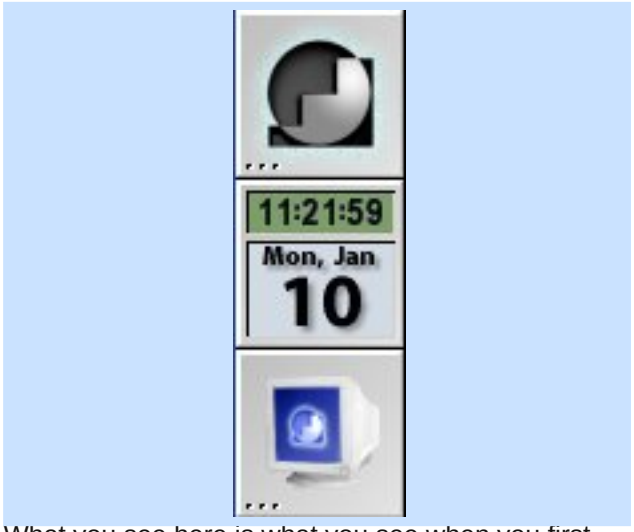
This article complements "*WindowMaker On PCLinuxOS: Introduction*." Here I give you the basics on how to use WindowMaker as a PCLinuxOS desktop. Shown here is a default WindowMaker desktop with `xterm` open.



This desktop looks quite plain when compared with KDE, GNOME, Enlightenment, XFCE, or LXDE. However, the WindowMaker desktop is very configurable, simply by launching *WindowMaker Configuration Manager* from the system menu. The utility can be found under *More Applications* > *Configuration*.

The WindowMaker Dock

The 64x64 pixel icon with the GNUStep logo at the upper right hand corner of your screen is the Dock.

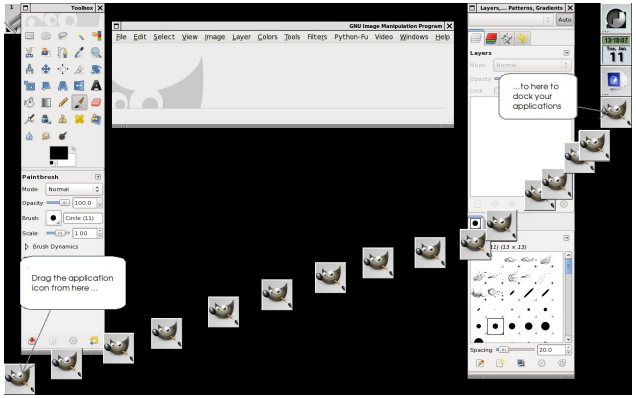


What you see here is what you see when you first launch WindowMaker. In PCLinuxOS (and in Mandriva), there are two icons below the GNUStep icon. The dock has been configured to show the system date and time, and a launcher for a terminal window (`xterm`).

This dock is expandable by dragging icons on the lower left hand corner of the screen to the bottom of the stack.

There are two kinds of icons that can be dragged to the dock. The first kind is a created by a currently running application such as Firefox, OpenOffice.org, or the GIMP. The icon associated with the application appears at the lower left hand corner of the screen. The icon at the bottom of the dock is a launcher for a terminal emulator (`xterm`). In the screenshot below, I show you a way to move these icons to the dock. Since there is limited space on the dock, I recommend using this for applications you use often.

The other kind of icons is a collection of applets developed for WindowMaker and AfterStep (another window manager that provides a NeXT-like interface, and also installable from Synaptic). These applets run *inside* a 64 x 64 icon. The calendar (below the GNUstep icon) is an example of a WindowMaker applet. (Visit the WindowMaker website for examples.)



Workspaces in WindowMaker

Like GNOME, KDE, and other desktops available for PCLinuxOS, WindowMaker comes with four workspaces already configured.

The icon on the upper left hand corner is what you use to switch between

workspaces. The Clip is another example of a WindowMaker applet. Simply click on the arrows (at the upper right and lower left corners) to change workspaces.

Here is a bonus. The Clip is another Dock! Unlike the workspace controls in KDE, GNOME, XFCE, and other PCLinuxOS desktops, you can *actually* dock icons here, at *any* edge of this icon, not just the bottom. In fact, icons on *this* dock can expand the same way that metal objects can stick to a magnet. (Remember those science experiments in elementary school involving magnets?)

Also, icons docked to the Clip apply *only to the current workspace* where the icons are docked. Icons applied to the Dock apply to *all* workspaces.

The System Menu

Right click anywhere in the background to pull up the System Menu. As configured in PCLinuxOS (and Mandriva), this menu is the same as the menus for all other desktops available in PCLinuxOS. This provides consistency between desktop environments if you have multiple desktops installed (e.g. WindowMaker installed along with GNOME, KDE, E17, XFCE, etc.).

With this configuration, the menu changes as you install and remove applications from within Synaptic.

Note: With some other distributions such as Slackware, openSuSE, Ubuntu and Fedora, there is a default menu setup by the developers of WindowMaker. You can configure WindowMaker to use *this* menu, but the menuing system here is **not compatible** with the menuing system configured with PCLinuxOS and Mandriva.

This means that if you choose to use the WindowMaker default menu configuration instead of the PCLinuxOS default menu configuration, the menu you see will **not change** when you use Synaptic to add software, remove software, or update PCLinuxOS. If you use the WindowMaker default configuration, you will have to manually edit the menus using the *Preferences* utility or the *WindowMaker Configuration Manager*.

To maintain the consistency we expect from PCLinuxOS, *I do not recommend reconfiguring the menu in WindowMaker*.

You can also pull up the menu by pressing the `F12` key on your keyboard.

Launching Applications

In addition to the System Menu, you can launch applications by *double clicking* on application icons that are docked in either the Dock or the Clip. Double clicking on the icon that looks like a 3D view of a monitor displaying the GNUstep logo opens a terminal window where you can launch applications from the command line.

Switching Windows

Press `F11` on your keyboard to pull up a list of windows that are currently open on your desktop. You can select an open window from the menu that pops up. You can also use `Alt-Tab` to switch between windows the same as in Windows or in KDE. (Using `Alt-Tab` displays windows as icons, and is much cooler than using the `F11` method.)

Exiting WindowMaker

Of course, you will want to exit WindowMaker when you are finished with your session. This is accomplished by selecting *Exit* > *Exit* from the System Menu. Selecting *Exit* > *Restart* will restart WindowMaker with the current configuration. This is useful when you *actually* make changes to the WindowMaker configuration that *require* a restart to take effect.

Your Home Directory

When you launch WindowMaker for the first time, a directory structure is created in your home directory. This is where you can install wallpapers, themes, icon sets, pixmaps for tiling. The directory structure is used by WindowMaker to store preferences on a per user basis.

This directory structure starts with ~/GNUStep, and is the root directory for everything WindowMaker and AfterStep related.

~/GNUstep/Defaults is where WindowMaker stores all preferences and user customizations.

~/GNUStep/Library/WindowMaker is where you install wallpapers, tiles, icons, etc. and is available only when you login to the desktop (i.e. on a per user basis).

~/GNUstep/Library/Icons is for icons that are shared between WindowMaker and AfterStep.

The GNUstep/Defaults directory

WMGLOBAL is where session defaults are stored and used throughout WindowMaker.

WMRootMenu is the location where contents of the System Menu are found. (Should be /usr/share/WindowMaker/menu in PCLinuxOS.)

WMState keeps track of where icons are on the desktop and the configuration of each icon, including the Dock and the Clip.

WMWindowAttributes keeps track of the location of application icons for each WindowMaker icon created.

WPrefs stores color customizations.

WindowMaker is where user customizations are stored.

The GNUStep/Library/WindowMaker directory

Backgrounds is where you install wallpapers for use with WindowMaker.

CachedPixmaps is where WindowMaker stores application icons assigned to WindowMaker icons.

IconSets is where you install icon collections for use with WindowMaker, icon sets are similar to icon themes for KDE.

Pixmaps is where you install icons and other graphics to be used by WindowMaker.

SoundSets and Sounds are where you install audio files for use with WindowMaker. This requires a separate WindowMaker sound server applet, which I shall explain later.

Styles is where customizations to the appearance of the menus are stored. This is similar in function to styles used by FluxBox and BlackBox.

Themes are where you store WindowMaker themes. Themes are stored as .tar.gz files.

WPrefs are other customizations to WindowMaker are stored on a per user basis.

Disclaimer

1. All the contents of the NEW PCLinuxOS Magazine are only for general information and/or use. Such contents do not constitute advice and should not be relied upon in making (or refraining from making) any decision. Any specific advice or replies to queries in any part of the magazine is/are the person opinion of such experts/consultants/persons and are not subscribed to by the NEW PCLinuxOS Magazine.
2. The information in the NEW PCLinuxOS Magazine is provided on an "AS IS" basis, and all warranties, expressed or implied of any kind, regarding any matter pertaining to any information, advice or replies are disclaimed and excluded.
3. The NEW PCLinuxOS Magazine and its associates shall not be liable, at any time, for damages (including, but not limited to, without limitation, damages of any kind) arising in contract, rot or otherwise, from the use of or inability to use the magazine, or any of its contents, or from any action taken (or refrained from being taken) as a result of using the magazine or any such contents or for any failure of performance, error, omission, interruption, deletion, defect, delay in operation or transmission, computer virus, communications line failure, theft or destruction or unauthorized access to, alteration of, or use of information contained on the magazine.
4. No representations, warranties or guarantees whatsoever are made as to the accuracy, adequacy, reliability, completeness, suitability, or applicability of the information to a particular situation.
5. Certain links on the magazine lead to resources located on servers maintained by third parties over whom the NEW PCLinuxOS Magazine has no control or connection, business or otherwise. These sites are external to the NEW PCLinuxOS Magazine and by visiting these, you are doing so of your own accord and assume all responsibility and liability for such action.

Material Submitted by Users
A majority of sections in the magazine contain materials submitted by users. The NEW PCLinuxOS Magazine accepts no responsibility for the content, accuracy, conformity to applicable laws of such material.

Entire Agreement
These terms constitute the entire agreement between the parties with respect to the subject matter hereof and supersedes and replaces all prior or contemporaneous understandings or agreements, written or oral, regarding such subject matter.

Synaptic & The Repositories

by Daniel Meiß-Wilhelm (Leiche)
Translated from German by tschommer

At some point, every PCLinuxOS user is going to want to either update their PCLinuxOS installation, or they will want to install additional software packages. In fact, every user who installs PCLinuxOS should perform an update immediately after installing PCLinuxOS, to insure that they have the latest and most stable versions of the software installed. Whatever the case may be, the user will need to use Synaptic, the package manager in PCLinuxOS, to perform these updates and to install additional software packages.

margarita wrote in the PCLinuxOS forum comments:

Since I often read that every once in a while a user wants to enable several repositories, I want to stress once again:

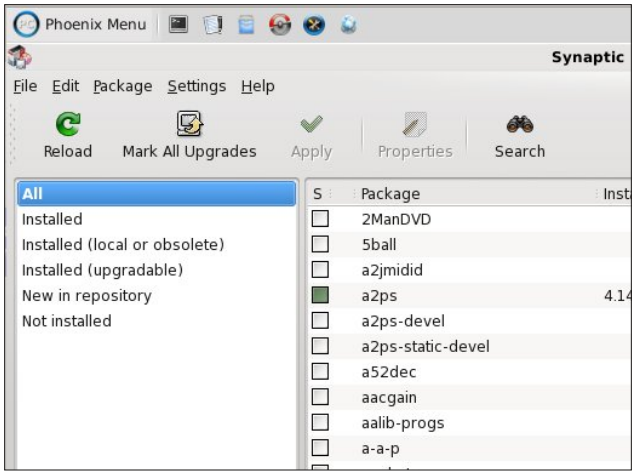
Please activate only one repository!

All servers are mirrors which are not all synchronized at the same time. In 99% of the time this will lead to problems.
So please, only use one server that is close to you.

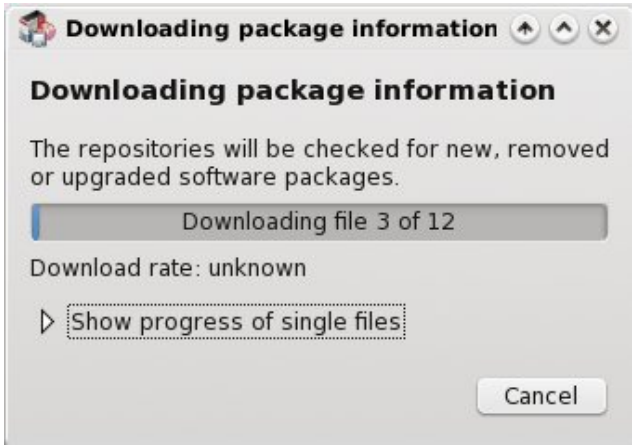
Da ich hier und da immer wieder lese, das einige User fälschlicherweise mehrere
Paketquellen aktivieren, hier noch einmal der Hinweis.
Bitte aktivieren Sie nur eine offizielle Paketquelle.
Bei allen Servern handelt es sich um Spiegelserver, die nicht zeitgleich synchronisiert werden. Dadurch kommt es bei 99% zu Problemen.
Also, benutzen Sie nur einen Server in Ihrer Nähe.

How can I get the most current package list?

Synaptic is either in the panel or can be found in the menu under **Applications > Software Center > Package Manager**. It will appear with one of the two icons pictured above. You need the ROOT password in order to run Synaptic.



First, click **Reload** to update the package list to its newest versions.

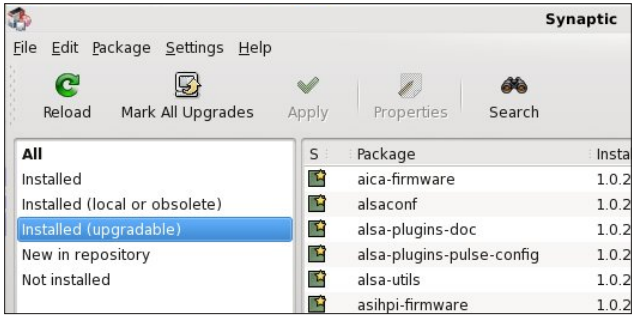


The current package list will be reloaded and analyzed.

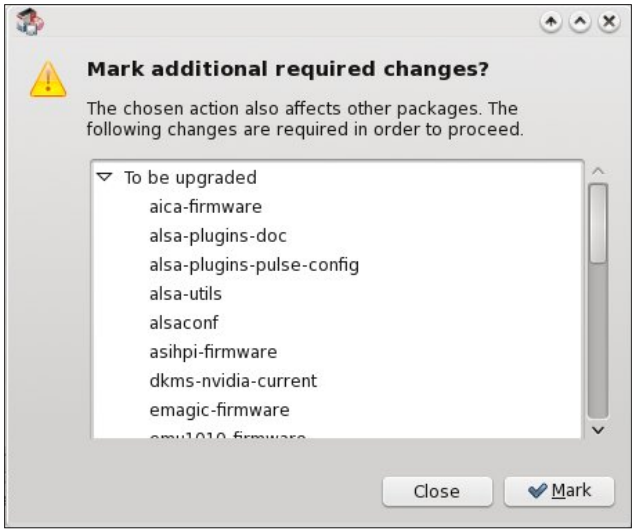
If newer versions of the already installed packages exist, then you will see the "Mark All Upgrades" button displayed on the left side.

Mark update for installation

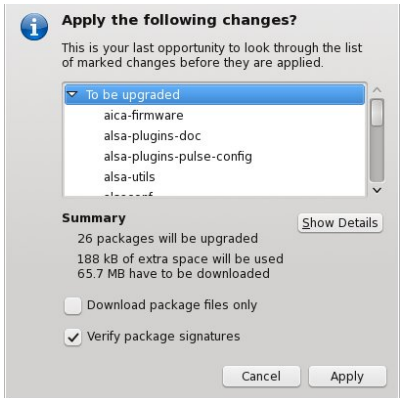
Click on **Installed (upgradable)** in the left column



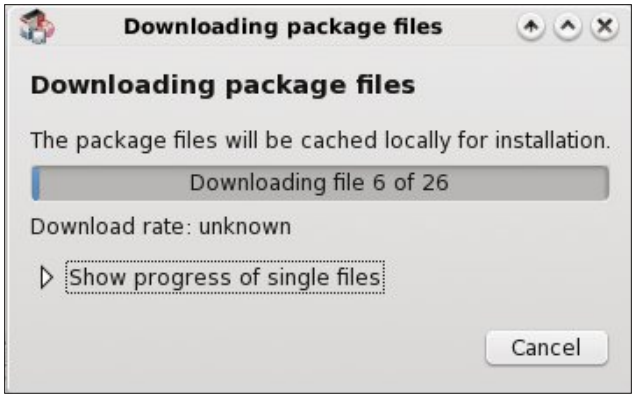
to see all packages that can be updated. To select these, simply click on **Mark All Upgrades**. Another window will open with the following text:



Click on **Mark** to continue with the update process, and then in the main window click on **Apply**. This will bring up another window and ask for confirmation that the updates should actually be installed.



Click the **Apply** button. Now, there's no turning back...



… if you don't click on **Cancel**. This process may take a while, depending on the size and number of updates.

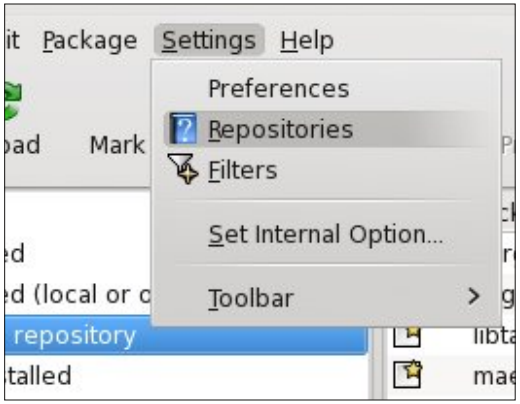
After all packages were downloaded, Synaptic will start installing the updates and deleting the older versions and obsolete packages.

It may happen that Synaptic informs you that one or more packages are not available. You have the option to continue with the installation or to cancel, after which the packages that have already been downloaded remain in the cache. It's usually a good idea to cancel and try again later on, because an incomplete installation can damage your system.

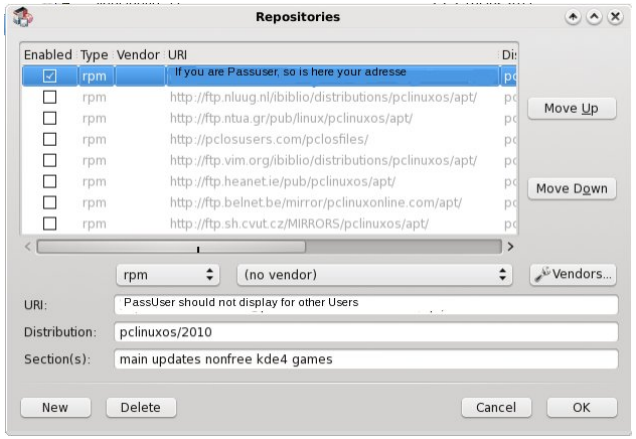
Advertisement

Changing Repositories

To change the repository simply click on **Settings > Repositories**.



In the following window you can select the activated repository to see detailed information:



NOTE: A PASS user is one who has recently donated to PCLinuxOS. The repository URL is sent to you by Texstar in an email.

To change the repository, remove the checkmark from the one currently enabled and set the mark for the one you wish to activate. Afterwards you should click on **Reload** in the main window so that the current package list from the newly selected repository is downloaded. An appropriate message should appear when clicking **OK** in the repository selection window.

You can also activate two additional sections which are not actually mirrors, but rather contain additional packages, such as the Megagames section.

Click on **New** and enter the following data:

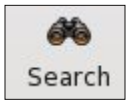
Address:
http://ftp.nl.freebsd.org/pub/os/Linux/distr/texstar/megagames/apt/

Distribution: pclinuxos/2010

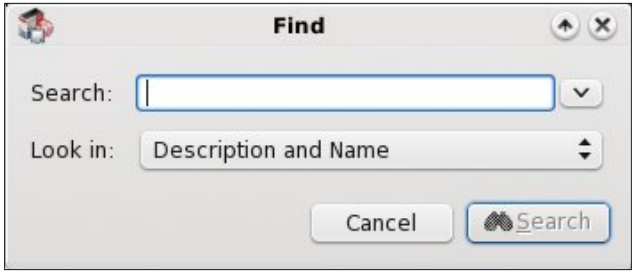
Section(s): megagames

Searching for Applications in Synaptic

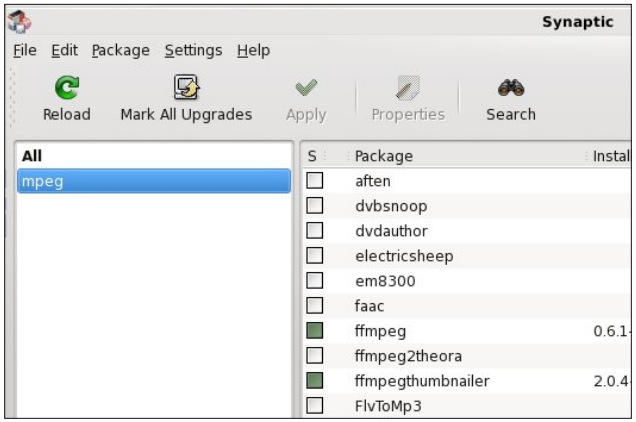
Here you have several options for searching. Click on



or press Ctrl+F. Now you can enter the program name or a keyword (e.g. “mpeg”).

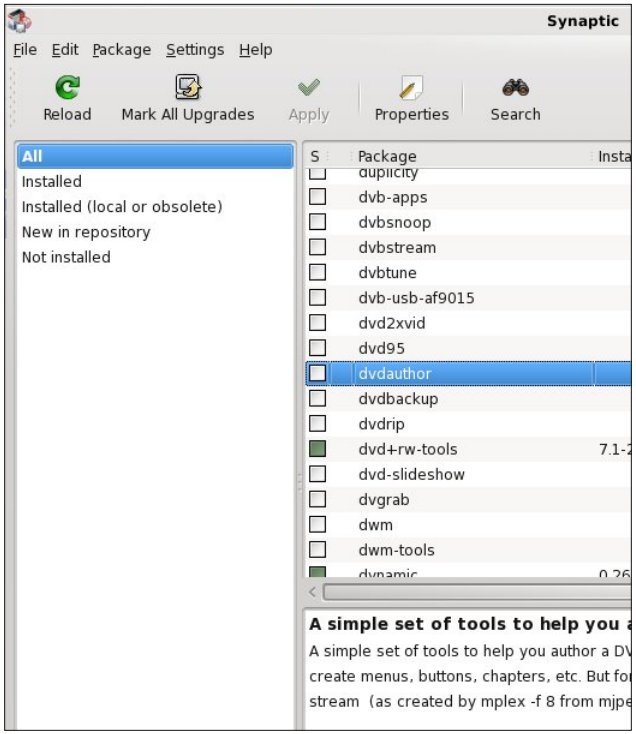


If the search was successful you will be presented with the results:



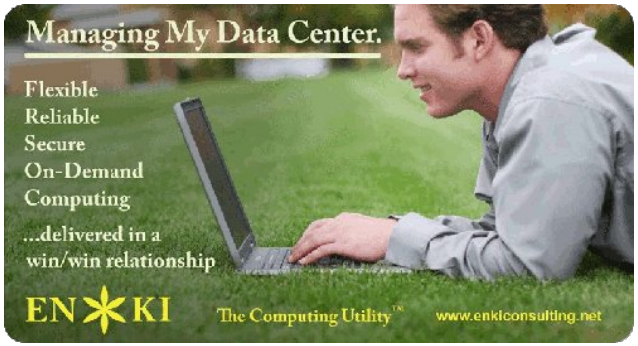
or the results window will be empty if nothing is found.

You can also click on any package on the right side and start typing the name of the application if you know it.



Finally, since our main repository recently updated their servers, we have had to update our sources.list, to insure that Synaptic has all the current information. From time to time, as mirrors change and the directory structure of the mirrors change, you may need to occasionally update the sources.list. Complete instructions for completing this simple task are given in the forum, here: http://www.pclinuxos.com/forum/index.php/topic,87378.0.html.

Good luck!



International Community PCLinuxOS Sites

DENMARK

CZECHOSLOVAKIA
PCLinuxOS
síla jednoduchosti

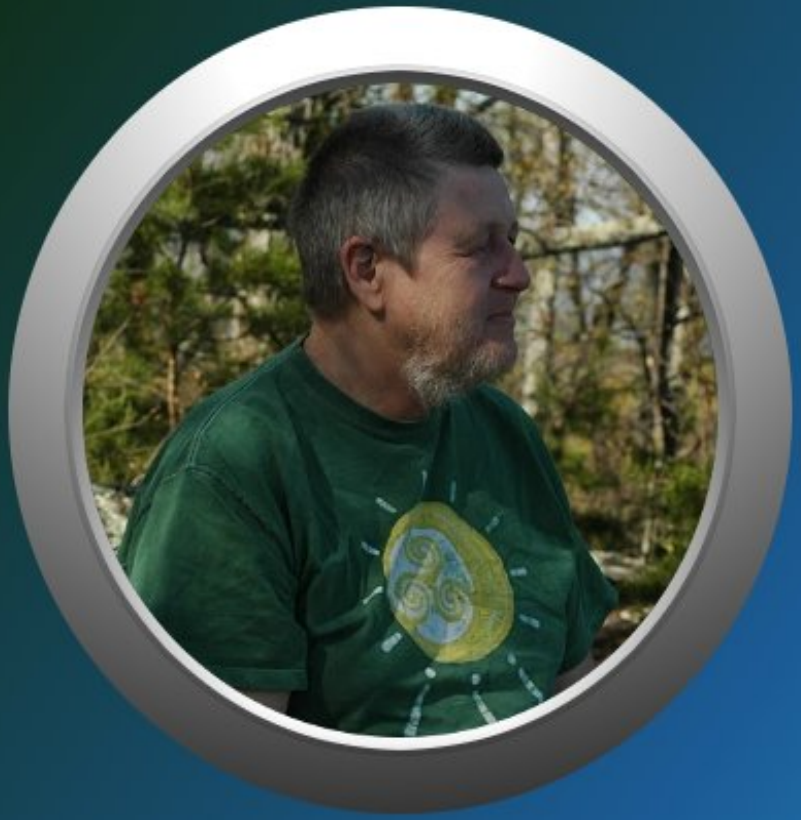
More Screenshot Showcase

Top left: Posted by Archie, February 22, 2011, running KDE 4.

Top right: Posted by djohnston, February 3, 2011, running e17.

Bottom left: Posted by Ramchu, February 21, 2011, running KDE 4.

Bottom right: Posted by tschommer, February 3, 2011, running KDE 4.



2011

March

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

Neal
Forum Administrator
Coffee Connosiuer

photo by C Solis