



# full circle

THE INDEPENDENT MAGAZINE FOR THE UBUNTU LINUX COMMUNITY

ISSUE #31 - November 2009



**WIN!**  
A GOOGLE  
WAVE INVITE!



Google wave

## BUILD THE PERFECT SERVER WITH UBUNTU 9.10



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THE INDEPENDENT MAGAZINE FOR THE UBUNTU LINUX COMMUNITY



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This issue - Andreas Wenning who is currently working in Thailand.



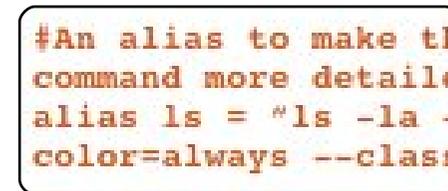
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Name	Revision	Rep
p/rapidsv		
.	8099	809
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## Welcome to another issue of Full Circle magazine.

**T**his month we bring you the first part of a new series: *The Perfect Server with Ubuntu 9.10*. Yes, we've done several server articles in the past, but I thought that this one is particularly relevant since it uses the most recent Ubuntu release, Karmic Koala.

Looking back to Ubuntu 9.04, Robin Catling brings us a review of *Linux Mint 7* which is built on Jaunty Jackalope.

The *My Opinion* article, this month, is on *Windows 7*. We've never used any Windows reviews, or articles, previously, but this one is well balanced, well written, and thought provoking, so I couldn't ignore it. Fear not, this magazine will not publish articles that indulge in Windows bashing ... not on my watch!

Oh, and one last thing: please note that FCM#32 (December 2009) will be released on **Thursday 31st December**, and not the last Friday of the month like we usually do. Our usual release schedule will return in January 2010.

Enjoy the issue, and keep in touch!

**All the best,**

*Ronnie*

Editor, Full Circle magazine

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This magazine was created using :



### What is Ubuntu?

Ubuntu is a complete operating system that is perfect for laptops, desktops and servers. Whether at home, school or work, Ubuntu contains all the applications you'll ever need including word processor, email application and web browser. Ubuntu is and always will be free of charge. You do not pay any licensing fees. You can download, use and share Ubuntu with your friends, family, school or business, for absolutely nothing.

Once installed, your system is ready to use with a full set of productivity, internet, drawing and graphics applications, and games.

**TIP:** use the new 'contents' link to jump to the contents page from any other page!





## Giving Up The GIMP?

An important part of the 10.04 roadmap that emerged during UDS [Ubuntu Developer Summit] is a tentative plan to remove the GIMP, the GNU Image Manipulation Tool, from the default Ubuntu installation. Although this decision is viewed by some as controversial, the reasoning behind it is valid. The removal of a niche professional graphics editing tool reflects Ubuntu's growing maturity as a mainstream platform for regular users.

### Reasons For Removing GIMP

GIMP's strengths are precisely what make it unsuitable as a default component of a mainstream operating system. Its expansive assortment of rich features necessitate a complicated user interface that is intimidating to inexperienced users. It is also saddled with a lengthy startup time due to its large collection of plugins. As one would expect of a high-end graphic editing tool, it also uses a lot of disk space. Its size footprint is especially problematic for Ubuntu, because the distribution ships as a CD image and has a very limited amount of space.

The GIMP developers, who have expressed views on the subject, seem to agree with Ubuntu's plan.

Source: [arstechnica.com](http://arstechnica.com)

## Google Shows Chrome OS, Promises 2010 Launch

"Speed, simplicity and security were the key components of the design, said Pichai. "It takes seven seconds to boot to the login, and three seconds to hit an application. We're working very hard to make that faster." All applications are web applications, he said, with the browser running each in a tab isolated from other applications and the system, and there was nothing for users to install or maintain.

"All Chrome OS data is in the cloud", Pichai said. "If I lose my Chrome OS computer, I can buy another one, log in and in a few seconds everything is back."

He also said the operating system was self-checking and self-repairing, with individual components cryptographically signed. If the computer detects an error, malware or the system being hacked, it reloads some or all of the system afresh over the cloud.

Source: [news.zdnet.co.uk](http://news.zdnet.co.uk)

## Skype Will Go Open Source On Linux

Skype announced [...] that it's developing an open source version of its client software that runs under Linux.

Skype developer Stanislav Karchebny (whose screen name is Berkus), said in a blog post, "Yes, there's an open source version of Linux client being developed. This will be a part of a larger offering, but we can't tell you much about that right now."

Although Skype has confirmed that the user interface will go open source, customers expressed concerns in comments on the announcement that Skype's Internet protocol software might remain closed.

Comments from Skype's customer services reportedly suggest that the open source version will be available in the "nearest future", however users are already asking the company to name a date.

Source: [theinquirer.net](http://theinquirer.net)

## COMPETITION



### About Google Wave

Google Wave is an online tool for real-time communication and collaboration. A wave can be both a conversation and a document where people can discuss and work together using richly formatted text, photos, videos, maps, and more.

We have four Google Wave invites to give away to lucky FCM readers. To be in with a chance of winning, all you have to do is sign up with the FCM blog: <http://fullcirclemagazine.org>

If you've already signed up, then you're already in with a chance! The winners will be chosen, at random, from the list of blog members on Monday 21st Dec.

**Good luck!**

**Please note, this competition is not endorsed by Google.**





# COMMAND & CONQUER

Written by Lucas Westermann

**B**efore I start on the focus of this article, I'd like to take a moment to thank David Rowell for pointing out that another space-waster on some systems is the thumbnails directory (this applies only to systems where thumbnails are generated). In Ubuntu, the default directory is `~/.thumbnails`. I believe, however, that Thunar (on Xubuntu) stores it in a different location - the same is so for Konqueror on Kubuntu. The thumbnails don't get removed once the image/video that the thumbnail applies to is removed, at least, this was the case in Gnome 2.24/2.26. So, if you store/stored a lot of media on your hard disk, chances are the thumbnails folder can be rather large. To solve this, simply delete the directory with

```
rm -r ~/.thumbnails
```

and the next time you open a folder with media in it, the thumbnails will be

regenerated, which could take a few minutes (depending on the number of files and the CPU of your system). If you're not sure how big the thumbnails folder is, you can check using my tip from last month's article:

```
du -h ~/.thumbnails
```

Now, on to the topic of this month's article. I know many people use Ubuntu, or another form of Linux, on notebooks these days, and so I thought it could be useful to cover how to disable power management for hard disks, which can cause a lot of wear and tear on notebook drives. There are threads on most distributions' forums regarding this issue, and, as far as I know, it hasn't been solved. The downside of this fix is that the hard drive doesn't spin down. This can cause data loss if the laptop is dropped (especially if the hard drive is in the process of writing), and can also cause your laptop to be a few

degrees warmer, since the hard drive generates heat. The positive aspect of this is that the hard drive will last much longer than it will with the power management on, and the hard-drive performance will increase a little. I will be covering how to see if your laptop is affected by this bug, and how to disable power management. Also, I'll cover how to use smartmontools to check the health of your hard disk.

Before we start checking any values, you must first install the tool we'll be using. Smartmontools is in the main repository of most distributions, including, of course, Ubuntu. To install it, run the following:

```
sudo apt-get install smartmontools
```

Once it's installed, you should probably check the S.M.A.R.T. (Self-Monitoring, Analysis, and Reporting

Technology) values of your hard drive by running the following command:

```
sudo smartctl -H /dev/sda
```

You should replace `/dev/sda` with whatever hard disk you want to check. This will return information in the following format:

```
smartctl version 5.38
[x86_64-unknown-linux-gnu]
Copyright (C) 2002-8 Bruce
Allen
Home page is
http://smartmontools.sourceforge.net/
```

```
=== START OF READ SMART DATA SECTION ===
SMART overall-health self-assessment test result:
PASSED
```

As you can see, my laptop's SMART hasn't been tripped (meaning the hard disk's health is fine). If it says the hard disk didn't pass, you may want to think about replacing it in the near future. If it says your hard disk doesn't support SMART, then you can stop



worrying, since you will be unable to change any of the settings.

Before proceeding to the next section, I will take a moment to note that you should read the link to the UbuntuForums thread below before applying any of these fixes, since it should be done only when you have a good understanding of what is happening. Also, you have to take into account the period of time you've had the hard disk, etc. If you choose to follow the information in this article, you are doing so at your own risk. I am writing this article from the experience that most laptops I've used have required this fix. This experience includes explaining the steps of this fix to laptop owners. Be advised that some newer laptops may not need this fix, and may even suffer a shorter hard-drive life if it is applied to them. The Web has lists of laptops that suffer the power-management problem. These can tell you whether other owners of your laptop model have reported this problem in their machines.

In order to check the start of the `Load_Cycle_Count`, type the following command:

```
sudo smartctl -a  
/dev/sda | grep  
Load_Cycle_Count @
```

This will spit out one or two lines of code that look like this:

```
225 Load_Cycle_Count 0x0032  
099 099 000 Old_age Always -  
14091
```

The first number is the ID#, the name is the `ATTRIBUTE_NAME`, the hexadecimal string is the `FLAG`, the first value (099 here) is the `VALUE`, the `WORST` is the next 099, the 000 is the `THRESH`, the `Old_age` is the `TYPE`, `Always` refers to `UPDATED`, the `"-"` is in the `WHEN_FAILED` column (would be a date, if the hard disk failed), and the 14091 is the `RAW_VALUE`. Now, I'll explain what some of these terms are. The `VALUE` is the `SMARTCTL` percentage-type value. The `WORST` is the lowest stored value in the life of the hard disk, and the `THRESH` is where `SMART` decides that the hard disk is failing (so once

`VALUE` reaches 000, it's failing). The `TYPE` refers to the type of `THRESH` (choice between `Pre-fail`, where it warns you before the hard disk fails, and `Old_age`, where the hard disk will have simply run the course of its life). `UPDATED` is how often/under what conditions the attribute is updated, `WHEN_FAILED` shows the date at which the attribute passed the `THRESH` level, and the `RAW_VALUE` is how many times it actually occurred.

Anyway, record your `RAW_VALUE` somewhere for safe keeping, and check the value again at a later date. The best way to check would be to write a simple script to run as root in `CRON` once a day at the same time to give you an idea of how often it's increasing. You can also, however, check manually how much it increases in 5 minutes, etc. If it increases by more than 5 increments in 5 minutes while the laptop is being used, chances are that it's not giving you a proper value, and you could then divide the `RAW_VALUE` you have by the increase (so if it's increasing by



10 each minute, divide by 10). Once you have an idea of how much it increases on average (per day), you should then calculate how much the value will be in 3 years (average lifespan of a hard drive), taking into account, of course, how long you have had the laptop! If the value is under the `Load_Cycle_Count` that the hard disk should be able to handle (it's generally around 600,000 but you should Google your hard disk's `Load_Cycle` limit just to be sure), then you

will not need to worry about the fix. If, however, it greatly exceeds the limit, you should apply the fix in order to keep your hard drive running for as long as possible. For example, my Samsung n110 (running ArchLinux) increases at a rate of about 1 per minute, so per day it's an increase of 1440,  $1440 \times 365 = 525600$ ,  $525600 \times 3 = 1576800$ . I didn't, however, account for the fact that the laptop is about 4 months old. Since the number is so large, I decided to not bother finding a more-accurate value, since it wouldn't make too much of a difference. This value is well over any reasonable limit for hard disks, so I've turned the APM option off. In order to do this, run the command:

```
sudo hdparm -B 255 /dev/sda
```

Or, if you want to just set it on the lowest possible setting (waits the longest period of time before going into power-saving mode) run:

```
sudo hdparm -B 254 /dev/sda
```

In case you ever want to

undo this, the default setting of APM for most hard disks is 128, so running

```
sudo hdparm -B 128 /dev/sda
```

will set the APM back to its default setting.

This concludes most of what I wanted to cover. If the fix works for you and decreases the Load\_Count, then you may need to add a script to run it on boot up, but this is covered in the thread I listed below. Also, I urge any reader who isn't 100% sure that it's required on their hard drive to read through at least some of the thread, in order to grasp a better understanding of this process.

For those of you who are wondering why I included this information in an article after warning the reader repeatedly that it shouldn't be used lightly, the answer is simple: the smartctl command is extremely useful. It can give you lots of information about your hard disk, and it can offer you information on the status of your hard disk's life. I added the information about APM

simply because it uses a lot of the commands that I use to check hard-disk life/information, and because it is a useful thing to be made aware of. I'm not saying anyone should just follow the instructions; I am making the reader aware of the possible issue, and offering a way to check/fix it, in case she finds it's necessary. If you buy a new laptop/laptop-hard-drive once a year, and are fine with it, then chances are you won't need to even consider this. That being said, not many people will do that. I hope the introduction to smartmontools was useful for everyone, and that the explanation on the Load\_Cycle issue was useful for some (hopefully, fewer than it would have been a year or two ago, but who knows?).

As the last note of the article, I am, as always, open to suggestions, questions, comments, opinions, and pretty much anything else to do with the CLI. If you're a reader who has any of the above, feel free to email me at [lswest34@gmail.com](mailto:lswest34@gmail.com). Be sure to include the word "FCM" in

the title and refer to the title of Command & Conquer in the subject header (just to ensure that I read it). I'd also like to take a moment to point out that this is my 10th Command & Conquer article. Thanks to anyone and everyone who has been following this series since I started writing it, after taking over for Robert Clipsham.

## **Further Reading:**

Official Ubuntu thread on load\_cycle\_count:  
<http://ubuntuforums.org/showthread.php?p=5031046>

hdparm manpage, accessed with:

```
man hdparm
```

smartctl manpage, accessed with:

```
man smartctl
```



**Lucas** has learned all he knows from repeatedly breaking his system, then having no other option but to discover how to fix it. You can email Lucas at: [lswest34@gmail.com](mailto:lswest34@gmail.com).



# HOW-TO

Written by Greg Walters

# Program In Python - Part 5

## SEE ALSO:

FCM#27-30 - Python Parts 1-4

## APPLICABLE TO:

ubuntu kubuntu xubuntu

## CATEGORIES:



## DEVICES:

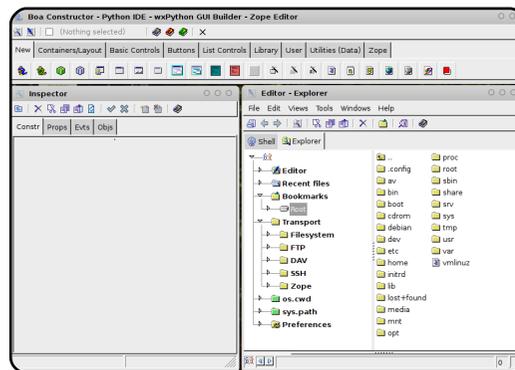


If you are like me, you will HATE the first part of this installation. I HATE it when an author tells me that I have to double read every word in their book/chapter/article, because I just KNOW it will be a snore - even when I know it's for my own good, and I will end up doing it anyway.

Consider yourself warned. PLEASE read the following boring stuff carefully. We'll get to the fun stuff soon, but we

need to get some ground work covered before we can really talk about trying to program.

FIRST you need to install Boa Constructor and wxPython. Use Synaptic and select both wxPython and Boa Constructor. Once installed, you should find Boa under Applications|Programming\Boa Constructor. Go ahead and start it up. It will make things a bit easier. Once the application starts, you will see three different windows (or frames): one across the top, and two across the bottom. You might have to resize and move them a bit, but get things to a point where it looks something like this:



The top frame is called the tool frame. The bottom-left frame is the inspector frame, and the bottom-right frame is the editor frame. On the tool frame, you have various tabs (New, Containers/Layout, etc.) that will allow you to start new projects, add frames to existing projects, and add various controls to the frames for your application. The inspector frame will become very important as we start to add controls to our application. The editor frame allows us to edit our code, save our projects, and more. Moving our attention back to the tool frame, let's take a look at each tab - starting with the "New" tab. While there are many options available here, we will discuss only two of them. They are the 5th and 6th buttons from the left: wx.App and wx.Frame. Wx.App allows us to create a complete application beginning with two auto-generated files. One is a frame file and the other is an application file. This is the

method I prefer to use. The wx.Frame is used to add more frames to our application and/or create a standalone app from a single source file. We'll discuss this later.

Now look at the Containers/Layout tab. Many goodies here. The ones you'll use most are the wx.Panel (first on the left) and the sizers (2,3,4,5 and 6 from the right). Under Basic Controls, you'll find static text controls (labels), text boxes, check boxes, radio buttons, and more. Under Buttons, you'll find various forms of buttons. List Controls has data grids and other list boxes. Let's jump to Utilities where you'll find timers and menu items.

Here are a few things to remember as we are getting ready for our first app. There are a few bugs in the Linux version. One is that SOME controls won't allow you to move them in the designer. Use the <Ctrl>+Arrow keys to

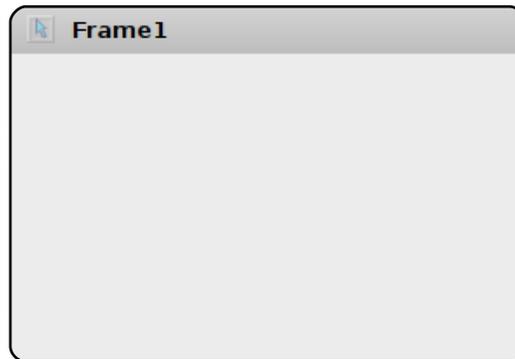


move or tweak the position of your controls. Another one you'll find when you try the tutorials that come with Boa Constructor - when placing a panel control, it's hard to see. Look for the little boxes (I'll show you this soon). You can also use the Objs tab on the Inspector frame and select it that way.

Okay, here we go. Under the 'New' tab of the tool frame, select wx.App (5th button from the left). This will create two new tabs in the editor frame: one named `*(App1)*`, the other named `*(Frame1)*`. Believe it or not, the VERY first thing we want to do is save our two new files, starting with the Frame1 file. The save button is the 5th button from the left in the Editor Frame. A "Save As" frame will pop up asking you where you want to save the file and what you want to call it. Create a folder in your home folder called GuiTests, and save the file as "Frame1.py". Notice that the `*(Frame1)*` tab now shows as "Frame1". (The `*(` says that the file needs to be saved.) Now do the same thing with the App1 tab.

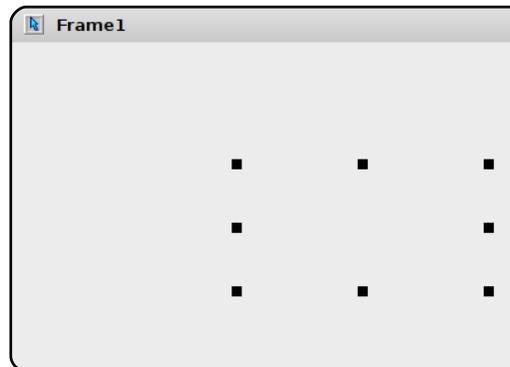
Now let's examine a few of the buttons on the Editor Tool bar. The important ones for now are the Save (5th from the left) and Run (Yellow arrow, 7th from the left). If you are in a frame tab (Frame1 for example) there will be some extra buttons you need to know about. For now it's the Designer button: 

It is an important one. It allows us to design our GUI frame - which is what we'll do now. When you click on it you will be presented with a blank frame.



This is a blank canvas for you to put whatever controls you need to (within reason). The first thing we want to do is place a wx.panel control. Almost everything I have read

says not to put controls (other than a wx.panel) directly on a frame. So, click on the Containers/Layout tab in the Tool Frame, then click on the wx.Panel button. Next, move over to the new frame that you are working on and click somewhere on the inside of the frame. You'll know it worked if you see something like this:



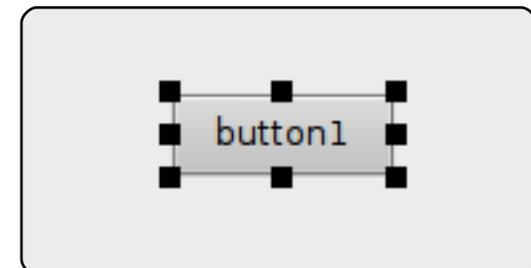
Remember when I warned you about the bugs? Well, this is one of them. Don't worry. See the 8 little black squares? That's the limits of the panel. If you wanted, you could click and drag one of them to resize the panel, but for this project what we want is to make the panel cover the entire frame. Simply resize the FRAME just a little bit at this point. Now we have a panel to put our other controls on. Move the frame you are working on until you

can see the tool box for the Editor frame. Two new buttons have appeared: a check and an "X". The "X" will cause the changes you made to be thrown away.

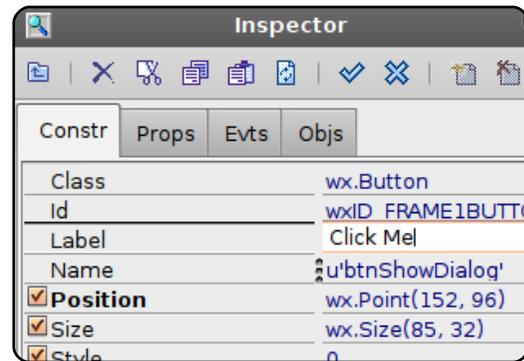
The Check button: 

is called the "Post" button. This will cause your changes to be written into our frame file. You still have to save the frame file, but this will get the new things into the file. So, click on the Post button. There's also a post button on the Inspector frame, but we'll deal with that later. Now save your file.

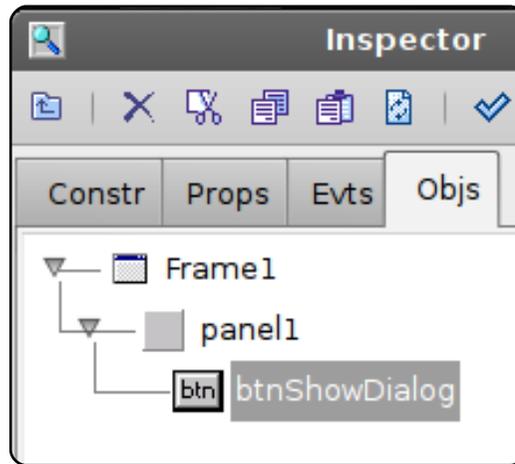
Go back into the Design mode. Click the 'Buttons' tab on the Tool frame and then click the first button on the left, the wx.Button. Then add it somewhere close to the middle of your frame. You'll have something that looks close to this:



Notice that there are 8 small squares around it just like the panel. These are resize handles. It also shows us what control is currently selected. In order to move this closer to the center of the frame, hold down the Control key (Ctrl) and while that's being pressed, use the arrow keys to move it where you want it. Now, let's look at the Inspector frame. There are four tabs. Click on the 'Constr' tab. Here we can change the label, name, position, size and style. For now, let's change the name to 'btnShowDialog' and the Label property to 'Click Me'.



Now, let's skip over all the rest of that tab and go to the Objs tab. This tab shows all the controls you have and their parent/child relationships. As you can see, the button is a child of panel1, which is a child of Frame1.

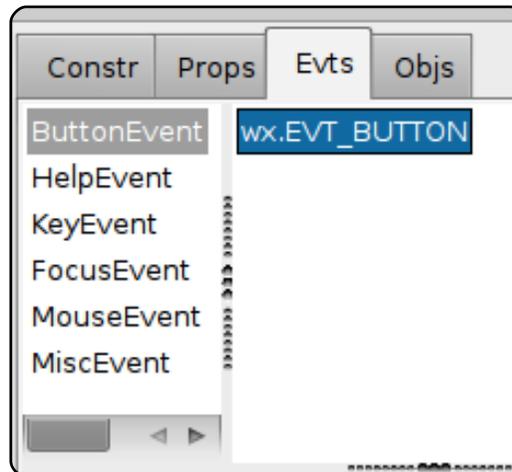


Post (check button) and save your changes. Go back to the designer once again, and notice that (assuming you still have the 'Objs' tab in the inspector frame selected), Frame1 is now selected. This is good because it's what we want. Go back to the 'Constr' tab, and change the title from 'Frame1' to 'Our First GUI'. Post and save one more time. Now let's run our app. Click the yellow Run button on the Editor frame.



Click all you want on the button, but nothing will happen. Why? Well, we didn't

tell the button to do anything. For that, we need to set up an event to happen, or fire, when the user clicks our button. Click on the X in the upper-right corner to finish running the frame. Next, go back to the designer, select the button and go into the 'Evts' tab in the inspector frame. Click on ButtonEvent and then double click on the wx.EVT\_BUTTON text that shows up, and notice that in the window below we get a button event called 'OnBtnShowDialogButton'. Post and save.



Before we go any further, let's see what we've got in the way of code ([page 11](#)).

The first line is a comment that tells Boa Constructor that

this is a boa file. It's ignored by the Python compiler, but not by Boa. The next line imports wxPython. Now jump down to the class definition.

At the top, there's the `__init_ctrls` method. Notice the comment just under the definition line. Don't edit the code in this section. If you do, you will be sorry. Any place BELOW that routine should be safe. In this routine, you will find the definitions of each control on our frame.

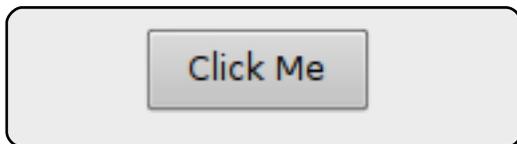
Next, look at the `__init__` routine. Here you can put any calls to initializing code. Finally, the `OnBtnShowDialogButton` routine. This is where we will put our code that will do the work when the user clicks the button. Notice that there is currently an `event.Skip()` line there. Simply stated, this says just exit when this event fires.

Now, what we are going to do is call a message box to pop up with some text. This is a common thing for programmers to do to allow the user to know about something - an error, or the fact that a

process has finished. In this case, we will be calling the `wx.MessageBox` built in routine. The routine is called with two parameters. The first is the text we wish to send in the message box and the second is the title for the message box. Comment out the line `event.Skip()` and put in the following line.

```
wx.MessageBox('You Clicked the button', 'Info')
```

Save and click the Run button (yellow arrow). You should see something like this:



And when you click the button you should see something like this:



Understand here that this is just about the simplest way to call the message box routine. You can have more parameters as well.

Here's a quick rundown on how to change the way the icons work on the message box (more next time).

**wx.ICON\_QUESTION** - Show a question icon

**wx.ICON\_EXCLAMATION** - Show an alert icon

**wx.ICON\_ERROR** - Show an error icon

**wx.ICON\_INFORMATION** - Show an info icon

The way to write this would be

```
wx.MessageBox('You Clicked the button', 'Info', wx.ICON_INFORMATION)
```

or whatever icon you wanted

```
#Boa:Frame:Frame1
import wx
def create(parent):
    return Frame1(parent)
[wxID_FRAME1, wxID_FRAME1BTNSHOWDIALOG, wxID_FRAME1PANEL1,
 ] = [wx.NewId() for _init_ctrls in range(3)]

class Frame1(wx.Frame):
    def __init__(self, prnt):
        # generated method, don't edit
        wx.Frame.__init__(self, id=wxID_FRAME1, name='', parent=prnt,
            pos=wx.Point(543, 330), size=wx.Size(458, 253),
            style=wx.DEFAULT_FRAME_STYLE, title=u'Our First GUI')
        self.SetClientSize(wx.Size(458, 253))
        self.panell = wx.Panel(id=wxID_FRAME1PANEL1, name='panell', parent=self,
            pos=wx.Point(0, 0), size=wx.Size(458, 253),
            style=wx.TAB_TRAVERSAL)
        self.btnShowDialog = wx.Button(id=wxID_FRAME1BTNSHOWDIALOG,
            label=u'Click Me', name=u'btnShowDialog', parent=self.panell,
            pos=wx.Point(185, 99), size=wx.Size(85, 32), style=0)
        self.btnShowDialog.Bind(wx.EVT_BUTTON, self.OnBtnShowDialogButton,
            id=wxID_FRAME1BTNSHOWDIALOG)

    def __init__(self, parent):
        self._init_ctrls(parent)
    def OnBtnShowDialogButton(self, event):
        event.Skip()
```

to use that suited the situation. There are also various button arrangement assignments which we'll talk about next time.

**So, until next time, play with some of the various controls, placements, and so on. Have fun!**



**Greg Walters** is owner of *RainyDay Solutions, LLC*, a consulting company in Aurora, Colorado, and has been programming since 1972. He enjoys cooking, hiking, music, and spending time with his family.



# HOW-TO

Written by Fernando Diaz de la Serna

# Universe Of Sound

## SEE ALSO:

N/A

## APPLICABLE TO:

## CATEGORIES:



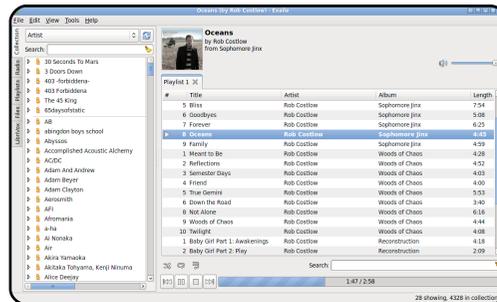
## DEVICES:



Having several music collections may be a bit confusing and time-consuming to classify and organize. Let's suppose you have the following categories of sound files in your collection:

1. Rock, Pop, and Jazz music
2. Classical Music
3. Folk and Ethnic music
4. Sound files of lectures etc.
5. Podcasts
6. Audiobooks

Of course you may have all those genres crammed into one single music manager such as Rhythmbox, the default music manager in Ubuntu. Yet, you may prefer to separate your different collections in various music managers. It makes sense mainly if your collections are huge. Rhythmbox is an excellent sound manager, but if you need to add more options to your sound experience, you can try the following:



**Exaile** has everything you might wish a music manager to have - and more. It has Shoutcast radio, and, since the Exaile installation includes Streamtuner, you can record any radio station to your hard

disc by simply clicking on the red button in the lower part of the Exaile window. The program will automatically create a folder for every radio station you choose, and save separate files in MP3 format for every song you listen to. You can increase your music collection considerably just by tuning to the radio stations of your preference and saving them to your hard disc while you listen to the radio. You may silence the radio, and Streamtuner will continue to record the radio station you chose even if the radio is paused (don't stop it, only pause it). What about leaving the recording function on all night? You'll wake up in the morning with a plethora of new music files on your hard disk that were recorded while you slept. On the left pane, Exaile classifies your collections neatly by artist, album, genre, etc., making it easy to drag the content of your folders to the right pane for reproduction. Download Exaile from Synaptic.



**Amarok** is the name of a gigantic wolf in Inuit mythology. It is said to hunt down and devour anyone who hunts alone at night. But fear not, Amarok is also the default sound player and manager of Kubuntu, the Canonical distribution that uses the KDE desktop. (Ubuntu uses the Gnome desktop instead.) You may install Amarok in Ubuntu, but some people think that the latest release (Version 2) doesn't run smoothly on Gnome. A previous version is unsupported but runs better in Ubuntu (Version 1.4.x). You can use a Personal Package Archive (PPA) to install it. Follow the instructions in the PPA page for installation: <https://launchpad.net/~bogdanb/+archive/amarok14> (Karmic



and Jaunty)

You may also install it in Jaunty using the command line - follow the instructions in the Ubuntu Geek Web page: <http://www.ubuntugeek.com/howto-install-amarok-1-4-in-ubuntu-jaunty.html>

Amarok is a topnotch music player and manager that has become very popular with Ubuntu users. It builds a list of all your music folders on the left pane so you can drag the contents to the right pane for reproduction. You can create playlists and also connect to your iPod. You can retrieve the lyrics of the songs you are listening to. It retrieves the cover art of your albums as well. It is integrated to Wikipedia displaying artist information. It is also integrated to last.fm and to Magnatune, the digital music store, enabling users to purchase music in Ogg Vorbis, FLAC, WAV and MP3 formats.

**Banshee** has had rapid development recently, making it a full-fledged, reliable and mature music manager. As a

side comment, I will quote the Webster dictionary; the meaning of Banshee may be little known to some users. But again, fear not!



*Banshee: A supernatural being supposed to warn a family of the approaching death of one of its members, by wailing or singing in a mournful voice, as under the windows of the house. (Celtic Folklore)*

You can play videos and podcasts and sync your music and videos to your G1phone, iPod, or other device. Cover art is automatically fetched as you listen. Banshee also has the capability of reporting played songs to a user's Last.fm playlist.

If you wish to download the latest stable release of

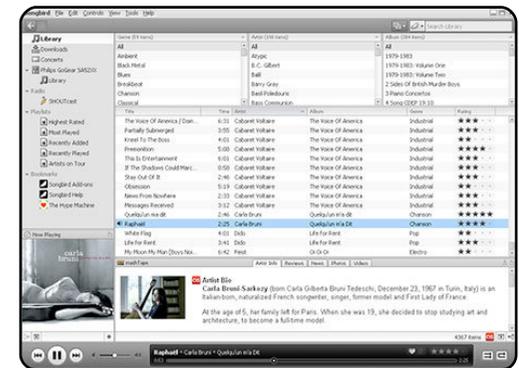
Banshee, you may go to this page for instructions. Click on the 'Technical details about this PPA' notice, and then click on the 'Read about installing' notice. Choose your Ubuntu version and follow the instructions.

<https://edge.launchpad.net/~banshee-team/+archive/ppa>



**Audacious** boasts the tiniest interface of both possible and impossible sound managers and music players for the Linux platform. In full mode it is tiny, but you can still reduce it to almost non-existence as a thin line so it becomes unobstructive on top of your desktop while you work on other programs. It is an open-source replica of the popular WinAmp player that satisfied the craze for music in PCs about a decade ago. At first glance, you may wonder what this little player could be capable of doing, being so

insignificant in size as it is. Don't let its size misguide you. Once you explore all its functions, which are indeed many, you'll see that it can actually do what any other player can do. As you click on its various controls, you'll see that a number of menus and sub-menus will open for you to configure the player as you please. It has an equalizer. You can create play lists and all the rest. You can download it from Synaptic.



**Songbird** tweets loud and clear! This sound manager has also had fast development recently. Songbird is an open-source media player and Web browser. It is built using code from the Firefox Web browser. The GUI is very similar to Apple iTunes, and it is also capable of syncing with Apple iPods. Like

Firefox, Songbird is extensible via downloadable add-ons. You can download the latest version in a .deb package from the GetDeb Web page (Version 1.2.0 for Jaunty, as of this writing).

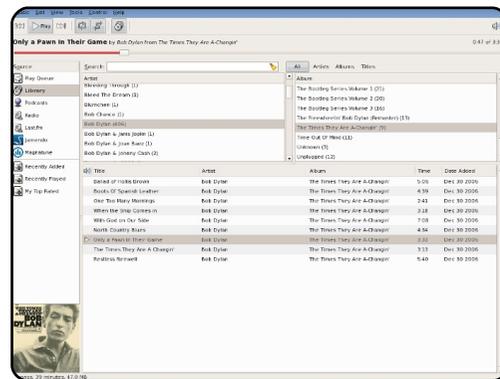
<http://www.getdeb.net/updates/?q=songbird>



**VLC Media Player** is a multimedia player, encoder and streamer supporting many audio and video codecs and file formats as well as DVDs, VCDs, and various streaming protocols. It is able to stream over networks and to transcode multimedia files and save them into various formats. VLC is a great media player. However, saying that VLC is just a media player is like saying a Swiss Army knife is just a knife. VLC can do much more than playback: it can also convert audio and video files to different formats (transcoding), send live audio

or video over the net (streaming), rip DVDs and CDs, and much more. VLC is in the Ubuntu repositories. You can find the complete manual at: <http://en.flossmanuals.net/vlc>

Note: This is a remarkable Web site called 'Floss Manuals' where you can find a number of manuals for various open-source applications: <http://en.flossmanuals.net/>. Among them are the ones I am pointing out. You can either download them in PDF format or print the manuals directly from the site. FLOSS (or FOSS) is the acronym for 'Free [Libre] and Open Source software.'



**Rhythmbox** is the default music manager in Ubuntu. You may be well acquainted with all

its features. The Help menu has an Index sub-menu where you can find a most useful manual. It is worth mentioning the two streaming radio sites it links you to. Magnatune is a source of music of every genre which you can stream from Rhythmbox or download entire albums from their Web site. You are required to pay a minimum of \$5 per album to support the artists. The other one is Jamendo; you can equally stream it from Rhythmbox, or download entire zipped albums from its Web site at no charge. All music is licensed under the Creative Commons license.

**Magnatune:**  
<http://magnatune.com/>

**Jamendo:**  
<http://www.jamendo.com/en/>

The Web page for Rhythmbox is: <http://projects.gnome.org/rhythmbox/>

You can find a number of third-party plugins and some extra tools to add features to Rhythmbox in order to enhance

your music experience.



**Totem** is the multimedia player by default in Ubuntu. You may be well acquainted with it. It uses GStreamer. It plays sound and video files by default. Double clicking on your sound files will automatically open it and play them. It's very much the same with video files. It can also reproduce commercial DVDs except that it does not play the film menus, which can be a hassle. To play DVDs you first need to download the appropriate codec from Medibuntu. You may be aware that you have access to the BBC radio of London, to Jamendo streaming radio, and to YouTube videos from the side bar of Totem. Cool!

**Totem Xine** is the multimedia player by default in Kubuntu. It uses Xine. It does very much the same as Totem, except that, if you want to play DVDs, you may as well use Totem Xine, for it plays them from the beginning showing the film menus. You can download it from Synaptic.



**Realplayer** is a proprietary media player that has twisted its arm in favor of the millions of Linux users. It's best to capture all those users than to ignore them. There are simply too many to be ignored! There is a version for the Linux platform that you can download from Synaptic or directly from their Web page (<http://www.real.com/linux>).

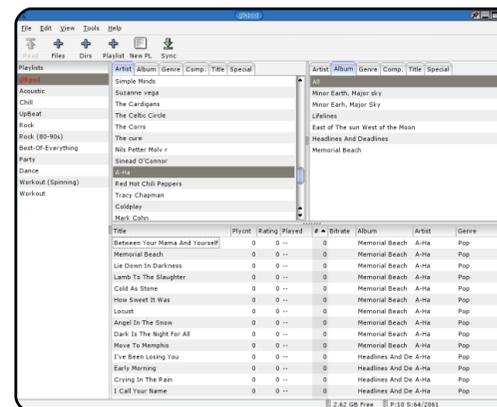
Make sure you download the .deb package. It is a poorly developed version compared to the full versions for proprietary operating systems. Nonetheless, it is useful if you need to stream or download sound files for Realplayer from Web sites that give you no other option.



**MPlayer** is used to playback audio and video, either from files, or delivered live through the net. It's one of those products that you may never have heard of, but, once you have used it, you don't know how you could do without it. It plays almost everything,

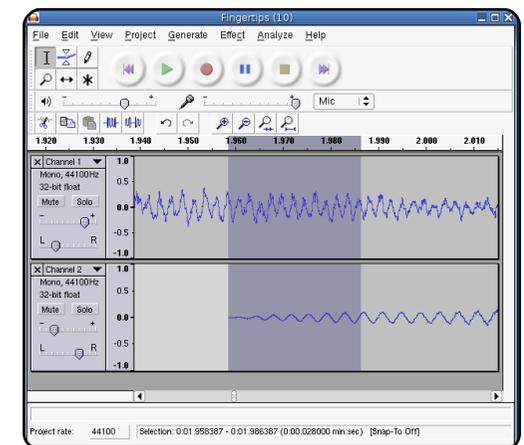
including CDs, DVDs, audio files, VCD, video files, net radio, and streaming video. MPlayer also allows you to manage playlists of material, so you can use it for playing back your music library, and it handles full-screen video very well. So watching DVDs or DIVX (etc.) with it is a pleasure. If you are using Ubuntu as an operating system, it is much more powerful than the default media player (Totem), and it has a nicer interface, but it can be a bit more tricky to configure. If you have patience, then stick with it, for it's well worth it. You can download it from Synaptic. You will find the complete manual at:

<http://en.flossmanuals.net/mplayer>



**Gtkpod** is an open-source software project downloadable from Synaptic. It provides a GUI (Graphical User Interface) that enables users of Linux to transfer audio files to their iPod Classic, iPod Nano, iPod Shuffle, iPod Photo, or iPod Mini music players. Although it does not support some of the more advanced features of iTunes, Gtkpod still performs the role of an iPod manager for Linux. Album art and videos are also supported.

This list should suffice to get you started with a wide range of music players and music managers. Last but not least, the following are some relevant open-source sound editors and digital recorders:



**Audacity** is a digital audio

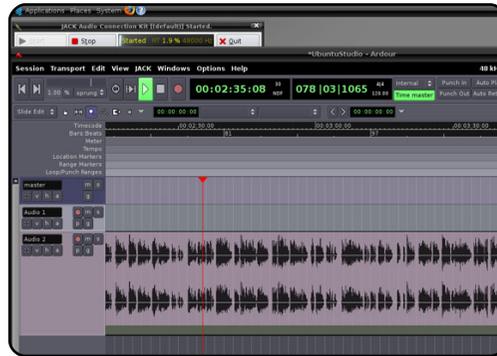
editor and recording application. Typically, one uses Audacity for recording sounds, such as interviews or musical instruments. You can then use Audacity to combine these sounds and edit them to make documentaries, music, podcasts, etc. Audacity is a powerful tool for recording and editing audio on a home computer. It is a very sophisticated program and can do everything one would expect from a modern audio editor. Audacity perhaps falls short of meeting the needs of professional recording studios, but not by much. You can buy a manual for Audacity and download it in PDF format from the InformIt site at

## **Podcasting with Audacity: Creating a Podcast With Free Audio Software**

<http://www.informit.com/store/product.aspx?isbn=0132366576>

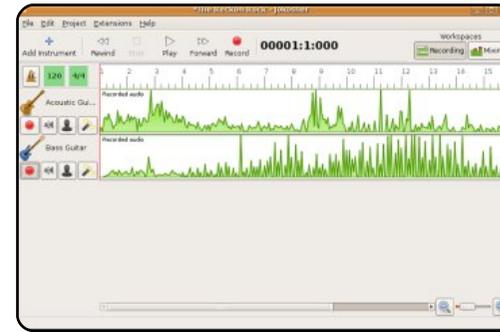
You can also find a free complete manual for Audacity at the FLOSS Manuals Web page:

<http://en.flossmanuals.net/audacity/>



Ardour is a hard-disk recorder and digital audio workstation application. A description of it is beyond the scope of this article. It is very professional open-source software. Digital audio recording has been a revolution. For the first time, artists can cheaply and easily run their own recording studios out of their basements, garages, or anywhere with power. Applications like this one are closing the gap between artists and recording engineers and giving musicians the chance to do the job themselves. The following link will tell you more:

<http://ardour.org/>



**Jokosher** is an easy-to-use audio editor. Its creator and developer is Jono Bacon, whom you'll remember as one of the authors of *The Official Ubuntu Book*. He also writes a section in the Ubuntu User magazine (<http://ubuntu-user.com/>).

*"The interface...aims to use concepts familiar to the artists and musicians that use the program. This means that the user doesn't have to have a great deal of familiarity with multi-track editors to be able to record. In Jokosher, there are tools for splitting, trimming, and moving - when editing. During the mixing, multi-track volume is available with VU sliders. Audio-tracks are called 'instruments' in Jokosher. A range of instruments can be added to a project, and instruments can be renamed. Instruments can also be muted*

*and soloed easily. Jokosher can import audio from Ogg Vorbis, MP3, FLAC, WAV, and anything else supported by GStreamer into projects. After recording, it can export back to any of these formats" (Wikipedia).*

You can download it from Synaptic, but if you want the latest version (0.11.3 for Ubuntu 9.04 and 8.10), go to the Jokosher download page: <http://www.jokosher.org/download/>. You will download a .deb package. Upon double clicking it, a warning will pop-up saying that there is an older version in the repository. You may ignore it and continue with the installation process.

## **Conclusion**

Ubuntu is an OS with an amazing universe of exciting possibilities. The first step is to know what applications populate that universe; the second step is to get acquainted with those applications and to learn to use them so you can get all the juice out of Ubuntu. Then you can be immensely creative.



# HOW-TO

Written by Falko Timme on [HowtoForge.com](http://HowtoForge.com)

# The Perfect Server - Part 1

## SEE ALSO:

FCM09 - 16 : Server Series 1 - 8  
FCM28 - 29 : LAMP Server 1 - 2

## APPLICABLE TO:

ubuntu kubuntu xubuntu

## CATEGORIES:

Dev Graphics Internet M/media System

## DEVICES:

CD/DVD HDD USB Drive Laptop Wireless

This tutorial shows how to prepare an Ubuntu 9.10 (Karmic Koala) server for ISPConfig 3, and how to install ISPConfig 3 on it. ISPConfig 3 is a webhosting control panel that allows you to configure the following services through a web browser: Apache web server, Postfix mail server, MySQL, MyDNS name server, PureFTPd, SpamAssassin, ClamAV, and many more.

Please note that this setup does not work for ISPConfig 2. It is valid for ISPConfig 3 only!

## Requirements

To install such a system you will need the Ubuntu 9.10 server CD, available here: <http://releases.ubuntu.com/releases/9.10/ubuntu-9.10-server-i386.iso> (32-bit) or: <http://releases.ubuntu.com/releases/9.10/ubuntu-9.10-server-amd64.iso> (64-bit)

## Preliminary Note

In this tutorial, I use the host name *server1.example.com*, with IP address *192.168.0.100* and gateway *192.168.0.1*. These settings might differ for you, so you have to replace them where appropriate.

## The Base System

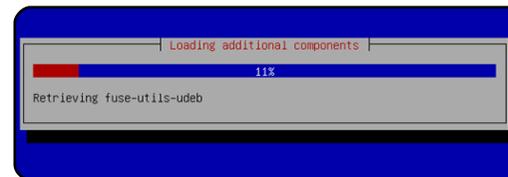
Insert your Ubuntu install CD into your system and boot from it. Select your language

then select Install Ubuntu Server:



Choose your language (again), location, and keyboard layout.

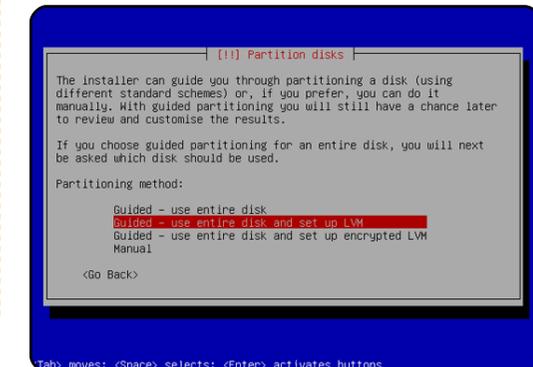
The installer checks the installation CD and your hardware, and configures the network with DHCP if there is a DHCP server on the network:



Enter the host name. In this example, my system is called *server1.example.com*, so I enter *server1*:

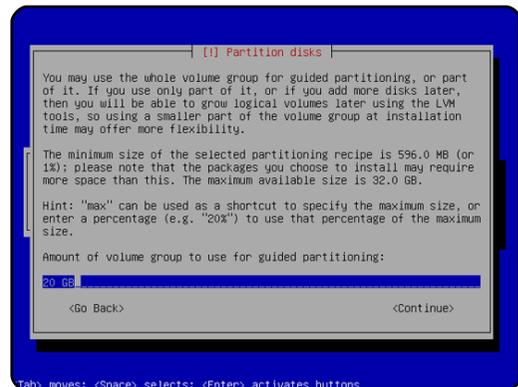


Now you have to partition your hard disk. For simplicity's sake, I select Guided, use entire disk and set up LVM. This will create one volume group with two logical volumes—one for the / file system, and another one for swap. Of course, the partitioning is totally up to you—if you know what you're doing, you can also set up your partitions manually. You may find it helpful in future months if you set up separate /home and /var partitions.

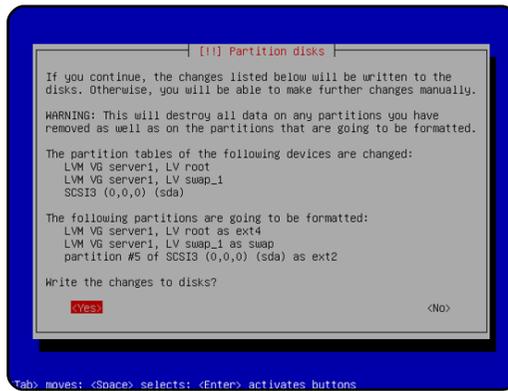


Select the disk that you want to partition, and, when you're asked 'Write the changes to disk and configure LVM?', select Yes.

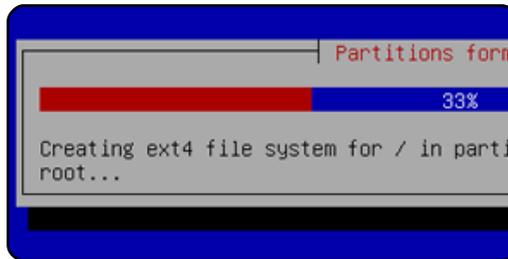
If you have selected Guided, use entire disk and set up LVM, the partitioner will create one big volume group that uses all the disk space. You can now specify how much of that disk space should be used by the logical volumes for / and swap. It makes sense to leave some space unused, so later on you can expand your existing logical volumes, or create new ones. This gives you more flexibility.



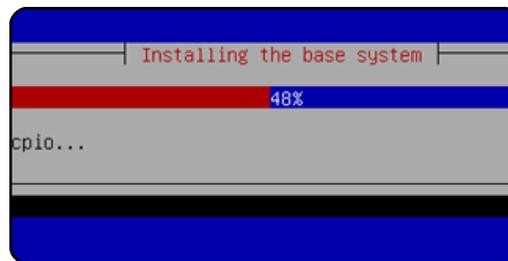
When you're finished, hit Yes when asked "Write the changes to disks?":



Your new partitions are created and formatted:



Then the base system is installed:

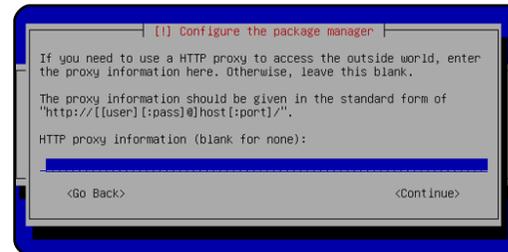


Create a user, for example the user Administrator, with the user name administrator. Don't use the user name admin as it is a reserved name on Ubuntu 9.10.

I don't need an encrypted private directory, so I choose No here:



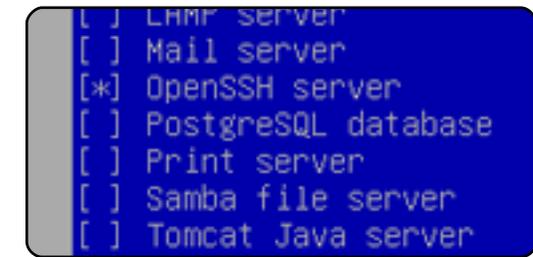
Next, the package manager apt gets configured. Leave the HTTP proxy line empty unless you're using a proxy server to connect to the Internet:



I'm a little bit old-fashioned, and I like to update my servers manually to have more control, therefore I select No automatic updates. Of course, it's up to you what you select there.

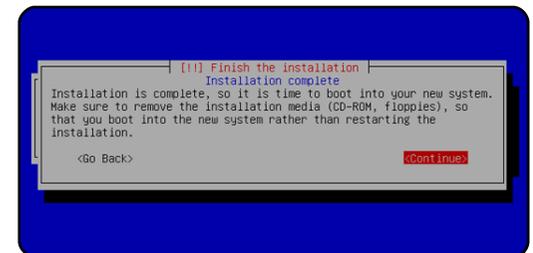
We need DNS, mail, and LAMP servers, but, nevertheless, I don't select any of them now because I like to have full control over what gets installed on my system. We will install the needed packages

manually later on. The only item I select here is OpenSSH server, so that I can immediately connect to the system with an SSH client such as PuTTY after the installation has finished:



The installation continues, then the GRUB boot loader gets installed.

The base system installation is now finished. Remove the installation CD from the CD drive and select Continue to reboot the system:



**Next month, we use our administrator account to install SSH Server and vim-nox, and also configure the network itself.**



# MY STORY

Written by Victor Moisey

## The Conversion

**M**y first encounter with Linux, in any real sense, was in 1999, when a colleague came to my office and told me an unusual story. I was working at the Red Cross War Memorial Hospital in Cape Town, South Africa, at the time. My job, as an electronics technician, was to maintain pathology-laboratory equipment.

I had a 486 computer with DOS and Windows 3.1 installed. I used Microsoft Office - like all my colleagues - for administrative tasks. There were, however, applications that remained out of reach. Some colleagues pirated software, and I cannot be honest if I didn't mention that I also nobbled software. A friend once said that he had so much pirated software that he called his computer the "Jolly Roger."

I had occasionally seen references to Linux, but I wrote it off as just another of those

expensive operating systems. Then, on that day in 1999, my colleague, Grant, stepped into my office and told me this unusual story about scores of people who write software and give it away. It was hard to believe, but I knew that he would not tell me something that was not true. He mentioned Linus Torvalds, Tux, Richard Stallman, and also gave me a short introduction to some of the Linux "geek-speak."

I just had to try this new software. My first encounter was with "Tom's Root 'n' Boot." I had no idea what I was doing! I managed to run it on an old XT, but could not figure out what to do with it. It was a disappointment to have to turn back to my office machine and continue using software that was now starting to become an irritation.

A few days later, Grant came in with a CD in hand. He had bought it with a copy of

"Linux For Idiots" or some such title. I tried it on my computer at home. What a mind bend! Once again, I did not know what I was doing. Never before had I partitioned a hard drive. Now this upstart software was wanting me to slice 'n' dice! But, help was at hand. My youngest son, Adrian, knew what to do. Still, I did not really know what I could do with Linux.

In 2001, I changed jobs, and started work at the University of Cape Town (UCT). It turned out that there were others there who were interested in Linux. They had set up a server, and were offering Linux on the UCT intranet. I downloaded Debian and managed to install it on my machine at work alongside Windows. I was still very much in the dark, but Grant, co-incidentally, had been transferred, and was now working for the UCT IT department. He came over to my office and set up my email.

Now I had something I could do with Linux. Because I could boot into Linux or Windows, I spent as much time as possible using Linux and re-booted Windows only if I had to.

I was still not totally satisfied. It seemed that I could use Linux only as long as Windows was somewhere around to fall back on. In 2004, Mark Shuttleworth released "Warty Warthog." As soon as I got hold of a copy, I installed it on my work machine and home machine. Warty did not change my computing world all that much. Once more, I was disappointed because I was not using Linux as much as I would have liked. I had thought Warty would be the point where I could dump Windows forever.

Mark Shuttleworth had other ideas. He released a new version of Ubuntu every six months. As I installed each new version, I found that I was learning more about the inner workings of Linux. Also, my





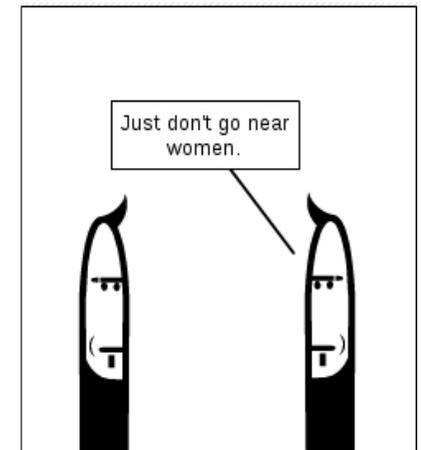
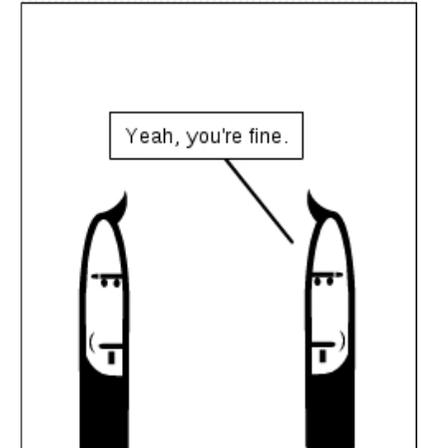
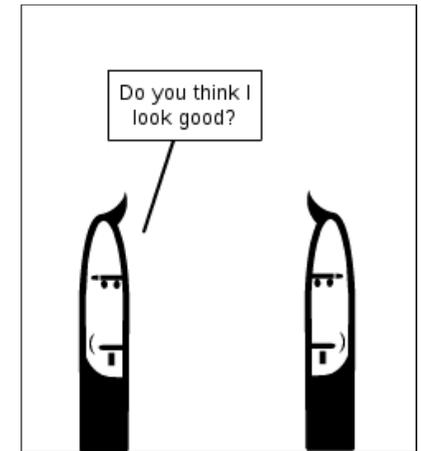
youngest son, Adrian, had left school and was working for an internet provider who used only Linux. Whenever I had problems with Ubuntu, I would email Adrian. He would then SSH into my work machine, and fix things for me. I gradually learned more about Linux and became increasingly independent. I now do Ubuntu installations myself. Admittedly, it is not that difficult, thanks to Mark Shuttleworth.

I have progressed through ten versions of Ubuntu. I enjoy using it because it costs so little. When a new version is released, I take a pack of DVDs and copy the whole of Ubuntu plus repositories on UCT's

Freedom Toaster.

At home, I use only Ubuntu. I have no need for any other software. I mostly use Open Office, Scribus, Qcad, Gimp, Audacity, and Amarok. These names might sound strange to the uninitiated. Open Office is an office suite, including, amongst others, a word processor and spreadsheet. Scribus is a desktop publishing application. Qcad is a technical drawing program. Gimp is a graphics manipulator. Audacity is an audio editor. Amarok is a top quality MP3 player. Those short descriptions in no way describe the quality of this software. You have to try them yourself.

At work, I have a standard issue XP machine, and a Linux box connected through a KBM switch. I have become so used to Ubuntu that I spend as much time on it as possible. If you are reading this and have not tried Ubuntu, all I can say is, "Give it a shot." Run the live version on your computer so that you can see what it can do. If you would like to use Ubuntu, but have to retain XP or Vista, install Ubuntu with "Wubi." That will give you a chance to try it out without upsetting your original installation. And finally, if in doubt, ask. There are normally a few tame Linux geeks to be found somewhere in the woodwork.





**W**hat's sad about this commentary is that I get most of my Microsoft software free through the MSDN (Microsoft Developer Network) program, so I don't have to pay \$400 for a full version of Windows 7 Ultimate. However, this doesn't mean I necessarily enjoy what I get.

I've been playing with 7 since I got the first beta version, and I recently evaluated the final RTM (pre-release) version. I've also compared it to Ubuntu 9.10 (Karmic Koala) to see how the two stack up.

## SPEED

Microsoft touts the speed of 7, both in booting and application usage. Is this true? Yes and no with a possible maybe thrown in for good measure. As for boot times, 7 is quicker than Vista, but only if you don't add an anti-virus program, or replace the

standard Windows Defender firewall. Do either of these and that stellar boot time of 30 seconds suddenly doubles. Of course, you can't safely run 7 without an anti-virus program, so the time claims are automatically doomed.

Ubuntu boots in about 30 seconds, and the plans for the new version in mid-2010 call for a 10-second boot time. Go ahead and add firewall and AV programs and watch the boot time increase to all of 35 seconds! Now that's impressive!

As for application speed, 7 is lightning quick for Microsoft apps but not for others. Windows Explorer will open so fast you'd better not look away after clicking or you'll miss it. Ditto for Microsoft Works. Now move on to OpenOffice, Firefox, Quicken, or any other non-MS product and you'll get a shock. You're going to have to wait. Quite often these products won't boot any quicker than

under XP or Vista. MS claims this is a safety feature to make sure the apps won't compromise the OS, but after a couple of uses it should become apparent that I do want this program to open and I do trust it. Truth be known, some MS programs do boot quicker but this doesn't mean they are quicker to work. Explorer does boot within 2 seconds, but it takes another 5 or so for the main screen to appear. It's an illusion comparable to sticking a V8 engine in a Chevy Aveo. Sure, it will go fast but don't take any corners.

Ubuntu may not be as quick to open some programs, but at least it is consistent. I already know that OpenOffice may take 5 seconds to boot (I dumped the splash screen to save time) and that Firefox may take the same time, but I expect this.

## COST

Microsoft states that 7 is

actually less expensive than previous Vista versions, but I don't see it. For upgrades, the price can be somewhat reasonable (free for certain machines bought by January, 2010 with Vista installed), but installing a full version is nothing short of breathtaking. Count on dumping \$200 for the Home Premium version and \$400 for the Ultimate version. The cheapest version is the upgrade from Vista to 7, which might cost \$120, but you have to do a parallel update, i.e., you can upgrade from Home Premium to Home Premium but not Home Premium to Ultimate without first installing Premium.

Has anybody told MS that some new computers can be had with 7 already installed for around \$400? Why buy the OS for half that cost and slap it on a computer it might not like?

Even odder is the use of the term "Premium" in the Home version's title. There is no Basic version for sale this time



around. Basic is standard on inexpensive computers, but you can't buy a standalone Basic product. So why have a Premium when it's really the base product? Premium is better named "Home" without the additional word.

If you didn't know, buying a computer with 7 Basic is akin to electronic death. Basic cannot be upgraded, and the only way to get another tier up is to blow off the hard drive and install a full version of Home Premium (\$200), Professional (\$300) or Ultimate (\$400). Go ahead and buy that cheap unit with 7 Basic installed and you'll spend just as much on the upgrade software.

Oh, as for the free upgrade with some new machines that carry Vista, has anybody noticed that these computers are already gone? They were yanked from the market in late October when 7 came out. Fat chance you'll have any luck finding a new computer with Vista on it being sold at major retailers (those remaining may be open box or display samples

that might not qualify for free upgrading).

### UPGRADING ONCE INSTALLED

One of the procedures I love in Ubuntu (Karmic Koala) is the relatively painless and optional updating. While MS claims their updates are also optional, they really are not. You either update or leave your machine exposed to various bugs and viruses. I saw this during the early stages of 7 in which over 1GB of updates were issued by MS in roughly 1 year. For an operating system that started at less than 3GB, something tells me the future is full of nothing but more bloat and incessant updating. Think this is not so? If you have XP at home or work, go to "Add/Remove Software" and scroll to the bottom of your



program listing. See if you don't have at least 30 entries for various updates over the years and see if these don't add up to at least 2GB. If you started with XP Professional and have used it at least 4 or 5 years, you should have over 3GB of updates and upgrades on your hard drive.

### BLOAT AND OTHER ODDITIES

MS claims that 7 can run XP programs. Yes it can, but only if you have the Professional or Ultimate versions and download a ponderous file from MS that includes a basic version of XP. From what I've been told, this file is close to half a GB in size. Those of you with dial-up don't stand a chance of acquiring this, and users opting for Home Premium are left in the cold (sorry, it's not an option with Premium). If you do the math,

you'll see that this XP option is not free after all. You'll have to pay at least a \$100 premium over Home Premium in order to run XP, but you can buy legitimate XP versions for around that price at most major outlets.

As for support, Ubuntu has an easy-to-navigate forum, whereas the Windows website is a hodgepodge of disgruntled users who too-often don't receive the right advice. Moreover, it appears that the forum administrators only occasionally get around to deleting improper entries, whereas Ubuntu's site is well maintained and garbage is kept to a minimum.

As for me, I'll stay with Karmic Koala and steer away from 7. I see no reason to pay for a product that provides nothing more than what I'm already getting for free.



**D**erivatives have gotten a bad name since the financial credit-crunch and banking meltdown. There is one derivative, however, that looks like a good investment: **Linux Mint 7**, code-named *Gloria*. Mint 7 is a Linux distribution derived from Debian via Ubuntu – in this release, from Ubuntu 9.04 Jaunty.

You can obtain a couple of editions: *Main* and *Universal*. The Main edition has all the codecs and support for the restricted formats (such as g-streamer and lame for MP3) installed by default, whereas Universal pops up a dialog box asking if you want to download media codecs; with one click to

confirm, the codecs are installed in about 20 seconds. The 100%-free-software zealots won't like Mint, because it uses proprietary, closed-source media codecs. Does the new release make it anything other than Ubuntu with codecs?

Reviews of previous releases in Full Circle declared it a Linux distribution for beginners and converts. Mint aims to make the whole experience of installing, configuring, and maintaining a Linux desktop feel a little more seamless, easier, and more logical for new users or Windows converts. Don't dismiss the little touches like the welcome screen that pops up with help and guidance at login. Mint may be the distribution for newcomers to Linux.

I'm running it on a spare machine built from salvaged old tat and some sheet perspex: Abit Pentium4, 2.14GHz clone, 1GB memory, Geforce-IV AGP graphics card, Belkin wireless USB dongle. Remarkably, given its complex

Ubuntu 9.04 underpinnings, Mint 7 has speed, performance, and stability, even on this lash-up machine.

Here is a quick run-down of the critical components:

**Installer:** Standard Ubuntu-style installer. It works. Everything is done for you. There's nothing to edit at the end.

**Wireless:** Even on my USB dongle, it works. I didn't have to tell it a thing. No Ndis wrapper or Windows drivers required. The trouble I used to have with other distributions did not occur with Mint. Your mileage may vary.

**Desktop and Menu system:** No default top panel, but a unified and attractive desktop, not dissimilar to a Windows start menu, task bar and notification area.

**Look and feel:** Of course you can change it, but the standard theme looks very smart. In

shades of green with black, it wouldn't be out of place on a corporate desktop. That's not to say it's as hard-edged, macho or techno-obsessed as other themes we could mention.

**Bundled Applications:** Mint is bundled with the latest Firefox, Thunderbird, Rhythmbox, Brasero, Mplayer, Pidgin, Transmission, and a selection of other up-and-coming productivity tools: Gnome-Do, Tomboy, and Giver. Browser plug-ins, such as Flash, come ready to go, so YouTube videos play straight away in Firefox. Moonlight is also included, so if you install Mono apps or visit certain websites, you don't have to install a plug-in.

I threw a stack of media files into Gloria, and, for each left-field format, Mplayer popped up a box with its diagnosis and recommendation; only on your confirmation does it then fetch the right codecs.

**Mint applications:** The



special apps were always a strong selling point; the install and config utilities make Mint easy to use.

**MintMenu:** This is a start menu done right. Dividing the menu items into Places, System and Applications is a sensible use of screen real-estate. The menu filter box provides a convenient find-as-you-type search. You never have to scroll through menus to find the application you want to run. Still can't find that app? Mint goes out of its way to be helpful; if I search the menu for Xine player, which isn't installed by default, by typing 'xine', Mint offers four choices:

- Search Portal for 'xine', which takes you to the software portal on the Linux Mint website,
- Search repositories for 'xine', which goes directly to the official Mint repositories and any others you have configured,
- Show package 'xine', which shows the output of 'apt search

xine', and

- Install package 'xine' (which is pretty obvious).

It all works, and it's a very easy way to install new software.

Speaking of installing software...

**MintUpdate** is a superior version of Ubuntu's Update Notifier, providing a list graded 1 to 5 for risk factor. You can choose what to update based on risk (stability of the package) or size of download.

If that's not enough, there's also **mintinstall**, which addresses every way of installing software on a Debian system and wraps them in an attractive graphical front-end. You can browse the software and get descriptions and reviews, all in one interface. This is leading the way with innovative touches such as displaying a screen-shot of a listed application, a feature which has found its way into Synaptic. It's not perfect: sometimes it takes a while to

find a screen-shot, or realize there isn't one. You also get to browse a predefined list of 'Featured Applications'. Click the 'Featured Applications' button to get a list of popular applications you can install simply by selecting its radio button. How much easier do you want it? This convenience and ease of use runs through the Mint utilities:

**MintBackup** lets you make a backup of your home directory; just remember to include hidden folders such as your Thunderbird user profile - easily done from the hidden-folders tab within the app. It's not a full-featured backup tool, but if you keep all your personal stuff together in one place, you've covered the essentials.

**MintNanny** provides a parental-controls black-list of blocked websites.

**MintDesktop** provides an



easy way to configure your desktop without diving into gconf files with a text editor.

### How does it run in practice?

Mint is built on the solid foundations of Debian and Ubuntu. It benefits from the vast Ubuntu repositories, and installing new software becomes almost trivial. It may not be backed by a big commercial support operation such as Canonical or Red Hat, but then a beginner is less likely to break Mint and need to raise a support call. I can't think of any serious niggles. Install it from a Live CD as I did, or download from the ever-effective Mint website.



# MOTU INTERVIEW

Taken from [behindmotu.wordpress.com](http://behindmotu.wordpress.com)

## Andreas Wenning

Behind MOTU is a site featuring interviews with those known as 'Masters of the Universe' (MOTU). They are the volunteer army of package maintainers who look after the Universe and Multiverse software repositories.



Age: 23

Location: Thailand

IRC Nick: a|wen

How long have you used Linux, and what was your first distro?

I've been using linux since 2006, and my first distro was actually Ubuntu.

How long have you been using Ubuntu?

I actually switched to Ubuntu directly from Windows back when Dapper was the new thing. After using it as a second workstation/server for some time, I ended up switching to use Kubuntu Edgy as my primary operating system on all the hardware I had. I quickly started developing some interest in how it all worked

behind the scenes, and in upgrading to alpha/beta releases and reporting bugs.

When did you get involved with the MOTU team and how?

My more serious involvement started in the beginning of 2007. Ubuntu was changing to Apache 2 only, and all Apache 1 modules needed to go away or get updated. I helped in investigating possibilities, filing removal reports, sharing my investigations with Debian, and taking maintainership in Debian for the modules to be kept, but missing a maintainer. After that, I started helping out some more with Kubuntu during the last part of the hardy cycle.

What helped you learn packaging, and how Ubuntu teams work?

Trying and trying, reading and reading, and asking lots of questions. I've had some great sponsors to ask, and both the #kubuntu-devel and #ubuntu-motu IRC channel are great

places to hang around if you happen to have a packaging question. And searching around wiki.ubuntu.com has also helped me a lot to get started with new things.

What's your favorite part of working with the MOTU?

Actually being part of making something as great as Kubuntu and Ubuntu! And the friendly atmosphere of course :)

Any advice for people wanting to help out MOTU?

Find a problem that really annoys you (not too complex, you know), and then try to fix it. Reading up on packaging, patching and more on the wiki, and joining #ubuntu-motu (or #kubuntu-devel for KDE packages) for asking the questions that the wiki doesn't answer. Fixing rebuild FTBFS, and helping with merges, can also give a good hang of the packaging flow.

Are you involved with any local Linux/Ubuntu groups?

I am, back in Denmark. I hang around the IRC channel, help a bit with answering questions and show up at the release parties.

What are you going to focus on in Jaunty and Jaunty+1?

Trying to get as many of the KDE 3 packages replaced with KDE 4 equivalents; and making the KDE packages we ship at release rock! Just upgraded to Jaunty on my main computer, and they already rock, but let's have them rock even more!

What do you do in your other spare time?

I'm studying for a Master in Telecommunication; this really takes a lot of time. Otherwise, I'm enjoying life, doing sports and travelling around Thailand (I'm studying on exchange currently). When I come back to Denmark I will start being a scout leader again.





## Internet-less

One of the things I have noticed with those of us who attempt assisting Ubuntu users is that we tend to assume all computer users have internet access.

I live in South Africa, where I have learnt not to assume that every Ubuntu user out there has a full-time internet connection, can afford massive bandwidth or even has an internet connection. It's usually a lot more cost effective for these users to buy a cheap set of Ubuntu + repository CD/DVDs. Any installation I perform, I copy all my repository + security + update DVDs to local hard drive and edit the sources.list to add the local disk. Sure, you lose about 30Gigs H/D space, but I believe the convenience for the (especially new) Ubuntu user makes up for that. Now I just need to figure out how to get the local DVDs

authenticated (I'm no Linux expert - barely past newbie stage).

Food for thought to all those who install for others?

**Terence H.R.**

*Ed: I absolutely agree, 100%, as many times I've installed Ubuntu for someone only to realise that they've no Internet (or slow Internet) access and can not download extra packages (codecs etc.) which makes the OS quite unusable. Very annoying, and makes Linux look bad.*

## Is Ubuntu Trying To Go Commercial?

I've been using Ubuntu for several months now, started with 9.04, earlier had some experience with Mandriva and Knoppix. I was satisfied with 9.04, upgraded to 9.10 and my impressions are, well, mixed to say the

## LETTER OF THE MONTH

Writer of Letter of the Month wins two metal Ubuntu case badges!



First let me say that I really enjoy your online magazine, and look forward to it every month. I am about seven months into using Ubuntu as my primary OS, only switching my laptop drive to Vista Ultimate to do small business accounting. I have found the OS to be very intuitive and as a novice, that is nice. I took the dive into getting my desktop effects to work, and it looks amazing. Blows Windows out of the water. Aero-who? I must admit though, that there are drawbacks that I have yet to figure out. Instant messaging, for example. I utilize Pidgin, but would love to hold a video/audio chat session with family and friends. I have looked for open source apps to get this done (probably not hard enough), and the same goes for small business accounting software, the kind that will use OpenOffice to generate invoices, for example.

My biggest gripe with Ubuntu is printing. I guess I should trash my Canon All in One MP 700 series.

If you could, in future articles, address in detail some of the applications that are currently being tested or that I may be lacking, that would be awesome. Most of the results I got for video chat with Linux in general were bad or non-existent. Anything else (accounting apps, printer drivers, connecting to a shared printer on a MS network and such-like) would be a plus.

Great Job so far and I look forward to reading more from you guys!

And all this from a Microsoft System Administrator.

**Doug Jackson**

*Ed: If you install/upgrade to 9.10 (Karmic Koala) you will get the Empathy IM Client in your menu. Empathy is the replacement for Pidgin, and does do audio/video chat although I haven't tested it myself.*



least. I see Ubuntu incorporating much useless bling instead of growing into a mature, steady and reliable distribution.

I see Ubuntu loosing its humanity for commercial babble. I see too much useless junk instead of hardware support. I see ubuntu loosing in the eyes of third party developers, discouraged with constant bugs, and code being inserted just to hold the system from falling apart. I see improvements that are worth little to nothing; like the new boot screen, Ubuntu One and the Ubuntu Software Centre which is worse than its predecessor.

I see Moblin adding some really important stuff to their distribution who have one huge advantage - a line of sight. They know where they are going and what they want their OS to be like, unlike Ubuntu, which I see adding all the junk that one can find available, and losing more and more in terms of speed and reliability.

Ubuntu focuses on

netbooks. OK, but why is the EEE PC ACPI utility project not supported? Fewt, the developer has just dropped the project calling it an endless fight with Ubuntu developers who are developing a more buggy system with each update.

Why can't we fix bugs instead of implementing new stuff that is not relevant for the system functionality? Boot time better in 9.10? I've not seen any improvement. I've seen the nonsense of changing the performance mode three times during boot and changing the backlight on my EEE PC twice before I see the desktop. Is it improvement? No, it's insanity.

My word of advice: focus on the system and make it work with the hardware. Leave the cloud computing and web drives alone. Anyone interested has already signed up for it.

The core of the system is what counts in the end. If you make it fancy and buggy, all the bling in the world will not bring you users. Make it human in a way humans need, and

stop making it commercial. Otherwise, we can go Debian, or Moblin, or Mandriva, or...

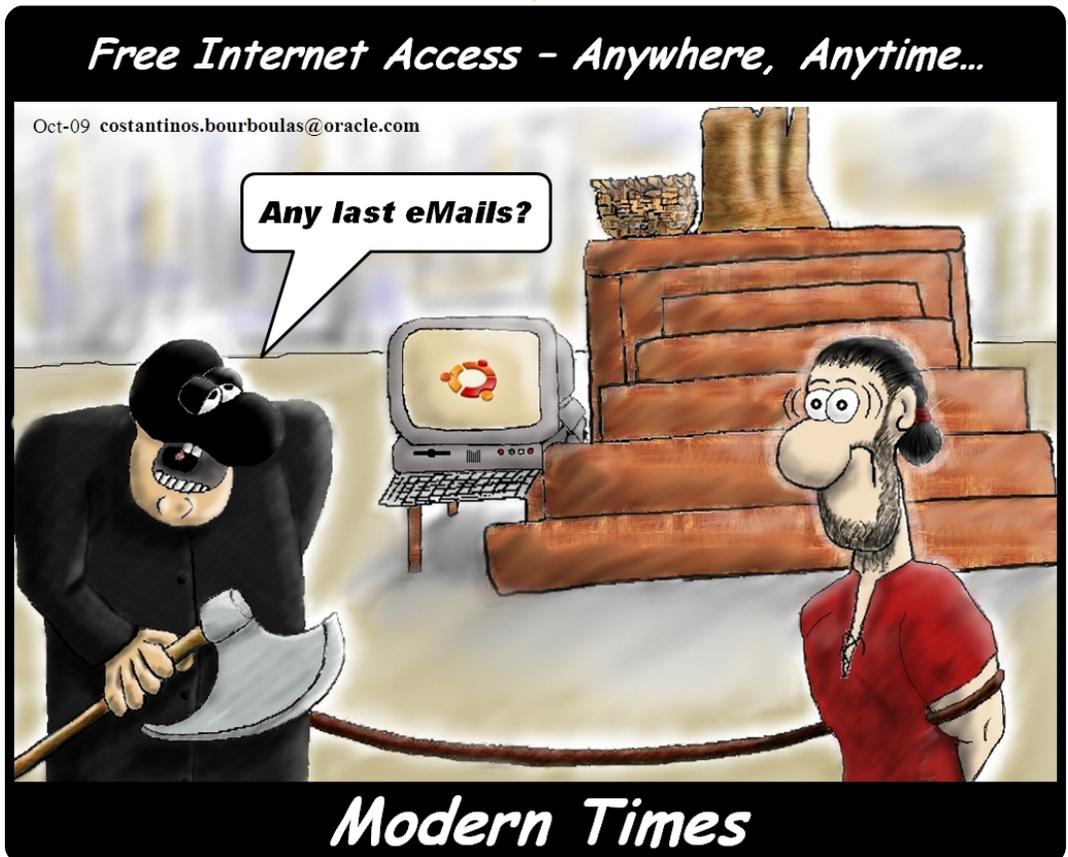
**Maciej Miller**

## Tahoe-LAFS

Please notice that Tahoe-LAFS is included in Karmic. Tahoe-LAFS is a backup and filesharing tool intended for "friendnet". Which is where a

group of people share disk space and files with each other. This is in contrast to the corporate approach where you rent disk space or service from a company, and it is in contrast to the "lots of ad hoc strangers" approach where you share files with strangers a la BitTorrent.

**Zooko**





**Amber Graner:** In this interview, I have the pleasure of speaking to Ara Pulido, a member of the Canonical QA Team and Ubuntu Women Team member. What a great time to talk to Ara on the heels of the Ubuntu 9.10 (Karmic Koala) release, and before the Ubuntu Developer Summit (UDS) where Ubuntu 10.04 (Lucid Lynx) will gain momentum and start to take shape.

Ara, you work for Canonical on the QA Team. Can you tell us what the QA Team does and what you do on the team?

**Ara Pulido:** Our objective as a team is to care about the

quality of Ubuntu as a final product. Our range of activities are wide, but they include things like bug triaging, testing (both manually and automatically), and hardware certification.

In the QA team I am focused on testing. I care about manual testing of Ubuntu, and desktop testing automation with our framework: Mago (<http://mago.ubuntu.com>)

AG: You deal with Testing the ISO, and, during Ubuntu Open Week (<https://wiki.ubuntu.com/UbuntuOpenWeek/>), you gave an awesome session about ISO Tester Tracking (<https://wiki.ubuntu.com/MeetingLogs/openweekKarmic/TestISOs>), but for those who didn't get a chance to attend the sessions, can you briefly explain where those testing opportunities can be found and how people can help?

AP: The landing page of the QA

team (<http://qa.ubuntu.com/>) has several links to documentation to start with. Most of the information links to the Testing wiki pages (<https://wiki.ubuntu.com/Testing>), and I guess that's the best way to start.

There are a lot of opportunities if you like testing. And although testing is sometimes seen as a dull activity, I think it can be a lot of fun. You get to know the project in a wider spectrum. You need to know what's going on in the different teams, and you need to communicate a lot with people. I love testing.

Also, Lucid is going to be a great moment to join the fun. I am talking with the Community team to organize a more formal Testing team in Ubuntu, just like MOTU or the BugSquad. We will be discussing this topic during UDS, and, hopefully, it will kick off before the end of the year.

AG: I read that you also help organize Testing Days. Can you explain how LoCo teams can help out on these days, and how they can get more information on involvement in these global testing events?

AP: I have to say that the activity of the Testing Days has been slower in the Karmic cycle than before. I was busy with other projects and could not pay the attention they deserved.

But I think that it is still a good idea to have them. In each release we introduce new exciting features in Ubuntu that need a lot of testing. Testing these features with others can be very challenging and exciting.

I hope that we will be able to start these again for the Lucid cycle, and be even better when the new Testing team members start their activities. Of course, we will communicate with LoCo teams to introduce Testing



Days in their global jams.

AG: I had not heard of Checkbox until the Atlanta Linux Fest, and the "Will Karmic Run on My Computer" testing. I know that checkbox was used in this testing but not sure of the specifics. I read that you are also involved in Checkbox. Can you tell people a little bit about it, and what is it used for?

AP: Checkbox is an application to run any kind of test, either manual or automated. The good thing about Checkbox is its simplicity. It is used to run tests and nothing more. It was originally developed for our hardware certification labs, and it is still used there. Using Checkbox, we run daily tests against the certified hardware and we can have consistent reports, no matter if the tests are manual or scripted, or if they have been developed by us or by someone else.

AG: Thank you so much for participation in the Ubuntu Women's Team; are there any other groups you are in that encourage specifically women? Can you tell us a little about

those?

AP: I am part of the Software Testing Club (<http://www.softwaretestingclub.com/>) that is a community of software testers. The club was created by a woman, Rosie Sherry, and, although it does not promote women participation specifically, I think that seeing a woman as the founder of a project encourages more women to join in.

Women need more visibility in the FOSS world. The more we participate in groups, blogs, conferences, articles, etc., the more welcoming for women the community will be.

AG: Ara, can you tell us how long you have been in the FOSS, and, more specifically, the Ubuntu Community. What was your point of entry into each of these communities, and how would you suggest others get involved?

AP: I started my involvement with FOSS when I started college, back in 1998. I met some great people interested

in Linux (including people from GNOME Hispano), and together we started the LUG of my university town (<http://gcubo.org>). I would recommend people to join a local team if they have access to one. For me, face-to-face communication is very important, and I don't think I would have been so involved in FOSS as I am right now if I hadn't met such a nice and welcoming group of people.

I have been an Ubuntu user since 2006 and I created my Launchpad account back then. I wrote some articles in a Spanish Linux magazine - mostly in QA topics - and then I started to be more involved with Ubuntu QA (the Mago project, ISO testing, testing days...). My aim is to promote testing as a great activity to help in making the Ubuntu distribution better.

AG: Ara, thank you so much for taking the time to tell us a little more about you and the awesome contributions you are making - not only in the Ubuntu community but in the FOSS community as a whole.

AP: Thanks to you, Amber.



# CANONICAL



## GAME NEWS

### ATi Drivers, Which is better?

*Phoronix* benchmarks both the open and closed ATi drivers, and found the open-source ones to offer the best performance!



Ever since I started using Linux, everyone has been talking about Frozen Bubble as the game you must play on Linux. This month, I finally gave it a go.

Frozen Bubble is a puzzle game, with the objective of firing at and knocking down a collection of bubbles before the

time runs out. It's a simple but addictive game, very similar to the games I reviewed a few months ago - games which you can pick up and play for short bursts. Those games offered very little replay value due to lack of content. Frozen Bubble is very different - there is so much to do. For a start, there are over 100 levels to complete, and improve your score on, in single player mode. There is split screen support - for more hours of fun with friends. Online multiplayer is also available, with support for up to 4 players. There is even a Level creator, to create your own levels to play. As you can see, for a casual game, there's tons of things to do.

The game looks and sounds great. I like the cartoony-style of the game - simple animations which will play well on any computer you throw it at. I did find a few problems with the game. Sound would crash, or not start up with the game, and the game would

lock up when trying to exit. This surprises me since the game has been in development for years, so it just may be a problem with Ubuntu 9.10, or with my system.

Overall, Frozen Bubble is generally an excellent game, with tons of levels and features to keep this game fresh for many hours. It would be nice to have an online leader board for each level, to complete the online experience. Frozen Bubble is in the Ubuntu repositories. I recommend you give it a go.

**Score: 8/10**

**Good:**  
*Tons of levels*



*Good graphic style*  
*Excellent multiplayer options*

**Bad:**  
*Buggy in places*  
*No online leaderboards*



**Ed Hewitt**, aka chewit (when playing games), is a keen PC gamer and sometimes enjoys console gaming. He is also on the development team for the Gfire project (Xfire Plugin for Pidgin)



# Q&A

Written by Tommy Alsemgeest

If you have Ubuntu-related questions, email them to: [questions@fullcirclemagazine.org](mailto:questions@fullcirclemagazine.org), and Tommy will answer them in a future issue. Please include as much information as you can about your problem.

**Q** I was trying to save some disk space using programs such as Kleansweep on my Kubuntu 9.04, but, unfortunately, I may have deleted some system files. After I restart Kubuntu it won't show the splash screen, it just enters the desktop. However, my keyboard and mouse won't respond.

**A** I would say the easiest thing to do is to reinstall Kubuntu. To save your files that you have stored in your home folder, you can boot from the live CD (like you do when you are installing Kubuntu), but make sure you select "Try Kubuntu without any change to your computer". Once you have booted, you can back up your files to somewhere safe, before reinstalling Kubuntu.

**Q** Some music sites require the Windows Media Player plugin for Firefox to play

online music. In Ubuntu, how can I listen to music content that requires the Windows Media Player plugin? I have tried the Gecko and Mplayer plugin but they do not work with all the sites.

**A** Install the packages: non-free-codecs gxineplugin

```
sudo apt-get install non-free-codecs gxineplugin
```

Restart Firefox and you should be able to play them.

**Q** I look after a small website. To make my life easier, I decided that the PHP 'include' statement would be really useful to me. For this to work, I found that I have to name all the files filename.php although they are mostly HTML with the odd 'include' thrown in where required. The editors that I have tried so far in Ubuntu will not work properly with the

suffix .php. To make it work, I would have to rename all .php files that I want to edit as .html, and then rename before uploading.

My ideal would be a clone of *1stPage* which is an excellent (Windows) editor for Web page work, and which works fine with .php files. Yes, I know I can do this in a text editor, but *1stPage* allows the preview function which is so useful.

**A** As I do not program in PHP, I can't tell you from personal experience. However, after a bit of talking around, I can offer *Geany*: <http://www.geany.org/> as a good tool for coding PHP. Geany is in the repositories.

**Q** I have a network and can move files around from Windows to Linux and vice-versa, but also use external hard drives and memory sticks.

The problem is that some of the memory sticks and external hard drives can be read on the Windows machines and my EeeUbuntu netbook, but not on the laptop running Ubuntu. The devices were formatted under Windows.

**A** By saying that they cannot be read by the Ubuntu machine, do you mean that they do not show up, or that, when you try to open it, it comes up with an error? If it is the former, you should try to mount it from the terminal. There is a nice wiki page for it here:

<https://help.ubuntu.com/community/Mount/USB#Manually%20Mounting>. If the latter (an error), you should use Google to search for the error message. If that fails, you can format the drive in Ubuntu using the Partition Editor, which can be installed using Add/Remove Software or Synaptic (or if you are running 9.10, the Ubuntu Software Center).





# MY DESKTOP

Your chance to show the world your desktop or PC. Email your screenshots and photos to: [misc@fullcirclemagazine.org](mailto:misc@fullcirclemagazine.org) and include a brief paragraph about your desktop, your PC's specs and any other interesting tidbits about your setup.

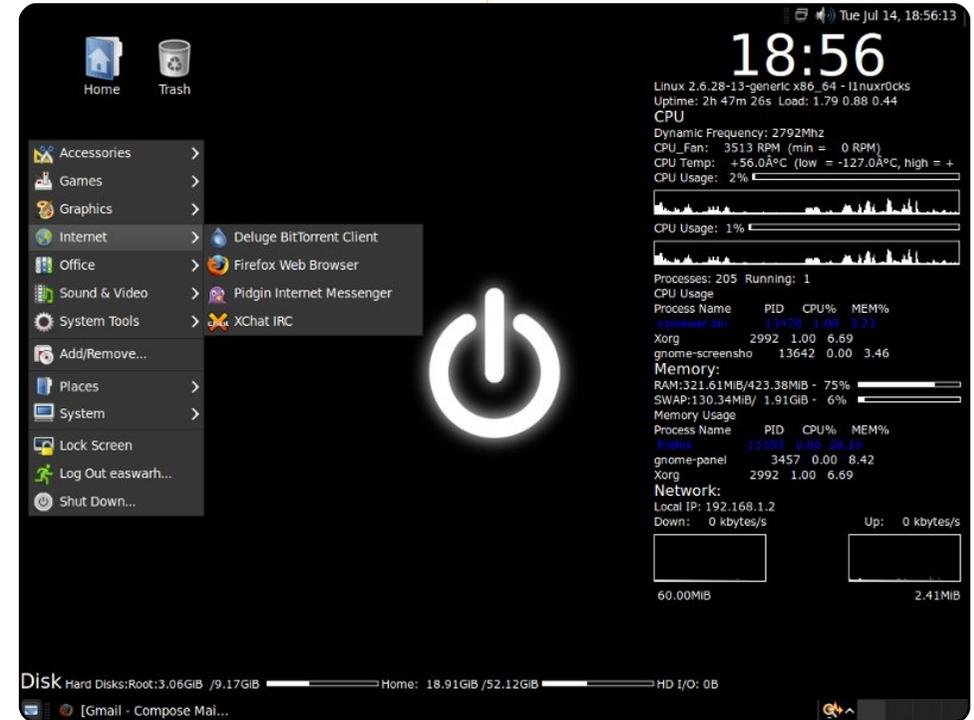


I'm running Kubuntu 9.04, with KDE 4.2.2 on my PC with a 2.8GHz CPU, 768MB of RAM, and an nVidia Geforce 6200 graphics card.

My KDE theme is Air, downloaded from svn. I downloaded the wallpaper from kde-look.org. Its name is rayair2. The picture in Picture Frame is Perfect Galaxy, made by Badjoker(Badboy). My micro-blogging software is Choqok, and I write my blog posts with Bilbo Blogger. Also, I'm using StarCalendar for viewing Jalali calendar. I use Amarok to play music, and SMPlayer or Kaffeine to play video files. I love Kubuntu and KDE very much.

I should say I am 15 and I'm from Saqqez in Kurdistan, Iran.

**Ahmad Sufi Mahmudi**



This is my Ubuntu 9.04 Jaunty desktop on a computer with Intel Pentium D 2.80 GHz dual core processor, 512MB DDR1 RAM, and Intel D101GGc motherboard with ATi Radeon Xpress 200 integrated graphics. This uses the Dark Clearlooks theme (can't seem to find it now) + Ubuntu Studio icons I received from an install of Epidermis (now purged). The system monitors are conky. My .conkyrc for both the main and the Disk display are attached. Both panels have been rendered transparent from the background tab of their Properties. The wallpaper was downloaded from 4scrape. The most interesting modification is the use of the Menu invoked with Alt+F1 without having it in either of the panels, a la Openbox or Fluxbox. :) I am an undergraduate engineering student at the University of Bombay, and I send my greetings to all from here in India.

**Easwar**





I run Kubuntu 9.04 with KDE 4.3 on my Dell vostro 1500 laptop. It has an intel core 2 duo (2.5GHz) with 4GB of RAM and a 250GB Hard disk. I use the air plasma theme with widgets: analog clock, rssnow, picture frame, daisy, searchmoid, opendesktop, weather forecast, ktorrent, and note plasma. There are 3 panels in this view. The one on the left looks like a sidebar. It's about 120 pixels wide and holds my widgets.

## Roozbeh Shafiee



This is my awesome Ubuntu 9.04. I installed it in April from the free CD I requested. I found that it is like the previous version, but has better networking. To give it some eye-candy, I headed to some websites, where I found some cool tricks. After applying these, my previously boring Ubuntu now looks stunning. Currently, this machine dual boots with Windows 7, but I seldom use Windows, since Ubuntu fulfils all my requirements.

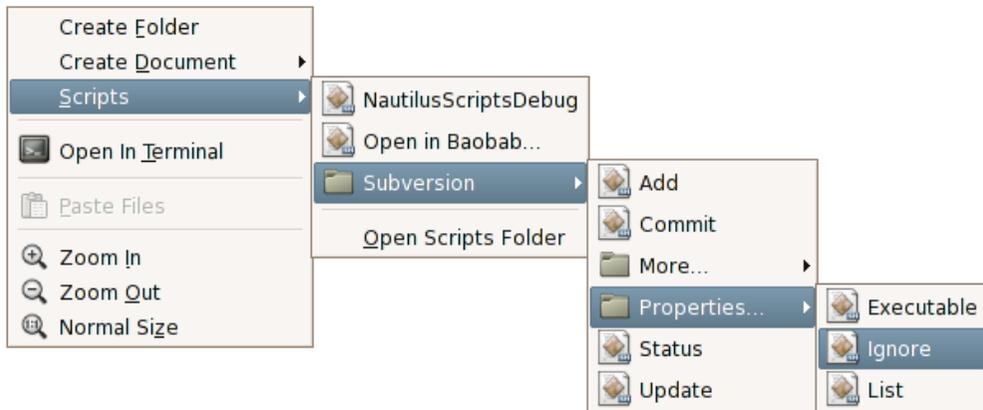
Presently, Ubuntu is running on my HP530 with an Intel core 2 duo processor T5200 @ 1.60GHz, 1GB RAM, and Intel GMA 950 integrated graphics.

I am using Avant Window Navigator for creating the dock, Screenlets for my new-looking trash, Azeins Icon package, and home-brew nfs wallpaper.

## Akash Goswami

## Nautilus Subversion Management Scripts

[http://marius.scurtescu.com/2005/08/24/nautilus\\_scripts\\_for\\_subversion](http://marius.scurtescu.com/2005/08/24/nautilus_scripts_for_subversion)



If all you need is some simple scripts, Nautilus Subversion Management Scripts is a great tool. It's not a fancy standalone client; it's just a plugin for the Gnome file manager. Once you install it, just right click on a file or folder, and you can then perform standard Subversion actions. Supported features include committing, adding, checking out, diffing, renaming, changing properties, and much more. If you don't need a full-fledged SVN program, Nautilus Subversion Management Scripts is perfect.

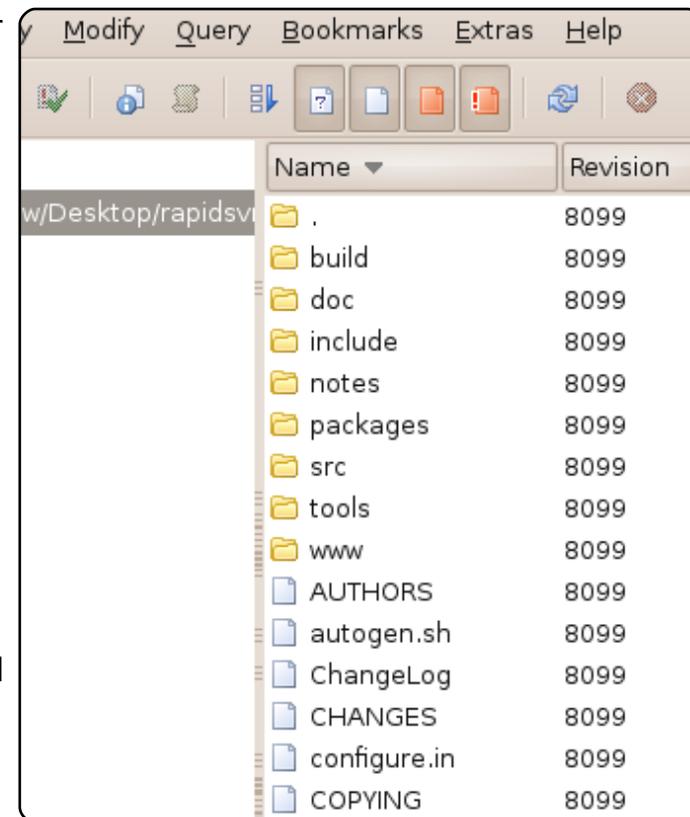
To install the script, use the ``nautilus-script-collection-svn`` package in the ``universe`` repository.

## RapidSVN

<http://rapidsvn.tigris.org/>

If you'd much prefer a standalone client, RapidSVN is a great alternative. It's a wxWidgets-based client that supports all the standard features, such as importing, exporting, checking out, updating, committing, adding, deleting, and moving. It also supports a few extra features, such as bookmarking and cleanup. Its biggest strength, though, is its simplicity: it's dead easy to use, yet still powerful enough to get the job done. And because it's wxWidgets-based, you get a consistent feel across desktop environments and operating systems.

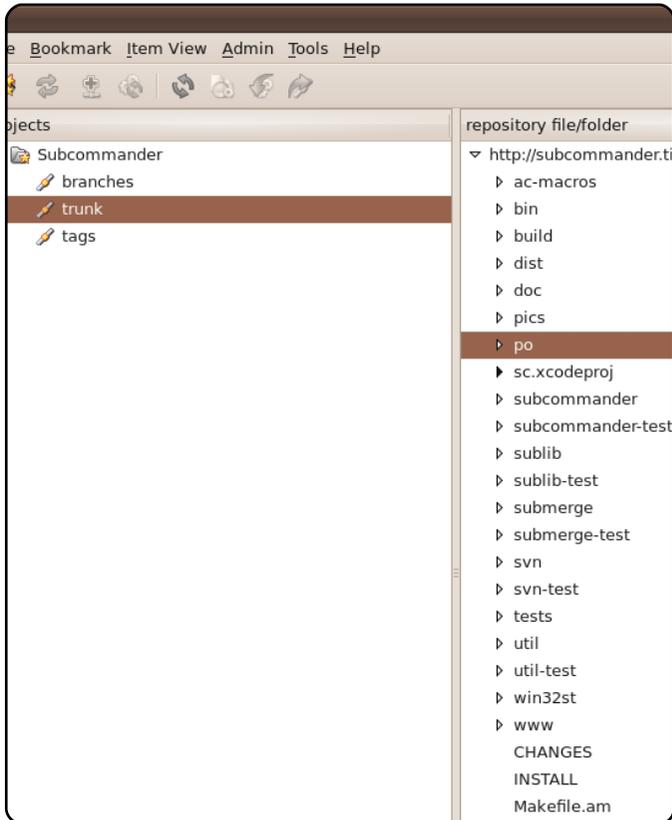
To install RapidSVN, use the ``rapidsvn`` package in the ``universe`` repository.



## Subcommander

<http://subcommander.tigris.org/>

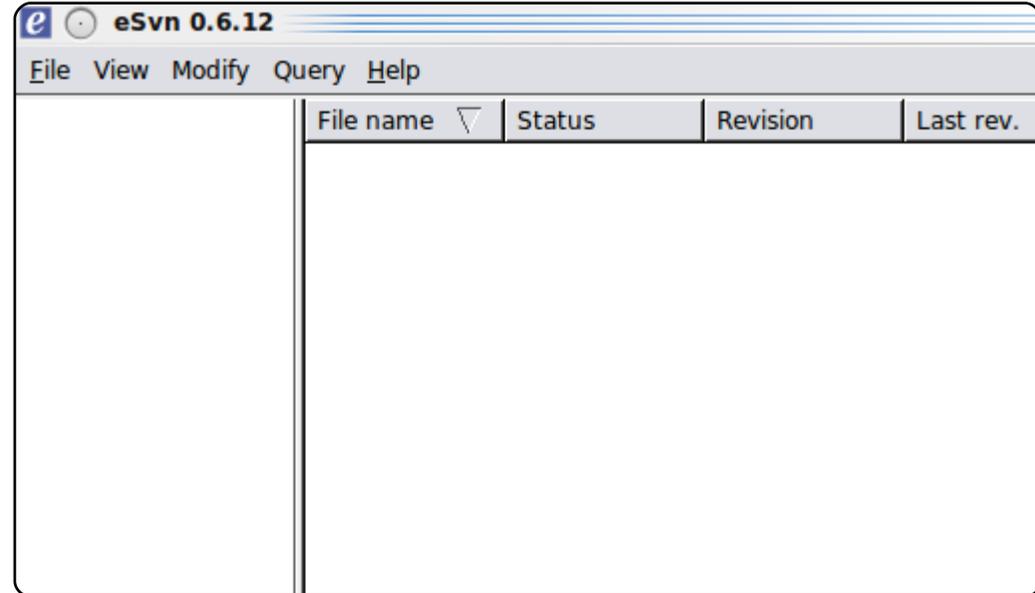
If, for whatever reason, you don't like RapidSVN, Subcommander is a great alternative. Like RapidSVN, it looks great across platforms, despite being Qt-based. It also supports the normal blame, checkout, diff, merge, mkdir, import, and export features that the rest of the programs have. It also has really customizable bookmarks, logging, advanced diff options, and much more, all in a really clean and easy-to-use environment.



To install Subcommander, use the ``subcommander`` package in the ``universe`` repositories.

## eSVN

<http://zoneit.free.fr/esvn/>

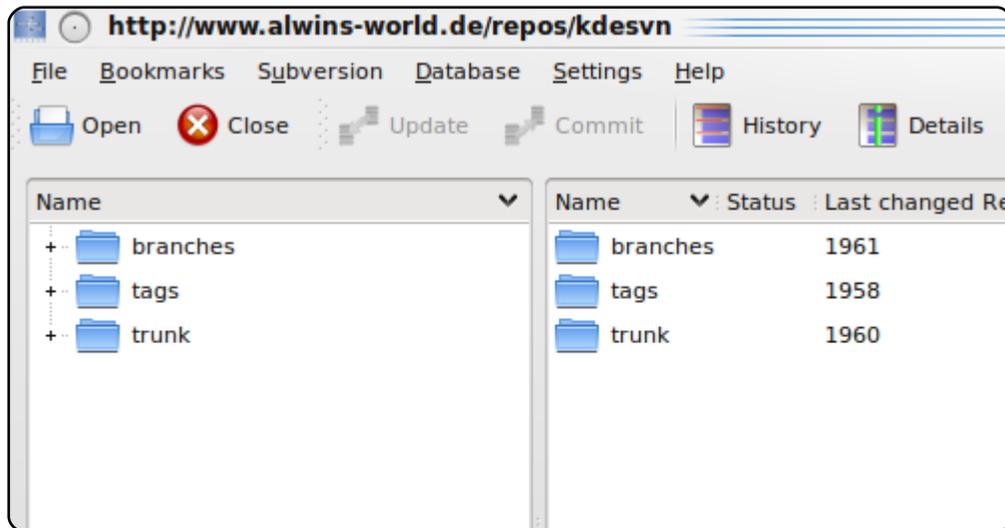


If you need a powerful SVN, look into eSVN. It doesn't have the prettiest GUI in the world, but it has a lot of customizable options, including a flat view, customizable refreshing options, advanced showing/hiding options, and some nice diff and cat features.

To install eSVN, use the ``esvn`` package in the ``universe`` repositories.

## KDEsvn

<http://kdesvn.alwins-world.de/>



If you're a KDE addict who likes everything integrated, check out KDEsvn. Based on RapidSVN code, KDEsvn supports all the standard SVN features (update, commit, blame, add, delete, merge, checkout, and import), but (as with most KDE apps), its strength is in customizability. Additionally, KDEsvn supports great integration with other KDE apps, including support for kio.

To install KDEsvn, use the ``kdesvn`` package in the ``universe`` repositories.



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