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LINUX MEDIA PLAYERS





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Next month you will find Chapter 1 of the Gnome User Guide that is based on the Gnome PCLOS 2008.1 version. You should also find more interviews from the heads of other PCLOS based projects. The summer looks to be heating up both outside and here at the Mag so get this issue and sit somewhere cool and enjoy the read!

Papawoob

Welcome to the 23rd Issue of PCLinuxOS Magazine! We have another issue full of interesting howtos, a new series on computer languages, an up-to-date Pclos Based Distros, and interviews with the heads of the i18 and BEL (Business Edition Linux.) You will also find Chapter 4 of the KDE User Guide and some more inspirational testimonials.

A note of congratulations to the German translation team as they have completed translating all 22 previous issues of the Magazine. They are now in the process of building a Wiki using the contents of this magazine. You can find links to both of these endeavors in the Links tab at our website.

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>digital magazine

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Can you tell us a little about yourself?

Well, I have no life. I work as a full time truck driver/dispatcher, I have a commercial cleaning business, I run a non-profit Linux/tech support community program for non-profit community programs that need help. Oh Yeah, I am part of the BEL (Business Edition Linux) Project team also. I really must say though, none of the work that is going on now, that has brought BEL Project and the servers to even this point could have been done without donsanderson, our Server Team Lead. Don is an experienced network technician for around twenty years now and knows what a server should do and how it should just do its job. We have had other members really pitch in and help with support and graphics and even providing us with new documentation, like eleduardok and weric. I want to say thank you to those folks so much. We have a lot of work ahead of us but we keep it fun and interesting.

What propelled you to create this version

Another fellow and myself got together one day , just over a year ago, that would be 'Merlin', and bought together two ideas to make one business project. I wanted to make a server based on PCLinuxOS, Merlin wanted to create a SOHO desktop that enabled very small business users to be productive with PCLinuxOS as well. Thus was born what has become the BEL Project

What were some of the hurdles that you had to get over in creating this version?

Getting other people involved is one of the biggest hurdles. It takes a lot to make (tweak) together

a 'multi-server' from what is originally presented as a home user desktop. It is a testament to PCLinuxOS that it is as powerful and flexible enough to do so. It really is a 'niche' area to work with servers and getting just the right group of people together to put in the work to not just make it, but keep trying to make it better is a challenge.

What do you see for the future of this version?

We are working to "own" the niche market for small to medium sized businesses running Linux servers/systems. One of my biggest pet peeves is people referring to PCLinuxOS as a "newbie" distro. PCLinuxOS, and BEL, by extension, are as capable as any other Linux distro currently available, and I would venture to say even better than most in it's offerings.

TESTIMONIALS



There once was a boy that lived in Beirut, Lebanon, he wanted a computer for Christmas, and as always in a fairytale he couldn't afford it. One day he picked up a book about how computers were made, read it cover to cover, and said "hey if i buy the parts and assemble them myself it would be much cheaper". After cracking open his piggy bank he treated himself to some of the nicer hardware available then (1998). A Pentium MMX 200Mhz CPU, an Intel Chipset MB, a Voodoo card, 16Mb of Ram etc... Having set up his hardware he found himself without an OS and with little money, then the devil appeared and offered him a bootleg copy of Windows 95, the boy not knowing any better, lived in the ignorance that is proprietary software for the rest of childhood.

The boy grew up, and went to college to study economics and he still had never owned a genuine copy of Windows or any of the games he

played or the software he used. Until, one day, while transferring at Charles De Gaulle international airport his Laptop running a pirated copy of Windows XP along with dozens of other pirated material gets flagged.

>>>>Fast Forwarding the full cavity search >>>>>

The angels appears, he says "hey buddy there is something called Linux try it", the angel had a Finnish accent...

And so began Jade's journey to find his significant other, the distro I will call mine...

I tried Ubuntu but it was too hot, I tried Mandriva but it was too cold and then i tried PCLinuxOS... and it was just right...

And as my tribute, I'm now writing my senior paper or as we call them in the French education system my "Memoire de Licence" on the competition

between Linux and Windows in the various OS markets.

and as J. Scott Thayer said:

One OS to rule them all,

One OS to find them.

One OS to call them all,

And in salvation bind them.

- with apologies to Mr Tolkien

LeJade



by **Paul Arnote**

to view more of Paul's musings visit his blog at:

<http://ravingrantings.blogspot.com/>

Recently, my trusty old WinXP installation on my even trustier Sony Vaio laptop went South. The NTFS file system crashed. At first, I thought the hard drive had given up the ghost. In fact, I was so convinced that the hard drive was bad that I ordered a new hard drive for the computer. It turned out that the file system had become corrupt. My, oh my! What about all the files I had yet to archive and back up?! (Yes, I routinely back up my important files and photos ... and so should you!) And all of this happened with NO warning whatsoever!

I put in my WinXP installation disk (commercial copy, not one of those recovery disks that comes with your computer), and managed to run `chkdsk.exe` in an attempt to clean up

the errant file system. I had hoped that merely running the `chkdsk` program to clean up the bad, bad file system would allow me to again boot my computer, but that was not to be so. The computer remained "un-bootable."

Having ventured into the land of Linux (as you know from my previous blog entries), I decided to use my PCLinuxOS 2007 Live CD to boot my laptop and see what I could do from there. The forums are full of stories of how others were able to use their Live CD to resurrect lost files, if not the operating system itself. I was initially skeptical that this would yield any appreciable results. Not only did PCLinuxOS boot my laptop, but even from the Live CD, the computer sprang to life and ran faster than it ever did! Plus, PCLinuxOS allowed me to access my previously lost files on the Windows disk. Using a SD memory card reader, I was able to transfer all the files of importance to me, 2 GB at a time, and move them to my 500 GB external hard drive (attached to another Linux computer in the house). And, before you say anything ... yes, it might have been easier to simply hook up the external hard drive to the laptop, but because it is formatted with NTFS, PCLinuxOS was not able to write to that drive from the Live CD. So my only other choice was to use some form of a USB drive to move the files. Hey, I was happy to at least have access to my files!

In the course of moving these files, I discovered how fantastically well my laptop ran with PCLinuxOS. As my previous work with PCLinuxOS had demonstrated, everything about my laptop was immediately recognized and properly set up. Joyously, I even had wireless access ... and it was set up with a minimum of effort on my part!

Afterwards, I figured since I had a new (and larger) hard drive on the way, and since



the Windows installation was toast, I was going to have to reformat the hard drive and re-install whatever operating system I chose to go with. So once I got done saving my files, I hit the "Install" icon on the PCLinuxOS Live CD desktop and reformatted the "old" hard drive to use only PCLinuxOS. The installation of PCLinuxOS took only about 20 minutes, and after applying all the updates from the repository, less than an hour had elapsed.

PCLinuxOS literally hummed and sang on this laptop! Under the previous Windows XP installation, WinXP would routinely "thrash" my hard drive for no apparent reason. It would just sit there and have all kinds of hard drive activity, even at times when I was doing nothing on the computer. One of the first things I noticed was that under PCLinuxOS, the hard drive light scarcely came on ... regardless of what I was doing!

Finally, my ordered hard drive came, but it was DOA. I sent it back, and while waiting on the replacement to arrive, hummed along with PCLinuxOS without any of the usual problems I was accustomed to under Windows, but also at a greater speed. I had already made up my mind. Since the new hard drive was more than twice the storage size of the older one, I was going to "dual boot" the laptop with Windows XP and PCLinuxOS.

When the replacement arrived (Whew! The new replacement worked perfectly), I used GPartEd Partition Editor to partition the new hard drive into two fairly equally sized partitions. GPartEd made this exceptionally easy, especially since this is what it is designed for. I attempted to install Windows XP Pro on the Windows partition. It was successful, in that it ran, but unsuccessful from the standpoint that not all of my hardware was properly installed. And, due to procrastination, I never got around to creating the Vaio Recovery Disks, as I should have done when I initially got the laptop. And the crash of the file system also took the Recovery Partition right along with it, so those could not be accessed any longer. I ordered the Recovery Disks from Sony (bravo to you Sony ... I had those in only two days!), then proceeded to install PCLinuxOS on the remaining partition. Installation of PCLinuxOS went totally without a hitch, and once again, all my laptop hardware and features were properly recognized and set up, with scarcely any input from me. The installation of PCLinuxOS was soooooo much easier than the installation of Windows XP! And the total time of installation was, again, less than one hour from installation to applying the updates from the PCLinuxOS Repositories.

Once the Recovery Disks arrived from Sony, I proceeded to finish a "proper" Windows XP re-installation from the Recovery Disks. After about an hour to an hour



and a half of repeatedly swapping Disc 1 with Disc 2 and constantly rebooting the laptop, Windows was finally re-installed and all my laptop hardware was finally working. Then, Windows spent the next four (4!) hours applying all the updates from Windows Update. One thing that stood out during this process was that 90% to 95% of those updates were "Security Updates" to plug security holes in Windows XP. As soon as one round of updates were complete, it would come up with more updates to apply. I have never experienced anything like this with PCLinuxOS.

Since installation of the new hard drive, and the subsequent installation of both operating systems, I've spent most of my time (including the time writing this blog entry) under PCLinuxOS. I've only booted to the Windows partition a few times, mostly to finish setting things up or to try out a new piece of freeware. This laptop runs so well under PCLinuxOS that I

have yet to find much reason for booting to Windows XP. Most of the programs that I routinely run under Windows XP, have counterparts under PCLinuxOS that usually do the job just as well and just as easily ... and sometimes even easier!



by Steve Lake

There are a vast number of tools available for Linux that provide the end user with access to a rich multimedia experience that is both satisfying, but also useful.

There are tools that play audio files, cd's, dvd's, have fancy interfaces, or even work from the console. Some have applications in DJ'ing, while others can be used to create custom built media kiosks or stand alone media players. But what are some of these programs and how can they benefit you? Let's look at each of them and what they offer for you.

Amarok

Amarok is a feature rich Linux music player that has a lot to offer the end user. It has a music catalog management system that allows you to gather your CD's together by name

and artist, and organize it quite effectively, and it gives you the option to include CD cover art in your catalog if it's available. The program itself comes with two basic interfaces. A Winamp and an iTunes style interface. The iTunes style interface is on by default.

There are options to pull down the lyrics and artist information if it's available as well. iPod support is spotless, and it also does a decent job supporting other media players as well. Playing with Amarok almost makes you feel like you've found the Swiss army knife of Linux media players. But that would be incorrect.

While it's a good player, it's got some rather nasty failings.

The first of these is its stability. I found it a bit flaky at times. It had problems such as lockups and other issues that required a hard kill to fix. The second is file support. While it does a decent job supporting a lot of different files, it doesn't do enough, or it chokes on files such as WAV, FLAC, ASF, WMA and several different kinds of MP3 files. There are likely other formats it doesn't handle well, but I didn't have more to test with. It does play Ogg beautifully, aside from occasional hanging issues. Performance wise though, it's pretty snappy.

Amarok also supports streams. While its support of last.fm bad, it could be a lot better. Another interesting feature is the ability to burn custom CD's. The catch though is that it uses K3B for the burning software. If you like K3B, then you're all set. Amarok comes standard in KDE, but is also available for install from your favorite Linux software repository.



Audacious

Audacious is a Winamp clone. It's a fork of Beep Media Player (which we'll be covering later), which is a fork of XMMS, the original Linux Winamp clone. The player's only real claim to fame is its roots and the fact that it allows for more audio formats than its parent or grand parent. You're still stuck with only one playlist, and only basic song management, but if you like simple, Audacious has it. It's also got better eyecandy than any of its predecessors.

One of the things I found bad was that the washed out white interface caused some rather ugly issues with trying to navigate the program. However, since it supports winamp 2 style skins, you can easily fix this by reskinning it in your favorite winamp skins. Another problem is that it doesn't handle ID3v2 tags very well. Support for them is rather buggy and causes the program

to do all kinds of weird things.

A third thing that bugged me was that while Audacious supports skins, it doesn't support them right. Double sizing the player, resizing the player, windows or the playlist either won't work, or will cause some very strange and erratic behavior.

One advantage of Audacious though over its predecessors I believe, is the much better organized playlist. There's support for adding actual internet streams, cd's, and networked and local files very, very easily. Support for other files besides Ogg and MP3 is either sketchy or non-existent. However, some of this can be overcome by simply applying some plugins.

It's a decent player overall, but it's got some growing to do.

Audio Overload

Audio Overload is a rather interesting program with a very specialized use. It's designed to play video game music audio files. While the number of formats supported is quite impressive, the support offered isn't totally up to date.

Currently, the only formats supported date from the early PS2 all the way back to the Commodore and the Amstrad CPC. Now if you've got audio files from old games written for these systems, then you'll have no issues getting them to play. But more support for modern sound files will be rather hard to come by. The player itself is only available through the developers homepage.



BMPx

BMPx is a media player that mixes quite a few different music playback and management tools together to provide you with the best possible experience for you while enjoying your music. But BMPx isn't just another clone. Despite its name, it is no longer a derivative of the BMP (Beep) media player. It has been completely rewritten from the bottom up, shedding everything that made up BMP, save for a few Xmms core files which were used in some of the audio decoding. So, in almost every way, BMPx is a whole new program with even more to offer you than its estranged former parent. While it's still somewhat unstable and classified as being in an early beta stage, what the developers have done with it is quite phenomenal.

The first thing that amazed me was the library system. Using ID3 tags included with each song, the player sorts your

music by artist, album, song, and more depending on your taste. And if you don't like the way the songs are sorted, you can easily resort them by simply editing their ID3 tags and changing them to your personal preference. Playlists are also easy to setup, and quite flexible in what they can do. You can create them from local files, or from Last.FM through the included Last.FM support. BMPx also has incredible support for large audio collections, easily tackling my 2500+ song collection as though that were just the warmup.

BMPx also includes an extensive streaming internet radio selection of stations. And when I say extensive, we're talking about being to the point of near insanity. The number of available genres alone is well over 250, which doesn't count the total stations under each genre. I couldn't get an estimate of exactly how many there were, but I'd easily say there was in excess of over 2000 streaming internet radio stations. So you should be able to find one that is to your liking. Last.fm support isn't bad really. Neither is it's podcast support. Those both seem to work very well.

Audio cd's are also handled so well that playing, ripping and managing them is a breeze. You also have your selection of formats to rip the files to, including , and flac. It also contains basic video playback for your podcasts. I couldn't find anything that indicated that it had iPod or other player support, but considering how far they've come with such a low numbered beta, I suspect that'll be coming in the near future, as well as online music purchasing.



BMPx is available through most major distributions, or by going to their homepage and downloading the latest SVN version.

Summary

While this is the end of part 1 of our roundup of Linux Media Players, don't think it's the end. There are still a lot more ahead, and many of them will be screaming,

jaw dropping, eye popping pieces of Linux media player goodness. In part 2, we'll be covering Banshee, Baudline and several more! The objective and goal of this roundup series is to show you just a taste of what's available out there in the Linux media player world. And we won't be covering just audio players either.

We'll be diving headlong into Linux movie players too. While we won't go into an exceptional amount of detail, what we do offer you, we hope will stir your curiosity to give each of these

players a try until you find one that meets your needs.

I've discovered over the years that no matter how much I tell someone about something, ultimately it's up to them to choose what fits them right. I hope I'm able to do that by opening your eyes to just a slice of what's out there and then let you loose to explore on your own. :)



by pinoc

Contact info: peter.vogt@jrc.it

Two months ago I removed Windows and installed PCLinuxOS in our local nursery in Italy; the kids love playing Gcompris and Tuxracer and the teachers are happily using a free office suite on a suddenly much faster computer. Roberto, the head of the nursery, has just bought a new laptop and he was surprised to see that the applications on the shiny Vista were not running any faster than on his 4-year old laptop he had before, and that in spite of the multiple amount of RAM and CPU power, but we all know this story... After a brief discussion we quickly agreed to liberate the poor new laptop and replace the pre-installed Vista with an Italian PCLinuxOS installation.

This article summarizes some simple steps to change the English

localization of a standard MiniME 2008 installation to the Italian language, but these steps are equally applicable to any other language. In case you are interested in a German localization, I strongly suggest you save yourself some time and download the excellent German remaster by LinuxDoc from the German PCLinuxOS web page. So, let's start from a fresh MiniME 2008 installation and change the localization from English to Italian.

Installation of the necessary language packages

We need to install some packages which are not on the MiniME2008 Live-CD, so set up your Internet connection first and make sure it works. Then start Synaptic: Start> System> Configuration> Packaging> Synaptic Package Manager and enter your root password. At first, you will only see the packages from the CD and we need to click on the "Reload" button to inform the system about all the other additional packages of the PCLinuxOS repository. Then we click on the "Search" button to search for and install the following three packages: locales-it, glibc-i18ndata, kde-i18n-it. Then we close Synaptic.

Change the system language to Italian

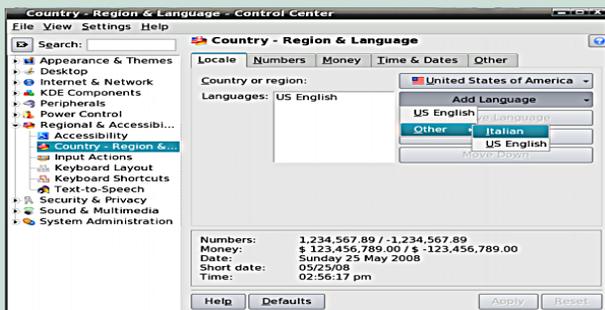
Start the PCLinuxOS Control Center: Start> System> Configuration> Configure Your Computer and enter your root password. In the left panel click on "System" and then on the right panel on "Select the language and the country or region of the system". In the following window select "Italian", click on the "Next" button, select your



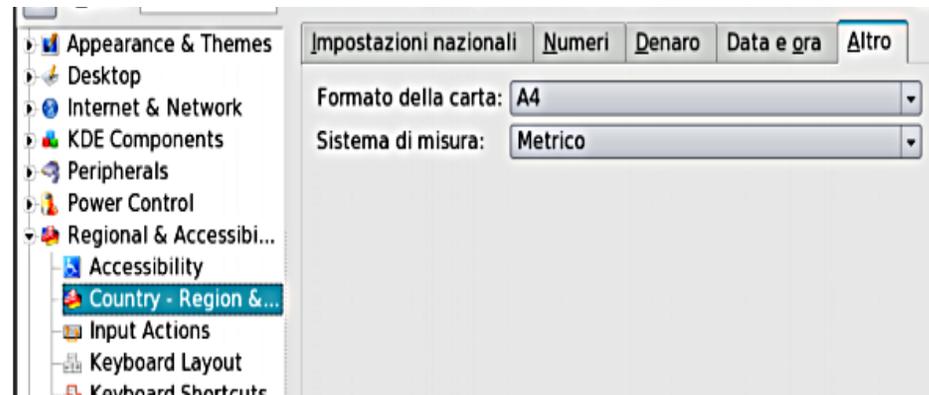
country, and click the “Next” button again; actually it is no longer called “Next” but already changed to the new language, in my case “Avanti”. Finally we click on the “OK” button in the following window and then we close the PCLinuxOS Control Center.

Change the KDE desktop to Italian

Start the KDE Control Center: Start> System> Configuration> Control Center. On the left panel open the entry “Regional & Accessibility”, then click on “Country - Region & Language” and on the right panel on “Add Language - Other – Italian” and you should see something like this:



After this, Italian will be at the top of the language list and the names of the tabs will already be in Italian. Now we can also amend some other useful things, for example in the “Altro” tab we can change the paper format to A4 and the system units to metric:



Finally, we click on “Apply”, close the KDE Control Center and any other open windows, and terminate the session: Start Log Out...

Start a new session and re-install existing programs

To start a new session, enter your user name and password at the Login window. Starting from now, any new installed software will have the interface of the new localization (Italian), if the programmers provided this language that is. However, all currently existing programs were installed with the default English interface and as a result they are all showing up in English. To change this, we need to reinstall all existing programs and it is thus meaningful to do the language conversion as early as possible. First, we need to get a list of the currently installed programs. Open a



terminal (Start> System> Terminals> Konsole) and enter the following command:

```
rpm -qa --queryformat "%{NAME} > installedRPMS.list
```

Now open the file “installedRPMS.list” with any text editor and insert the following three lines at the beginning of this file in such a way that your RPM list starts in the third line after the “--reinstall” (Note: there is also one empty space after the --reinstall). So, the head of this file should look like this:

```
#!/bin/bash
apt-get update
apt-get install --reinstall
<your rpm-list>
```

In the above example, replace “<your rpm-list>” by the actual list and remember to have one blank space between “--reinstall” and your rpm-list.

Within your list you can also remove the “kernel”-entries since we do not need to reinstall the kernel. Next, we save this file, exit the text editor, and enter the following command in the terminal to make this file executable:

```
chmod u+x installedRPMS.list
```

To perform the re-installation we need to become root, so we enter the command “su -” in the terminal and supply the root password. At the red root prompt enter the full path to the now executable file “installedRPMS.list”, e.g.:

```
/home/<your_username>/installedRPMS.list
```

(replace <your_username> by your actual username) and press the Enter key. Now Apt, the “motor” under the hood of Synaptic, will reload the repository RPM sources and finally ask for your confirmation to re-install: “Do you want to continue ? [Y/n]” and our answer is “Y” (without the quotes). This will take some time...

NOTE: It may happen that Synaptic can not re-install some packages because they are no longer available in the repositories. In this case it will complain and provide you with a list of these packages. Remove these names from your file “installedRPMS.list” and then try again.

When the re-installation has finished, we can clean the packet cache by entering the following command in the root terminal:

```
apt-get clean
```

Finally, close all windows, do a Logout/Login and there you go! Now everything should be in your chosen language/locale. Only those programs which do not

HOW TO



provide an interface in your language will have the default English interface. And now join in with Roberto and have fun with your newly localized PCLinuxOS!



Interview with Didouh

Can you tell us a little about yourself?

I'm a 29 year old married male living and born in France. I have two kids. My background is artistic and so is my professional and college experience until 2006. I've been using Linux since 1998 but have been increasing my commitment since 2000. I learned all I know about computer from experience and discussion. I used the skills I acquired in both art and technology as a background for most of my professional experience from 1999 until now by using one to teach the other. At the very moment, I'm a grocery shop manager as well as a computer preceptor (week end) and a visual artist. Online, I'm both one of Mypclinuxos Admins, i18n team leader.

What propelled you to create this version? (that question is kind of tricky and plural)

It's not actually a version that I designed but several... as you know I'm a "multitasking" interventionist.

My PCLinuxOS.com : I've been wandering around mypclinuxos.com for a while since its opening and offered my services to a lot of projects while giving tips and help on the main forums. I set up the i18n team's base there and focused my pclinuxos commitment here. I quickly became a global mod. Once Devnet decided to draw himself away from mypclinuxos, he assigned various members as admins of very specific sections of the site. I took the lead of the technical part, blended with my global moderator and project leader duties, this became quite a big thing, about 1 year ago with KDulcimer and Jmiahman . So after all I took no decision but to do something and the commitment took shape progressively.

I18n Project : Since I'm not a natural English speaker, PCLinuxOS is lacking a lot for me and for 2/3rd of the world... I had several commitments in software translation and a recent activity in a pclinuxos remaster oriented towards French people. Those projects were able to provide an almost 100% localized remaster but were unable to maintain the pclinuxos backward "linguistic" compatibility due to rpm, untranslated on the repositories ... thus, we decided, with the most people involved in the localization and translation effort round pclinuxos, to unite and start translating the "core" of the distro in as many languages as possible and sometimes goes farther and deeper. The very aim has always been to provide an OS as easy to use as possible for the average Joe and since the average Joe is not obviously fluent in English ...

What were some of the hurdles that you had to get over in achieving these goals?



mylinuxos : the big thing has been to set up something that would allow tons of people to work together in a simple and complementary way thus we have set up a system centered on two tools : a wiki and a forum ... those tools provide a base for work. We also provide sub domains and web based tools on those domains to help the project get independent ... so the big thing has been to deal with each project's specificity and help it grow without getting isolated ... it's more a matter of diplomacy than a matter of technical awareness. The last few months saw the birth of an increasing amount of sub domain and mature project while the commitment of people from "external" projects has become more visible and the interconnection of project like "Tiny-Me" with "Santa Little Helper" or "i18n" and "mklivecd" and "beautification" with "gtk live install" turned out to be very productive. and the real ordeal is to manage individuals and keep things organised without putting anything or anyone aside. The last year saw the

birth of several new projects like "mythtv-os" and "producer edition" or "eeepclinuxos". Some grew up quite fast and migrated out of mylinuxos in no time, and some other have a slower maturation but are not yet active. A lot are hyperactive like "Santa" or "i18n" and provide updated content on a real regular and intense basis to the mainstream distro and turned mylinuxos into a real third party software content provider for plinuxos.... it's sometime like managing a 2000 ninth grade kid classroom and some times like advising a sage assembly. Anyway, we have been trying to maintain the role of this site which is to gather endeavors around plinuxos and promote projects that add to it for everyone by providing 3rd party content, flavoured installs or better user experience and functionality and maintain a plurality in the proposal toward plinuxos users by supporting projects that the official site could not like hack.mylinuxos.com or eeepclinuxos.com.

i18n : one of the biggest issues with i18n is i18n in itself ... one needs to manage asynchronous and hyperactive commitments from various origins ... since the languages are numerous, we need to get the translators being as picky as possible on the quality of their translation and thus get them to triple check every word since we have not yet enough volunteers to proofread all the provided translations. My work has been to get a sharp understanding and awareness of what each sub team had in mind and was up to in order to synchronise the CVS and keep things up to date ... the second big issue has been to get our enhancements to the distro, being added to the repositories ... except for the "core" packages like drak-live-install and PCC, most have been incorporated by Santa Little Helper's team but due to the asynchronism and the very careful way the Ripper Gang commit files on the repository with several checks between the packaging and the release of a rpm ... only 20% of the overall translated elements are available for the regular plinuxos users. The last big deal has been to provide a framework for i18n incorporation where the distro missed it ...



like Synaptic category listing, mklivecd and more recentl vit. David Smid (maintainer of vit) and Gettinther (Santa Little Helper's leader) have been of great help on those but this project is composed of many individual such as those two. We have at the very moment a unique Synaptic version that is 100% translatable to any supported languages, vit is yet translated in at least 6 languages and mklivecd will be able to be fine tuned to get localized from the initial boot screen to shutdown!

What do you see for the future of MyPCLinuxOS and the i18n team?

mypclinuxos system is reaching its limit. We are currently testing a new engine with new tools. It's Joomla based with community builder and will use phpbb3 forums. Using Joomla as a hub, we are testing tools to monitor and report project activity like a bugtracker and an embedded wiki

using media wiki... soon the tests will start on a svn web service to let the project have an online tool to manage software content. All this is to introduce a new user experience, facilitate project interconnections and bug reporting. We want to split apart support and documentation from developement and general information. we also want to get a private area for each project and allow the connection of external project to mypclinuxos ... at the very moment, mypclinuxos looks like a pulp and we want to make it look like a hub! <http://test.mypclinuxos> is the place to go and check how this new site looks and works.

Of course 100% commitment in the repository is the i18n team's final objective. we are going to carry on the rpm update process on the softwares we translated in order to get a faster incorporation curve. We also will be working on sets of tools to localize regular pclinuxos installs and eventually take part in the developement of the long announced and awayted multilingual DVD! Once that would be done, our next target will be to translate documentation, both internal and external (wiki) and, why not the magazine ?



by Gary L. Ratliff Sr.
<eronstuc@gmail.com>

This is to begin a series of articles on computer languages. As I mentioned in earlier articles one of my reasons for purchasing computers, in particular my SuperPET in 1981, was the ability to learn to program in many languages. And on this machine I was first introduced to the fascinating language which was invented in 1957 by Dr. Kenneth Iverson. Here it was a system of notation, which, due to employing a unique set of symbols, was able to generate very compact code. This language operates on the array as its basic element. And with this I learned that a 'sort', which I had written in Basic and which took nearly four pages of program code, was translated into a single line APL statement containing only 67 characters!!

For example, the problem of adding

together two matrices (A and B), would be solved in Basic by a series of nested loops with FOR statements to read in the input and then add the result, would be solved by the rather simple statement: $C = A + B$. This saving is increased when one learns that there are also simple symbols to allow matrix multiplication and matrix inversion.

Studies have estimated that the amount of coding required in APL is about one tenth of that of required to code the algorithm in another computer language.

An interesting aside: there was a contest in New Jersey which was based on the success of the Donald Trump Apprentice series which offered un-employed computer programmers the opportunity to compete for a \$40,000 per-year junior programming position. Here one of the first assignments was learning to program using APL. The text mentions that a total of some 27 persons were in the initial set of competitors.

Getting and Installing APLX

There are several versions of APL available for Linux. Like REALbasic these are proprietary systems.

However, one of these is available free of charge for non-commercial use. Then, once one learns and appreciates the ease and power of APL, they may wish to acquire one of the commercial versions. These are available in formats for the i386 or 32 bit machines and also the 64 bit AMD and Intel systems. One of the reasons for going to a 64 bit system would be the almost unlimited size of arrays supported. Persons working with extremely large data sets have had to rely on piecemeal processing. The micorapl website notes that currently the 32 bit version only supports memory up to 4 gigs.

The APL we will be using in this article is the personal version of APL for Linux. Download the program from the

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following site using the download facilities of Firefox:

http://www.microapl.co.uk/apl/linux_pe_form.html

Soon a file will appear on your desktop, which will be a gzipped tar archive. This is the Linux version of ALPX. They also have versions for Windows and MAC. Much information of their offerings and additional features of these systems is available from the firm's website, which may be reached with the following link:

<http://www.microapl.co.uk/apl/>

There are two methods of installing this system: as a normal user, and as root. The path to the application is different based on which method you select. The fonts will not be installed if you install as a normal user. This makes using the root method of install

more desirable; also the system would be made available to all users.

Therefore, open a terminal, su to root and install the system using these commands:

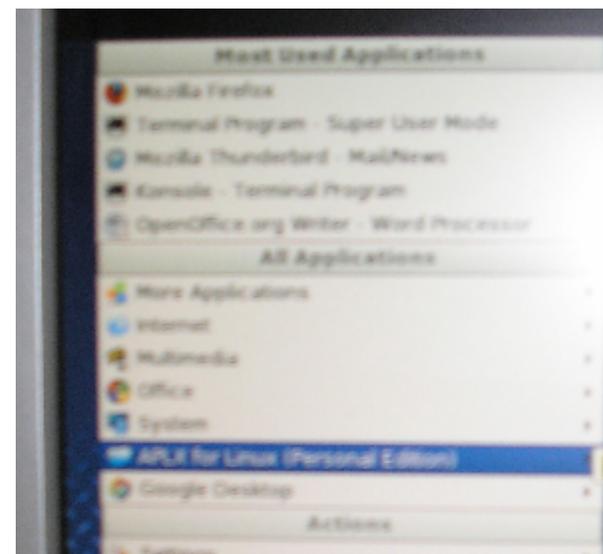
Caveat: perform this only on a system you use for experimenting. Do not do this on your main install as you will then have a potentially unstable system.

```
su
<enter password for root>
cd /home/gary/Desktop
gunzip apl_x_linux_pe_11.tar.gz
tar -xvf apl_x_linux_pe11.tar
cd APLXLinux1.1
./setup.sh
```

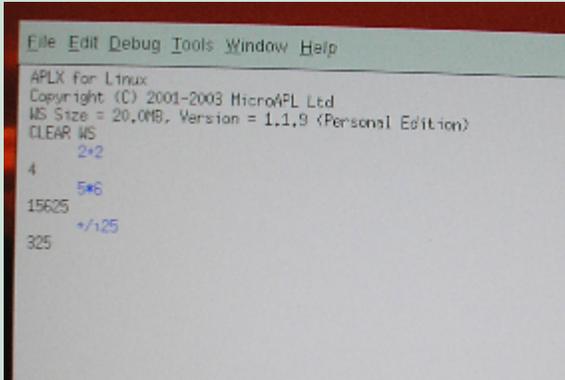
During the setup script select the default for all questions. Also register and they will email you an activation code which you will use to run APLX. Now restart the system and you will notice that there is a menu item (as seen below) for APLX for Linux (Personal Edition), which when

selected, will offer to load APLX.

You will, of course, need the activation code for the first run. The easiest method is to copy it from the email



message and then paste it into the request window using CONTROL V. You will then receive a request to restart APLX and you will now have the screen with a CLEAR Workspace as seen below



Mastering the keyboard and Learning APL

Now it will be a great help if you have before you the printed sheet which contains the locations of the various keys. One could print out such a sheet by performing a search in the Google search box of your Firefox browser for APL Keyboard Layout. The one I found of use for this version of APLX was found at:

<http://www.wickensonline.co.uk/apl/union-large.png>

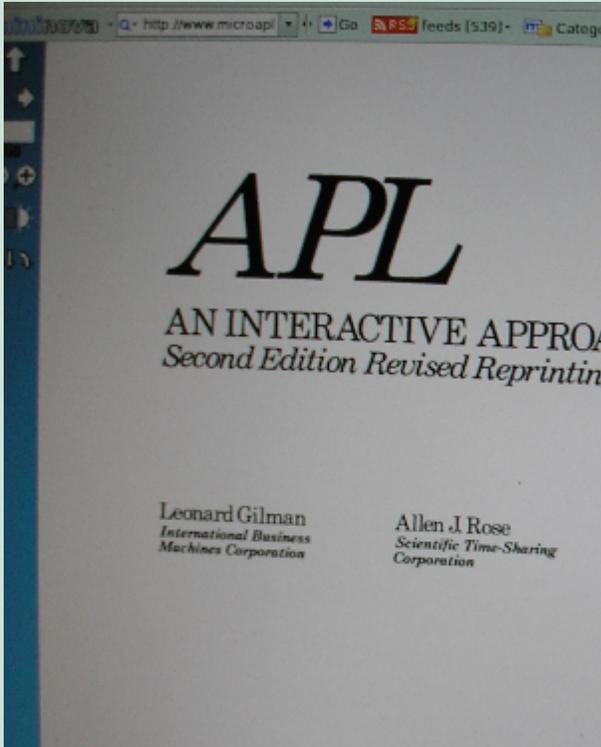
You will be able to select from two different keyboard layouts from the Tools menu of the Workspace. The one I prefer is the Unified APL Keyboard. Clicking the Help menu item then, selecting Keyboard Layout. Now by clicking you can hide the layout behind the window containing your workspace and bring it up front if you forget the location of a key. Note that it is color coded and in the Unified keyboard many of the items you will need are obtained by first pressing the ALT key. While keying in the examples of the functions and operators from the text of the book, it will show you how to use and learn APL. Some will require a key from the other set you are not using. Simply call up that keyboard, enter the desired symbol, and then go back to the keyboard which you prefer. Keeping the keyboard in use hidden behind the APL screen will be a handy shortcut for switching keyboards as required.

I learned that I will be able to allow you

to use the same method I used to learn APL some 27 years ago. I found a copy of one of the most useful tools for either learning APL in a classroom setting, or teaching the language to yourself: APL: an interactive approach by Gilman and Rose. So let us get into Firefox and enter this into the search window. We are using the Google search engine.

"APL: an interactive approach"

Soon a list of the search results will appear in your browser. Select the first one which should be: APL - An Interactive Approach-2nd Edition pg 1. This will be the text of the entire book. The control keys in the window on the left allow you to go forward and back one page, increase or decrease the darkness level of the text and increase or decrease the text size.



From the initial page, the up arrow will take you to a list of books and articles you may wish to explore. The right arrow will take you to the next page in the text. Once you are beyond the first page a left arrow will appear which will allow you to go back one page. As you work your way through the text, you may not wish to use the one page at a time method to reach the location at

which you stopped. Placing the cursor within the number window and entering a page number and then clicking the GO item will take you directly to that page. Next, if like me your eyesight is getting worse, you may wish to increase the text size so that you may read the pages without wearing your glasses. The circle with the + will accomplish this just keep clicking till the text size is as large as you need. The circle with the - upon it will reduce the text size in similar increments. The next three items, which appear as contrast figures, will increase the darkness of the displayed text or decrease it if the white contrast key is selected. Finally, we have covered all the controls except the three arrows on the bottom. Clicking the downward pointing arrow will rotate the entire text page 180°. In a similar fashion the other two arrows will rotate it 90° in the selected direction.

Now your PCLINUX OS System is well

equipped to allow you to easily teach your self APL. Simply place your Workspace in one screen and the text of the book in another. Then by reading the text and moving to your Workspace you will be interactively learning APL.

This has been shown to be the fastest method. Also by teaching yourself you are not held back by slower learning classmates. From the work space you receive instant feedback. As the text of the book has the correct answers you know if you have keyed in the item correctly.

Set a goal to complete a chapter per day, or a chapter per week, depending upon the amount of free time you have to devote to this and soon you will be the master of a fascinating computer language, which, by being around since the very beginning days of computing, has stood the test of time. If you have programmed in other



languages you will marvel at the simplicity and power this language provides.

Setting up the APLX documentation

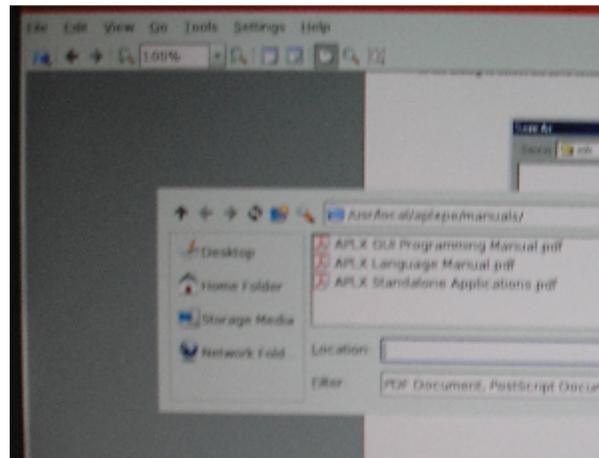
The above method will allow you to explore and learn APL. However, the system you downloaded has much more to offer. The Help menu item will allow you to read sections on the system while within your APL workspace. The system comes equipped with several book sized documents which are in the ubiquitous format of pdf files. PCLINUXOS provides the kpdf program which easily allows you to view this type of file. However, we first must point this to the file location. To do this just get to a terminal. Now locate the documentation provided with APLX by issuing this command and then set kpdf to point to any one of the displayed pdf files.

```
cd /usr/local/aplxpe/manual s  
ls
```

This will produce a list of the three pdf files which are included in the documentation provided with this system.

```
kpdf APLX <tab>
```

This will allow you to select from the available files pressing S and then the tab key will expand your selection to be: APLX Standalone Applications.pdf. This is only a 13 page document and will load the quickest of this selection.



Now, when you use a terminal to again use kpdf and then select OPEN, the other pdf files which were found will also be listed as candidates for viewing and may easily be selected.

There are also provided several workspaces with pre-written functions and operators which you may use. To locate these select from the File Menu the Open command. This will cause a Look-in window to appear, pointing to your home directory. Use the blue up arrow to move it till it points to: /usr/local/aplxpe/ws by clicking each item in turn until the list of the provided workspaces appears. By selecting DISPLAY we learn that this is now obsolete. Now you are given a clue to get help in using this workspace. Do not try to type in this command simply select it with the mouse pointer and press the Enter key. The text will move to the input area and the HELP function will be executed. The text of other commands given in these work

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spaces may be executed in a similar manner.

You now have the ability to explore and learn the system by reading the documentation provided and also the ability to explore and use the many workspaces provided with this system.

As you may have inferred, I have been dealing with MicroAPL Ltd. for several years I have always found them to be most cooperative in getting their system to function on my various computers over the years. Also I would like to express my appreciation to Richard Nabavi of Microapl for being willing to answer many questions I have had in my dealings with this version of APL.

Next time we will explore the commercial version of this system.



Besides the main components which make up the modern PC, there are many optional peripherals which can be attached to it. When these are properly utilized, they can contribute to make the computing environment and experience more convenient, productive and pleasant. The more common peripherals include:

printer

scanner

mass storage devices

In this chapter we shall be looking at how to access and use the common peripheral mass storage devices:

floppy disk drive

CD-ROM drive

USB mass storage device

CD-RW drive

Setting up and using a printer and scanner will be covered in the next chapter.

Note:

The method is to use the My Computer icon located on the Desktop. Double-click on the My Computer icon, and it will display all the system devices as well as the file system.



The Floppy Disk Drive

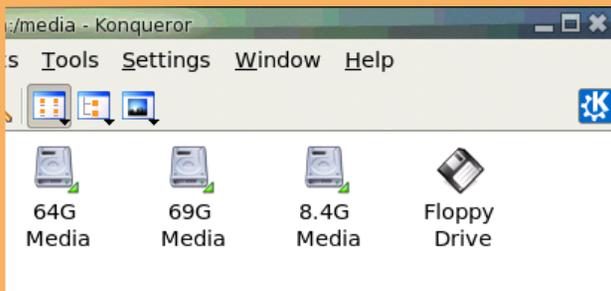
While most of the work is done using the hard drive (system and user data are stored on the hard drive), sometimes you may want to transfer or copy files to another PC. One convenient way to perform this (provided that the file sizes are not too large) is to use a floppy disk or diskette. Diskettes are very useful as a portable storage medium for small files (1.44Mb or less).



Mounting and Using the Diskette

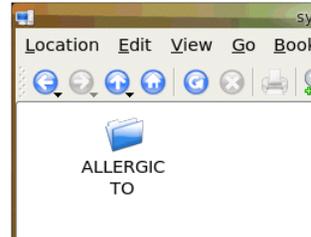
Before a diskette can be used, you have to perform an operation called "mounting" the diskette. This is to let the system know that you are going to access and use the diskette in the floppy drive.

The KDE desktop environment uses a series of background processes to accomplish various tasks. Mounting drives is handled by the "Media"



process. Simply click on the Storage Media icon in the System (My Computer) folder, and the Media task will be shown.

Disk access is done by double clicking on the My Computer icon on the desktop. Double clicking on the "Storage Devices" icon will open the window seen above. Next, double click the "Floppy Drive" icon.



This will mount the floppy and add a floppy icon on the desktop. Double-clicking on this will list out the files and folders in the floppy under the File Manager as seen below:

Once you have successfully mounted the diskette and listed out its directory contents under the File Manager, you can treat it like another folder to read and write files and folders to. However, you have to bear in mind some differences between the floppy diskette folder and the normal folder you have been working with.

The diskette has a very low storage capacity compared with the hard disk; a floppy diskette typically will have about 1.44 MB of storage capacity only. In contrast a hard disk will have at least a few hundred MB of storage capacity at the minimum!

If the write-protect tab on the diskette is enabled, then the diskette can be used for reading only, i.e. you can read the contents of the files on it only. You cannot write to the files, and so you cannot modify and/or create new files or folders.

After using the diskette, you will need to unmount it before you take the diskette from the floppy drive. To unmount the diskette, right-click on the floppy icon on the desktop and select "Unmount". This will unmount the diskette and the floppy icon will disappear from the Desktop. Once this has happened, you can safely remove the



diskette from the floppy drive.

Note:

It is important that you unmount the diskette before removing it from the floppy drive, especially if it has been mounted for writing. Failure to do so may result in incomplete data being written to the diskette and corruption of the file system on the diskette.

Formatting the Diskette

Before a diskette can be used it has to be "formatted" first. This will create the directory structures and other information needed for the system to keep track of where the data is stored on the diskette. You need to format a diskette once only. You can subsequently format it again after using it for some time, but re-formatting will result in the loss of the original contents of the diskette.

KFloppy does not come with the default install. You can install it and several other useful utilities by opening the Synaptic Package Manager and installing kdeutils.

To format a diskette, you can use the KFloppy formatter selection from the Main Menu.

Main Menu --> System --> Configuration --> Hardware --> Utilities --> KFloppy

Choose the default floppy density of 3.5", 1.44 MB and the DOS (FAT) file system

type. This will enable the diskette to be read on almost all commonly used operating systems including Microsoft Windows. You also have two other options for the filesystem; ext2 or Minix. Next, you can choose the type of formatting; Quick format, Zero out and quick format, or the default, Full format. After you have made your choices click the Format button located at the top right of the window.



Exercises



Format a floppy diskette, mount it for read-write and copy the following files/folders found in the /etc directory to it: hosts, termcap, motd and rc.d.

Unmount the diskette, mount it again and copy its entire contents to the folder tmp in your home directory (create this folder if it is not there). Unmount the diskette after the copying.

The CD-ROM Drive

Nowadays the CD-ROM is widely used as a means to store and distribute data and information. A typical 5.25" CD-ROM can store up to 700 MB of data. It is thus ideal as a medium for distributing large files, multimedia games, and software packages.

By default, when a CD-ROM is placed in the drive a new window will open that says "A new medium has been found. What do you want to do?"

Below this you will see a list of options. Choose "Open in New Window" and whatever data is on the CD will be displayed in a new window. If it is an audio (music) CD it will be auto-mounted, and then the default KDE CD player, KsCD, will open on your desktop and begin playing the music on the CD.

The File Manager can then be used to access the files and folders on the CD. If the CD-ROM is a read-only medium, you can only read the contents of the CD and not write to it.



After using the CD, you will need to unmount it before you take it out of the CD-ROM drive. To unmount the CD, right-click on the CD icon on the desktop and select "Unmount". This will unmount the CD and the CD icon will disappear from the desktop. It is now safe to remove the CD.

The USB Mass Storage Device

Another popular portable storage medium is the USB mass storage device (sometimes also known as a thumb drive). Like the floppy diskette, you can read and write to a thumb drive but it has the advantage of storing much more data than a diskette. Thumb drive devices of capacities 128MB up to 8GB are common.

To access the thumb drive, place it in the USB slot (port) provided and a window will open on the desktop. Choose "Open in New Window."



After finishing with the thumb drive, you will need to unmount it by right-clicking on the thumb drive icon on the desktop and selecting "Safely Remove", before removing it from the USB port.

The CD-RW Drive

While the CD-ROM drive is very useful

as a portable storage medium due to its high capacity and low cost, it suffers from the disadvantage that it is a read-only medium.

To overcome this, many PCs are sold nowadays with drives which enable you to record data onto CD-R (CD recordable and CD-R(W) (CD rewritable) disks. The former refers to a CD medium which allows you to record to it only once, while with a CD-R(W) disk it is possible to rewrite data to it multiple times.

Note:

While a CD-R(W) drive supports both CR-R and CD-R(W) functionalities, the CD medium that you utilize determines whether you can write data to it only once (CR-R) or multiple times (CD-RW). So it is important that you buy the correct medium type for the function that you want.

K3b The CD-Burner

Your system has a program which enables a user to copy files and folders very easily to a CD-R(W) drive. To use this feature, start the K3b program from the Main Menu.

Main Menu --> System --> Archiving -->CD Burning -->K3b



Fig. K3b CD Burning Program

Top Window - Data Sources

The K3b window has 2 main window sections, top and bottom. The top window is divided into 2 windows, left and right. The left window shows a list of data sources; Unix Tree, Internal Structure and CDROM drives. The data sources are the sources for the data to be copied and burned into the CD-R(W).

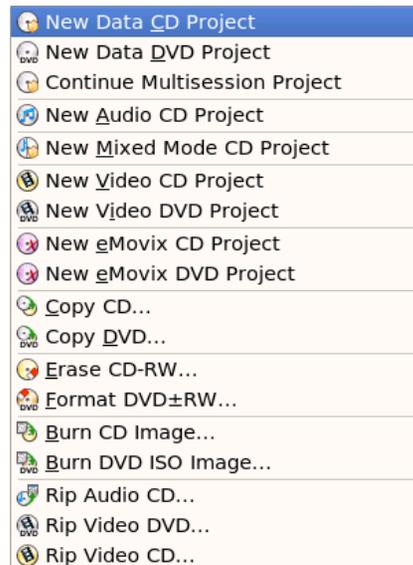
The Unix Tree represents the file system on the computer. Clicking on the + icon of the tree will expand it to display the file system, i.e. the hierarchical tree structure comprising files and directories (folders). Clicking on a directory will cause the files in the directory to be displayed in the right panel of the top window.

Clicking on CDROM drives will expand into a listing of the CD-ROM drives present in the system and clicking on one of the drives will display the tracks in it on the right panel.

Bottom Window

The bottom window gives you 4 choices as to what you would like to do with your CD/DVD; Audio CD, data CD, or data DVD. The fourth choice is to make a copy of a CD. If these are not what you are looking for then you need to click on the "Further actions" tab to see a complete list of options available as seen below:

Writing data to the CD-R(W) involves selecting which type of project you would like to create. After choosing which project, you can add the data from the data sources



window described above by dragging and dropping them into the bottom window panel. The bottom window has three possible selections; the virtual file system, the track editor, and the recorder settings. Each of these can be selected by clicking on the icons in the left panel of the bottom window.

The virtual file system represents a view of the file system setup in a track of the CD-R(W) to be written to later. Note that this is not part of the actual file system on your computer and so manipulating the files here will not affect the ones in the computer file system. The



virtual file system can be managed and edited by right-clicking the mouse.

The track editor shows you the tracks that you have selected to be burned to the CD-R(W). You can edit them using the track editor by right-clicking the mouse before committing them to be burned.

When you have added all the data or music that you would like to burn to the CD you need to click on the "Burn" button. This will open the burn window which enables you to change from the default, the various parameters for recording, e.g. recording speed, writing mode, etc.

Fillstate Status

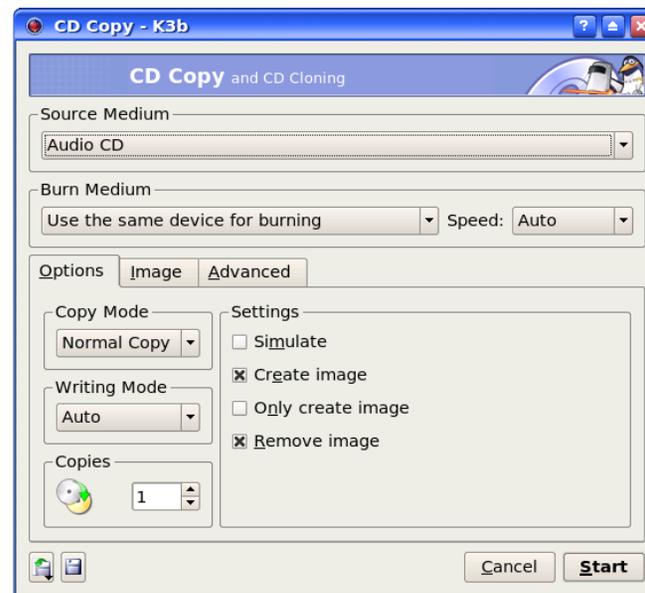
At the bottom of the K3b window is the Fillstate status panel. This shows you the current space that will be taken up by the selected tracks as a percentage of the space available on the CD-

R(W). This space utilization is also displayed in megabyte (MB) units as well as the audio playing time.

Duplicating CDs

It is easy to make a duplicate of a CD using K3b. To do this you will need one CDRom drive and one CD/RW drive. With K3b opened on your desktop, choose "Copy CD" and then insert the source CD into the CD drive. Next, insert the CD/R or CD/RW into the CD/RW drive. The drives will automatically be selected in the Source Medium and Burn Medium windows. You will see a window like this:

The only setting that you may want to change is the burn speed. Auto will select the speed for you but a tip to remember is that the lower the burn speed, the better the burn. To start the actual recording (burning) of the CD, click on the Start button at the bottom right corner of the K3b window.



Creating a Data CD



This section will discuss how you can copy files and folders from the mounted file system and record them into a CD-R(W). You can select the files and folders you want to copy from the Unix Tree in the Data Source window at the top left or from the top right window and drag them into the virtual file system right panel in the bottom window. The files and folders in the virtual file system can be edited by right-clicking on the mouse. You can create, delete and rename files and directories (folders).

After you have selected all the files you want, you should select the Burn button as above and then choose Start to start the recording.

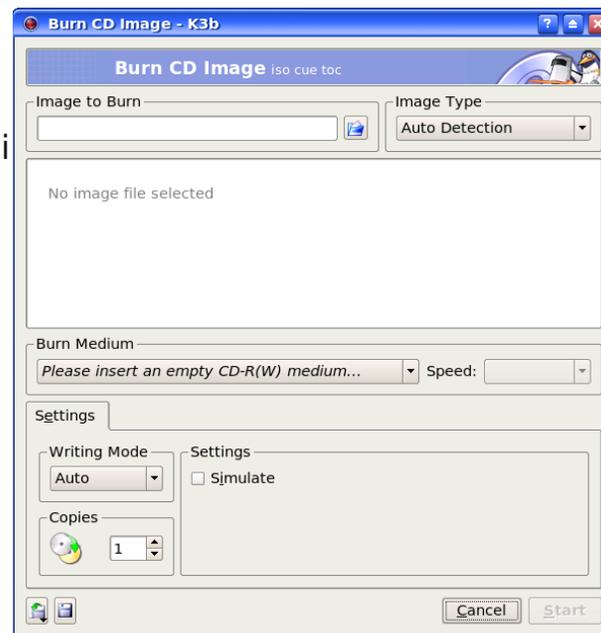
Writing ISO Images

It is possible to copy and store all of the data on a CD in the form of what is known as an ISO image file format. If

this ISO image file is then written to a CD, the new CD will be a duplicate of the original one from which the ISO image was created. This provides a convenient way of duplicating a data CD if you can copy or download the ISO image file from another source to the file system on your computer.

To write ISO images to a CD-R(W), select "Further actions" or "Tools" (at the top of the window) and select "Burn CD Image." This will open a window like the one seen below:

Next, select the ISO image by clicking on the file folder icon on the right side of the "Image to Burn" tab at the top left of the window and navigating to the ISO image file that you want to burn. Select the image by left clicking on it. Next, insert a blank CD-R(W) into your CD-R(W) drive. After that, ensure that the recording settings are correct and click on the Start button at the bottom right of the window to start the burning.





Help

There are many more options and features which K3b has, e.g. multisession burning, mixing audio and digital data, working with CD-RW media etc. The K3b documentation should be consulted for these more advanced features. The K3b User's Guide may be obtained from:

<http://www.k3b.org>



by Papawoob

Just thought I would try and bring everyone a list of currently active PCLinuxOS based distros. If I have missed any, I apologize. If anyone knows of any others that are being actively developed please drop me a note at the [Magazine](#) website or at Papawoob@pclosmag.com.

[AmaroK Live](#)

amaroK Live is a stripped-down live CD of the GNU/Linux operating system, based on PCLinuxOS, with a fully functional amaroK music player. It is meant to display the features and power of amaroK. The goals of this project are: create something cool to promote amaroK, offer an easy way to introduce people to amaroK, provide a way to demonstrate the new features of amaroK when a suitable Linux installation is not available, and make it easy to remaster the live CD.

[ArcheOS](#)

ArcheOS is an acronym for Archaeological Operating System. It is a GNU/Linux live DVD distribution, based on PCLinuxOS, with specialist software for archaeological purposes.

[CAElinux](#)

CAElinux is based on PCLinuxOS and is designed for computer aided engineering. Based on the open-source CAE softwares Salomé & Code_Aster, you can load STEP / IGES geometry in Salomé and start partitioning and meshing your problem in just 5 minutes.

[Granular Linux](#)

Granular Linux is an easy-to-use, desktop Linux distribution based on PCLinuxOS. Its main features are a carefully selected set of applications for common tasks, the ability to customize the distribution, and the inclusion of two popular desktop environments - the flexible KDE and the lightweight Xfce.



Karoshi

Karoshi is a free and open source school server operating system based on PCLinuxOS. Karoshi provides a simple graphical interface that allows for quick installation, setup and maintenance of a network.

Ruby on Rails

Rails Live CD is a specialist distribution providing a pre-configured and fully operating Ruby on Rails development environment on a bootable CD. The distribution is derived from PCLinuxOS.

SAM Linux Desktop

SAM Linux Desktop, a live and installation CD based on PCLinuxOS, is an easy-to-use, fast and clean XFce Linux desktop for home users. The distribution is enhanced by several

popular non-free applications, such as Macromedia Flash plugin, Java and RealPlayer.

VideoLinux

VideoLinux is a PCLinuxOS-based distribution with focus on DVD backups, video encoding and transcoding, DVD authoring, format conversion and pretty much anything else you want to do with video.

TinyMe

TinyMe is a scaled down version of PCLinuxOS 2007. The latest version is delivered as a 177 MB liveCD and features the Lightweight X11 Desktop Environment, Synaptic, and the PCLinuxOS Control Center. It comes with a few applications, so it could be a really light version of PCLOS for older computers or a foundation on which to build your own system as you choose.

PCFluxboxOS

PCFluxboxOS is a series of remasters of PCLinuxOS catering for different end-user needs. All the following remasters are installable live-CDs and all come with the i586 'Legacy' Kernel 2.6.18.8 for increased compatibility with older hardware. Newer kernels can be installed via Synaptic.



TinyFlux - Version 0.5b out now for testing (released 15 August 2007)

A minimal desktop experience within a tiny ISO of 225MB.

Main applications: Opera (inc Flash 9); Sylpheed (e-mail); Thunar (file manager); Audacious (XMMS/WinAmp clone); mtPaint (image manipulation); Graftburn for CD/DVD burning; Synaptic (package manager); PCLOS Control Centre; guided installer.

See TinyFlux downloads page for full details

MidiFlux - release expected September 2007

A large selection of applications in a relatively small ISO expected to be about 350MB in size

FullFlux - release expected September 2007

A huge selection of apps in a whopping 700MB full live CD

NanoFlux - release expected October 2007

A miniscule distribution stripped down

to Fluxbox and Synaptic. Add your own apps to build your perfect system!

RescueFlux - release expected November 2007

A small ISO containing all the apps you might need to prepare for, or rescue an installation.

[Keldix Linux](#)

Keldix is a Linux distribution primarily for the Small business Office and Home Office (SOHO) market. Keldix is a live-dvd built on PCLinuxOS.

[PCLOS Gnome](#)

All new bootsplash, backgrounds, and really nice features, upgraded to a great looking operating system and the best out-of-the-box look, and user experience possible!

[Business Edition Linux \(BEL\)](#)

BEL or Business Edition Linux is a business implementation of PCLinuxOS 2007. Our goal is to provide solutions for small business needs using one of the easiest to use Linux Distributions available.

[MythTVOS](#)

MythTVOS 2008 is based on MiniMe 2008 and has MythTV and all plugins installed and (pre)configured.



Just boot from the livecd, select your TV / SAT / CABLE card and scan for channels...

EeePCLinuxOS

EeePCLinuxOS is a PCLinuxOS remaster specifically for the EeePC.

PCLinux Educator

We are working on an educational meta-package, for PCLinuxOS2007. According to our development team

educational software, or even an educational distro, goes further than kde-edu, childsplay and gcompris.

MiniMe

This is a minimal LiveCD that is bootable, plus it can be installed. Add in your own background, window decoration, localizations, preferred applications and supporting libraries to fully trick out your desktop. In addition you can remaster your own custom version of PCLinuxOS. Have fun! You can find the .iso image under the Downloads button at: http://www.pclinuxos.com/index.php?option=com_frontpage&Itemid=1

Linux EduCD

The site is in Polish and I was unable to translate it.



Help with documentation

From the PCLinuxOS Documentation Wiki

Another good source of information for anyone new to PCLinuxOS is the Wiki. If you have any howtos, tips, or tricks, you can send them on to me at: papawoob@pclosmag.com and then go to the Wiki and post them there also. This will benefit our readers and by posting them in the Wiki it will benefit everyone who uses PCLinuxOS. Below you will find several links to places where you can lend a hand in many different ways.

Sign up here: sign up to these forums for a login to the [forums and this wiki](#) and then you can:

Make changes to this Wiki. =)

The main Wiki page is located [here](#)

If you want to participate more heavily,

post a note in '[add me to a project](#)' to request documentation channel access and let us know your interests.

Subscribe to the documentation [mailing list](#)

sign up to the main [pclinuxos.com forums](#) (if you have not already) since this Wiki will be moved over there soon.

Help with to do items

Discuss or help with the [todo list](#). It's very helpful to hear your opinions, because it lets us know what's important to you.

Edit and discuss pages

Just check out a page or two, edit it and contribute a little. Even a spelling correction is a big boost. At the top of every page is a 'discussion' tab. Click it to visit that page's "talk page" and add your comments. Sign your comments

with four tilde characters: ~~~~ and your signature will be automatically added.

Be a Gnome

Wiki gnomes are always around without being underfoot. They fix typos, answer questions, and are the magical element which makes a Wiki work well. These are the things you can do to be the best gnome you can be:

We are also trying to move as many of the articles that have been published in this magazine that are howtos, tips, tricks, etc to the Wiki so that both the Wiki and the Magazine will get more exposure and provide more useful information to more PCLinuxOS users. If you are interested in helping with this project please contact me at:

papawoob@pclosmag.com

To volunteer "create account" at the Wiki, then login and start at the "PclosMag2wiki" page. It is as simple as that.

HOW TO



Doing any of these things listed above will be a service to everyone who uses PCLinuxOS and make it that much easier for anyone who wants to convert from Windows or even another Linux or BSD distro. This is an opportunity to contribute to the community and to those who are where you were once. I hope to see some of you there soon!

Papawoob



Support Success

About seven or eight months ago, I installed PCLOS on the PCs of all my "supported group" - friends, relatives... you guys know. I left Windows as a dual boot for them, but asked them to boot into PCLOS whenever possible. All but one took to it like ducks to water.

The one who resisted called me a while back because she couldn't view some videos. Of course, she was trying to do it in Windows, and when I asked her to try it in PCLOS, it just worked. She switched, and asked me to set her PC up to boot into PCLOS by default. Rather than drive 20 miles, I showed her how to do it herself via phone - what a luxury.

Last night, I got a call from one of the "instant switchers". She couldn't get to her bank account, and had been having trouble for a while (she hates to

ask for help, a notion I've tried for decades to get her to quit). It occurred to me that she probably hadn't updated since I installed it for her back in November, so I guided her through the Synaptic process. (I had shown her at the very beginning, but it takes a while for people to settle in, as we all know.) When it started, she told me the estimated time was 2 hours on her 6Mb connection! Yep, she had missed a lot...

This morning, this was in my email:

Quote

Thanks~~~ you're the BOMB! The update was successful and I was able to get into my bank!!! U the Man!! And just a phone call away for the best tech support a girl could ask for Smiley

Hehehe! Maybe she doesn't know, but I do: it's not me, it's PCLOS! Thanks to everyone who makes me look good!

ElCuervo



Happy User

I converted from Windows to PCLOS about half a year ago, and I've never regretted it.

At that time it came sort of forced: My HDD had died and taken the UDMA-controller with it. That meant either buying a new laptop, or using an external HDD - a less pricey option. XP wouldn't boot. It kept asking if I was sure I was still using the same computer. My boy-friend had been trying to get me interested in Linux for a while (he's a Mandriva aficionado), so in the end it was but a small step. I had already decided to try out Mandriva when he showed me the live-cd for PCLOS. A single feature convinced me: the sub-menus in the start menu that lead to the apps. Instead of being intimidated by exotic abbreviations for programs I'd never heard of, I was gently led to what I wanted to do. And PCLOS kindly booted.

Of course, there was a bit of learning to do - and still is, but two weeks after I installed PCLOS I was certain I wouldn't want to get back to Window again. I mean ever. Windows is kind of a default option. Unless you care enough to get something else, that's what you're on. But what a change. Finally, my little box is more like a tool than a pet. It works. I'm positively in love with the Synaptic upgrade tool. It's transparent. It's me who controls it. It doesn't slow down my computer at the most inconvenient times, or shut down the computer to install something when I'm in the middle of something. It even tells me what it will change.

Hardware detection? Wireless? No problem at all. And it's stable as a rock.

The real change is that I stopped swearing at my computer. And that is definitely a change for the better. Wink

So kudos to texstar and the others

who did all the hard work for the technical blondes like me.

Anne

P.S.: Now, my boy-friend is convinced, too. He likes it even better than Mandriva.

TESTIMONIALS



In December 2006 the "other" OS decided to update my system with their own video driver and guess what?...it BSOD'd my system. After booting using VGA, I downloaded and installed "BigDaddy" and haven't looked back.

EVERYTHING I was doing in the other OS was installed by default in PCLOS. I very recently started using MiniMe 2008 on two very different machines, one a refurb Dell SX270, everything recognized and setup correctly, and a home-built AMD 64x2 5200+, Nvidia 7600 GT, 2Gig Crucial, 500 Gig Samsung HDD, 2-Samsung 20X DVD Burners, and my HP 1018 LaserJet, again all set up correctly (small firmware issue with printer, but resolved on my own), and running perfectly.

Default video was correctly set on both machines. Last year I decided to 'donate' to receive a "PASS"; EVERYONE who uses this distro should do the same, you will NOT be sorry. PCLOS is absolutely the most amazing distribution out there.

You can be PRODUCTIVE immediately after the install is complete, no looking for peripheral driver CD's and the sometimes thrown away instructions needed for a proper Winxxxx's install. My twin sister was absolutely amazed this past Thanksgiving when we plugged her fairly new Olympus 7.1 digital cam into the "Big" box and it was immediately picked up....heavy sigh...she just can't seem to get over her addiction to that other OS(?). I had been involved in computers for most of my adult life and had been 'stuck' using the other OS for professional reasons, but now that I am retired and living on a fixed income, I find it amusing (confusing) that more of us seniors are not looking at

alternatives that won't bankrupt any retirement I (they) might have. Who wants to pony up to be a beta (alpha) tester for BG? Texstar and the Ripper Gang do indeed need to be applauded for this effort--it is quite evident they love what they're doing and PLEASE donate to the cause!ll be renewing my PASS very soon.

oldgaman