

Linux in the not-so-Linux world

SO CONNECTED

This month we look at some Windows 7 interoperability tools and examine the phenomenon of the Internet OS. **BY JOE CASAD**

Sharing files? Supporting legacy apps? Some Linux users live very comfortably in a house with no Windows, but for the rest of us, the sheer number of Microsoft systems in the world means that Windows interoperability is a very Linux problem.

To further complicate this tenuous equation, a new Windows appears every few years – and Windows systems are certainly not built with an eye to making life easy for Linux. If your systems need to talk with Windows systems, the interoperability challenge is always near. The recent Windows 7 release, however, includes some promising features, including a set of Unix tools for free download, and the virtualization revolution leads to new possibilities for Linux on Windows. This month we feature stories about Linux with other systems.

In our lead-off article, we take a look at some of the interoperability tools provided for Windows 7, including the no-cost Subsystem for Unix-based Applications – a collection of utilities, scripts, and shells that supports greater integration with Linux and other Unix-based systems. You'll also learn about Windows 7's optional Telnet server and native NFS client.

Our next article tours some tools for doing what once would have been unthinkable: running a Linux system on top of Windows. You'll learn about popular tools like Cygwin and later developments like coLinux (Cooperative Linux – a modification of User Mode Linux) and Ulteo virtual desktop. We'll also tell you about the Windows Ubuntu Installer, which sets up a

copy of Ubuntu in Windows, and we'll highlight some common virtualization alternatives, like VMware Player and VirtualBox. We'll also tell you about the KDE on Windows project, which is working on bringing common KDE apps to the Windows desktop.

In the final story of this month's set, Marcel Gagné examines a new breed of operating systems designed to run from the Internet. ■

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