

TECH TOOLS

Linux Mint Announces mintBox

In association with CompuLab, Linux Mint has released the mintBox. The mintBox is a CompuLab fit-PC3 unit, with a green retro-lit Linux Mint logo. Each unit comes with a two-year standard warranty, and 10% of each sale goes toward Linux Mint. According to the announce-



ment, “the hardware is unique, and the box and form-factor are amazing.” The unit features a die-cast solid-metal case, which acts as a passive heat sink. The device cools its components without needing fans, so it’s almost silent.

The mintBox features eight USB ports, two of which are USB 3.0. It also comes with Ethernet, WiFi, and Bluetooth and includes an HDMI port and a DVI adapter.

The mintBox is available in two versions: mintBox Basic (US\$ 476 + shipping) and mintBox Pro (US\$ 549 + shipping). Both versions feature a 250GB HDD. The Basic version offers 4GB of RAM, whereas the Pro version offers 8GB of RAM. You can find more details on the Linux Mint blog at: <http://blog.linuxmint.com/?p=2055>. The mintBox is available from CompuLab at: <http://www.fit-pc.com/web/purchase/order-direct-mintbox/>.

ownCloud Introduces Version 4

ownCloud has released version 4 of its open source file sync and share project. According to the announcement, this version includes innovations and enhancements that make the project more flexible, secure, and innovative.

ownCloud 4 now includes file versioning, which actively saves files and lets users “roll-back” to previous versions, and a new API, which lets developers easily create applications on top of ownCloud capabilities. The latest version also allows users to view

Open Document Format quickly and easily without having to download them. ownCloud 4 also includes an “experimental” feature for mounting of external filesystems – including Dropbox, FTP, and Google Drive – which allows users to

have all their file sync and share tools in a single ownCloud interface.

Other major improvements include drag and drop file uploading, shared calendars, and file encryption. For more information, please visit: <http://www.owncloud.org>.



Mozilla Updates Thunderbird

Mozilla has released Mozilla Thunderbird 13, the latest version of its free and open source email application for Windows, Mac, and Linux.



The new version introduces a new feature for sending large attachments called “Filelink.” According to the website, Filelink allows users to upload files to an online storage service and send links to friends, avoiding bounce-back of large attachments. Mozilla is currently partnered with YouSendIt to

provide this feature – more partners will be added in the future. Also, the latest version lets you sign up for a personalized email address from within Thunderbird. Once you’ve set up your new email address, Thunderbird will be automatically configured to send and receive messages. This feature is provided in partnership with domain registrars Gandi and Hover, but Mozilla states that they are working with additional suppliers to cover more areas of the world and provide more options in the future. You can read more and download Thunderbird now at: <http://www.mozilla.org/en-US/thunderbird/>.

Obnam 1.0 Released

Version 1.0 of Obnam, the snapshotting, de-duplicating, and encrypting backup program written by Lars Wirzenius, has been released. The secure Obnam backup program allows backups to be stored on local hard disks or online via the SSH SFTP protocol. According to the website, the backup server, if used, does not require any special software on top of SSH.

Some features of Obnam include: snapshot backups and encrypted backups, using GnuPG, and data de-duplication across files and backup generations. According to the website, if the backup repository already contains a particular chunk of data, it will be re-used, even if it was in another file in an older backup.

Obnam can do push or pull backups, allowing you to run Obnam on the client and push backups to the server or run it on the server and pull from the client over SFTP. Wirzenius notes that access to live data over SFTP is currently somewhat limited and fragile, so it is not recommended. See the tutorial for examples of how to use Obnam at: <http://liw.fi/obnam/tutorial/>.