WRITE ACCESS

DistroWatch

I would like to bring to your attention the following unfounded rubbish written in the April 2008 issue of your magazine: "…PCLinuxOS regularly tops the DistroWatch download list…" Ladislav Bodnar (DistroWatch Owner/Editor): "DistroWatch Page Hit Ranking doesn't mean all that much and we have been saying this for years." Why do you then equate PHR stats with number of downloads?

PHR stats are easily manipulated and are meaningless in determining real-world popularity usage or distro download estimates!

Peter Apostolovski

LM You are exactly right. The DistroWatch list does not measure downloads. As this screenshot shows, the list is clearly marked as "Page Hit Ranking." (Note that PCLinuxOS is still at the top of the list as of the time this issue went to print.)

We regret this characterization of the DistroWatch list, however, we don't regret referring to the list. DistroWatch is an important source of information for the Linux community.

We made no attempt to equate the list with "real-world popularity." Even if the list did measure downloads, it still wouldn't have implied "real-world popularity." As shown in the figure, that would mean that PCLinuxOS is more popular than Ubuntu, openSUSE, and Fedora. A careful reading of the news, events, and feature articles presented in this magazine over time confirms that we are aware that Ubuntu, openSUSE, and Fedora are more popular than PCLinuxOS.

Figure 1: PCLinuxOS Page Hit Ranking.

Fedora Customization Tools

I'm pretty disappointed that the Fedora customization tools weren't even mentioned in your March 2008 issue – considering that it was one of the biggest features of our Fedora 7 release, which came out almost a year ago. Was there any particular reason for this oversight?

Greg DeKoenigsberg,
Red Hat Community Development Manager

LM We included a description of the Fedora customization tools with the Fedora 7 DVD pages in our August 2007 issue. We also ran a full article on livecd-creator and Revisor in our December 2007 issue, which is currently available as a PDF file on our website:
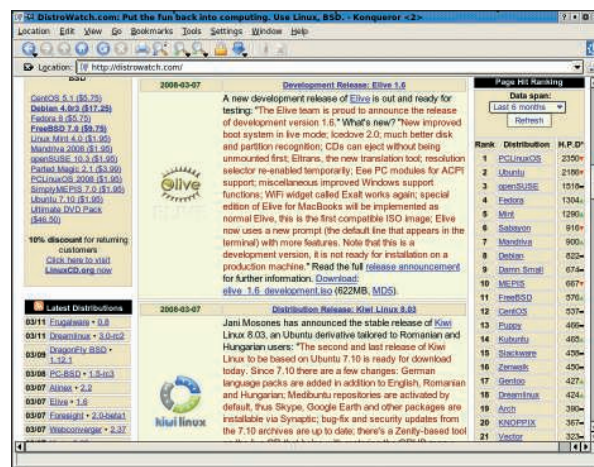
http://www.linux-magazine.com/issues/2007/85/original_spin.

We agree that the Fedora distro-building tools are as important as the other tools discussed in the March 2008 issue. We didn't include the Fedora tools in March because we had just covered them in December.

This brings up an important point about our cover stories. The Cover Story section of the magazine typically includes several articles on a single subject of interest to our readers. Although we make an effort to highlight multiple facets and viewpoints, we can't cover everything. For instance, next month's cover story on Security will have several in-depth articles, but it won't cover all aspects of security. Sometimes even if we try to cover a specific topic, the author might miss a deadline or we simply run out of space. We consider our Know-How, Sysadmin, Programming, and LinuxUser sections just as important as our Cover Story section, and our goal is to report on worthy tools like Revisor and livecd-creator as the information becomes available. Timeliness is more significant to us than the arbitrary deadlines of our editorial calendar.