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MUUGlines

The Manitoba Unix User Group Newsletter

September 14, 1999: VMware

Our feature presentation this month is VMware, demonstrated by Kevin McGregor. This product lets you run multiple operating systems on your PC at the same time!

That's right, we don't mean just installed and sitting on your hard drive taking up space, but actually running side-by-side on your screen in full glorious colour. No more rebooting to Windows to run that one last darn program that you haven't found a Linux equivalent for.

Want to try a new Linux distribution or just a different kernel version? Or check out that Beta copy of Windows 2000 without trashing your hard drive? This is the product for you!

As always, we're open to suggestions for meeting programmes, not to mention presenters! Feel free to convince someone you know to give a talk at on of our meetings, and be sure to mention that it's very informal. We're not looking for professional public speakers here. Contact any of the board at board@muug.mb.ca or in person at our meeting if you have an idea!

We will also have a round-table discussion, in which anyone can raise questions regarding their experiences (or lack thereof) with all things Unix. We realize that it can be a little intimidating, but please be assured that no question is too easy (or "dumb")!

Please note our meeting location: IBM Canada's offices in the TD Centre, at the corner of Portage and Main. We gather in the lobby on the main floor - please try to be there by about 7:15 PM. Steve Moffat will then take us up to the meeting room just before the meeting starts at 7:30. Please don't be late, or you may not get in.

Parking is available either in the parkade behind the TD building, off Albert Street, or in the ground level lot just north of the TD building. Entrance to the lot is from Albert Street, behind the parkade. Either way, parking is a $1.25 flat rate for the evening. You must purchase your ticket from a dispenser, so make sure you've got exact change - a loonie and a quarter, or 5 quarters.

Alternative OSes

We'd like to take a moment to remind you that there are excellent alternative operating systems available at little or no cost. While it's easy for us to set up presentations using the more popular Linux distributions, we intend to keep the group informed on other work in progress.

In particular, there is the *BSD group of operating systems: NetBSD, OpenBSD and FreeBSD. These OSes are derived from the (University of California) Berkley Systems Distribution version of Unix. In an all-to-brief nutshell, NetBSD has been ported to the most CPU platforms; FreeBSD is a well-known platform supporting commercial sites such as Yahoo!; and OpenBSD claims to be the most secure freely-available Unix-like operating system.

We hope to bring you more detailed information in upcoming meetings. In addition, there are very-low-priced versions of some commercial OSes, such as Solaris and SCO Unix. Let us know which one(s) you're most interested in!

Tripp Lite GPLs

Tripp Lite, a leading manufacturer of power protection products, will soon make the source code of its popular PowerAlert Universal UPS Management Software available to Linux developers. Tripp Lite is the first and only UPS software manufacturer to date that has granted Linux developers a General Public License to modify its original source code for private applications.

By granting developers of the Linux operating system access to its software's source code, Tripp

Lite follows in Linux's developer-friendly tradition. "We've kept with the spirit of Linux's open source evolution," explains David Cole, Director of Software Development for Tripp Lite. "Linux developers are accustomed to modifying software programs to meet their specific needs, then sharing their creations with others. For the first time, they can now customize a UPS management program, thanks to Tripp Lite."

Sam Ockman, CEO of Penguin Computing, is impressed by Tripp Lite's efforts. "This shows an amazing commitment to the open source movement," he stated. "It shows that Tripp Lite is one of the most enlightened UPS manufacturers, and one of the strongest supporters of Linux among computer hardware vendors overall."

PowerAlert Software quickly established itself in the Linux community when it first became available for Linux in 1998. As a leader in UPS innovation and support for Linux-based systems, Tripp Lite continues to exceed all other manufacturers in its commitment to this platform.

Tripp Lite plans to make the code available for download on its website at http://www.tripplite.com/linux/ in mid-September. PowerAlert Software supports Linux Slackware version 3.5 and later, Linux Red Hat version 5.1 and later, plus most major PC, Unix and Macintosh operating systems.

Linux Demo Days

From http://www.linuxdemo.org/

The purpose of the Linux Demo Day project is to coordinate a concurrent worldwide demonstration of the Linux Operating System to the casual computer user who may only have heard of Linux but has never seen it, and to those that are not even aware that there is an alternative to running a Microsoft operating system. What this translates to is LUGs throughout the world setting up demonstrations of Linux at shopping malls, schools, places of work, or wherever they feel would be appropriate for their LUG. In addition to just demonstrating Linux, the LUGs will also handout pamphlets that point visitors towards more information about Linux.

A couple of Linux enthusiasts and I came up with the idea of a "demo day" to promote Linux at our work place. We were going to setup a table outside the company cafeteria (or some other highly visible location) and have several Linux machines running software like GIMP, GNOME, KDE, Blender, ApplixWare, StarOffice, KOffice, Quake, X11Amp, ad infinitum. A lot of people ask me, "OK, Linux is another OS, it's more stable than Windows, but what can I do with it?" Our goal of doing a Linux demo day was to show people exactly what Linux is capable of... specifically the fact that it lets you get most of your day to day work (and play!) done just like you can with Microsoft Windows.

Linux has been getting increasing press coverage in industry publications for the last year and now mainstream publications such as Time, Forbes, and even CNN have had stories about Linux. I've heard references on web sites, and have myself had the experience of non-geeks mention and ask about Linux in a conversation! So lots of non-Linux-geeks have now heard of Linux. They hear that it's open source, how it's more stable than Windows, and many other wonderful things. But how many of these people have actually seen Linux in action? My guess is that maybe a few, those who happen to have geek friends running Linux, have actually had a chance to play with it.

I started thinking about this and decided that maybe instead of just doing a Linux Demo Day at my place of work, why not have a worldwide demonstration of Linux. With the release of RedHat 6.0, OpenLinux 2.2, and the work being done by Corel, and the GNOME and KDE teams, Linux is becoming a viable alternative for more users than ever before, so it's time that more people see Linux in action instead of just hearing or reading about it! Thus this project was born.

Linux Demo Day will take place between September 12th-19th. The reason for this time period is because according to a message by Linus, Linux 0.01 was released "in the middle of September". What better way to celebrate the birthday of Linux than to expose more people to it? A whole week was chosen as opposed to a single day to give participating LUGs flexibility to work around their schedules.

HP Thin Clients

Hewlett-Packard Company announced the HP Entria thin-client appliance family. These thin-client products are designed for IT simplicity while improving the user experience with a high degree of availability, uptime, application performance and reliability.

"HP's vision is to continue to provide IT managers with all the benefits of thin-client computing -- a low-cost-to-own solution that is easy to maintain, manage and deploy," said Wolfgang Baltes, general manager of HP's Thin Client Operation. "And now, with the new HP Entria thin-client appliances, end users can enjoy increased reliability, flexibility and security within their own unique computing environments."

The HP Entria thin-client appliances include three new products -- the HP Entria G (220), the HP Entria L (500) and the HP Entria X -- and provide users with access to a full range of features, including Windows(R) and Java(TM)-based applications, corporate Intranets and the Internet.

For organizations with a heterogeneous IT infrastructure, the top performance and flexibility of the HP Entria X thin-client appliance is ideal. Based on the Linux operating system, the HP Entria X provides seamless access to any application on UNIX(R) systems, Microsoft(R) Windows NT(R) or legacy servers. In addition, the HP Entria X thin-client appliance delivers the highest degree of visual comfort with best-in-class graphics resolution of up to 1,600 bits x 1,200 bits x 16 bits.

As more customers turn to e-services as a core business practice, the HP Entria X thin-client appliance -- which incorporates ChaiVM, HP's embedded virtual-machine technology -- will take full advantage of revenue-generating services available on the Internet.

The HP Entria L thin-client appliance is designed specifically for mainstream business users who require access to both Microsoft Windows NT and Web-based applications, such as corporate Intranets. The HP Entria L series is based on the Linux operating system and includes a local browser that provides end users with the flexibility and enhanced performance needed to complete their everyday tasks.

The HP Entria G thin-client appliance is designed specifically for business customers using Microsoft Windows NT, Terminal Server Edition and Citrix Metaframe software. The new HP Entria G series provides users with solid performance and easy access to their Windows(R) desktops. Additionally the HP Entria G series includes a full suite of terminal emulations that makes migrating painless -- from legacy systems to Microsoft Windows NT. The HP Entria G is expected to be available next month for an estimated $599 (U.S). See more at http://www.hp.com/go/thinclient.

MacroMedia Flash!

Macromedia, Inc. announced that versions of its Flash Player will be available free on 1 September for Linux, Sun Microsystems, Inc.'s Solaris, and Silicon Graphics Inc.'s Irix platforms. Flash is the standard for creating high-impact, vector-based Web sites that deliver motion, sound, interactivity, and graphics.

Flash Player versions for UNIX will be available for download at no charge from the Macromedia Web site. Flash already ships with most leading operating systems, media players, and Web browsers, including Windows 98, Mac OS 8.6, America Online 4.0, WebTV, Apple QuickTime, RealNetworks' RealPlayer, and current versions of Netscape Navigator and Microsoft Internet Explorer.

Companies strategically using Flash to enhance their online presence with interactivity and dynamic content include Citibank, PepsiCola, Daimler Chrysler, and Nestle. Flash is also a delivery format for content assembled in Macromedia Generator, a server based product that allows dynamic publishers to deliver personalized, real-time Web graphics.

"As an open standard for powering the World's top Web sites, Linux has become a premier choice for Web publishers," said Linus Torvalds, inventor of the Linux operating system. "Now that Macromedia has announced both a free Flash Player for Linux and a free Flash Player source licensing program, Flash offers the best and most widely available solution for viewing high-impact, vector-based Web sites."

SAP on Linux ships

SAP AG, the leading provider of inter-enterprise software solutions, announced it has begun first customer shipment of SAP(TM) R/3(R) on the Linux operating system, becoming the first inter-enterprise business software provider to deliver productive solutions on Linux.

Growing industry support and customer demand for Linux prompted SAP to deliver SAP R/3 on Linux, and major SAP hardware and software partners have followed suit by delivering Linux-based systems, tools, databases, and ongoing platform maintenance and support.

"Our commitment to platform independence and customer demand for Linux has made the delivery of SAP R/3 on Linux a logical step," said Karl-Heinz Hess, member of the extended executive board, SAP AG. "The successful and on-schedule rollout gives our customers another attractive platform for SAP inter-enterprise business solutions."

"We're excited about running SAP R/3 on Linux," said Detlef Stuewe, manager Information Systems, ce CONSUMER ELECTRONIC Aktiengesellschaft, Munich, Germany. "We already have significant UNIX expertise in-house. By moving quickly to support this platform, SAP has now given us the flexibility to leverage this expertise on cost-effective Intel-based servers."

SAP also plans to deliver the SAP Business Information Warehouse(TM) (SAP BW(TM)) and the SAP Business-to-Business Procurement(TM) (SAP B2B(TM)) solutions running on Linux as components of mySAP.com(TM). mySAP.com provides an open collaborative business environment of personalized solutions on demand. This enables companies of all sizes and industries to fully engage their employees, customers and partners to capitalize upon the new Internet economy. SAP R/3 is the foundation for companies to benefit from the world of e-business with mySAP.com. Major hardware and software partners currently supporting SAP R/3 on Linux for Intel-based systems include Compaq Computer Corp., Hewlett-Packard Co., IBM Corp. and Siemens AG.

SAP R/3 on Linux Solution

SAP will host a live, end-to-end demonstration of SAP R/3 on Linux at SAP TechEd '99. The annual technology education conference, which will be held Aug. 29-Sept. 2 at the Pennsylvania Convention Center in Philadelphia, will showcase the open, flexible technologies of mySAP.com. Participants at this sold-out event will be able to view the entire process of installing SAP applications on Linux, from a blank machine to a fully functional SAP R/3 solution within a few hours.

About SAP

As the market leader of inter-enterprise software solutions, SAP is leveraging its strength in industry-focused business software and the world's largest enterprise software customer base to deliver mySAP.com. mySAP.com provides an open collaborative business environment of personalized solutions on demand. This enables companies of all sizes and industries to fully engage their employees, customers and partners to capitalize upon the new Internet economy.

mySAP.com allows people to harness the power of the Internet to work smarter, better and faster by optimizing supply chains, managing strategic relationships, reducing time to market, sharing virtual information, and increasing productivity and shareholder value.

MUUG Contact Information

To contact the MUUG board for membership information or anything else, send e-mail to board@muug.mb.ca. We have a Web presence as well, at http://www.muug.mb.ca/, where you can find all kinds of information, including details of upcoming and past meetings and presentations and references related to them. We're always interested in article submissions. Submit your articles and ideas to editor@muug.mb.ca. Note that we can't publish articles directly taken from other periodicals as that would be a violation of copyright laws if we did it without permission.