

Pulling the Shades on Windows

Technofreak - Speak!

by Rob Harle



Around seventy percent of all computer owners (globally) use Microsoft Windows as their operating system. The operating system is the software that enables you (the human) to communicate in your own language (English) with the computer in its own language (machine code).

Once you commit yourself to an operating system you are automatically locked into using software applications such as word processors, games and accounting programs that will function within that OS.

The average computer user has three choices of OS: Microsoft Windows, Macintosh or Linux. Macintosh OS only works on Macintosh hardware, which is well made, though fairly expensive. Macs have a smallish group of dedicated devotees and until recently, were superior in graphic and sound handling capabilities. Annoyingly there are still limitations with software, such as Google Earth being unavailable at present.

Windows OS works on all sorts of hardware under different brand names, has quirky bugs – that's why Microsoft keeps releasing patches and updates. It's cheap, does the job basically and is an example of "perfect marketing". Because it is the most popular OS it is the constant target of most malicious computer hackers.

Linux was spawned in 1991 by Linus Torvalds who wanted to create an OS that was similar to Unix but easy to use by average computer users and would be freely available under the GNU project. Freely available not only means you do not have to pay for Linux but also that the source code is available to all and sundry to use or customise (within limits). Under the Public Licensing system a company cannot charge for the source of any applications but may charge for "the physical act of transferring a copy" and for warranty or support.

To be quite objective, the early releases of Linux required a considerable degree of computer literacy and enthusiasm to get them up and running. Also there were limited software applications available. Now it is a different matter all together!

New Hat

Linux Red Hat (Version 9) is as easy to install and use as Windows, has free software available, at least equal to that available for Windows and is superior to both Mac and Windows in networking capabilities. Further it is has virtually no problems with viruses or hacking, and will run on all sorts of systems from slow old clunkers to the latest super-power machines.

Where do you get it? I originally borrowed a Red Hat User Manual from the public library with the CDs included. After reading the installation instructions carefully it took thirty minutes to get it installed and connected to the Internet.

You may download various Linux releases from the net, all are slightly different in name, appearance and capabilities and sometimes there is a small charge as mentioned above. I think first-time users will be rewarded by trying Red Hat (9) to start with. Also I suggest not to remove Windows until you become familiar with using Linux. In most cases it is possible to have both operating systems on the one computer and even exchange files between the two.

Another important consideration in your decision to use Red Hat is that its distributor provides backup support, very important if you have a business and your computers must never crash.

I'm introducing this concept of Open Source Software not only because it will save you perhaps thousands of dollars but because the principle behind open source is a sustainable one. It brings out the best qualities in people because they feel they are sharing something of value and because they are beating corporations that make obscene amounts of profit not commensurate with the investment and research they put into their products.

As an example, how can Open Office software (word processor, spreadsheet etc.) be absolutely free and Microsoft Office cost approximately \$500? Both are approximately equal in their capabilities.

Enthusiastic volunteers who love computers and programming, either as individuals or as part of an open source community group have produced these applications and, like Linus Torvalds, made them freely available to the world. This incredible concept with its practical outcomes is an example of how things could work on this planet if the only motivation for existence ceased to be the dollar.

After all, there are no pockets in a shroud!

Podcasting Nimbin to the World

by Warwick Fry

Podcasting is here to stay. Since 2NimFM launched its first Podcasts in June this year nearly 500 radio programs were downloaded in just over a month. This was an impressive start, and the numbers steadily climbed, but we were most impressed when, in the single week before Christmas, 1000 downloads were registered.

It brought the total up to over 7000 programs downloaded in the six months since podcasting started, including a break of two months when the studio had computer problems.

The growth, and increased popularity of podcasting, and a steady accrual of regular listeners partially explains this. But mainly, it seems that the world is hungry for the kind of radio produced by 2NimFM. A combination of critical commentary and raw, quirky, radical radio, with homegrown musicians and artists is reaching an audience who are turning their backs on commercial media.

Cross linking to web sites dedicated to community and alternative radio sound files (like the A-Infos Radio4All web site) proves that programs like the Hemp Show (Fridays 12 – 2) has a regular following in the US, consistently registering 50 downloads each week for every show.

Martin Jansen's ScanDotOrg – a potpourri of political satire, sound mixes, and commentary, sometimes scores over 100 downloads, and is rebroadcast over community radio networks in the US and the UK.

The 2NimFM interviews are always popular. The exclusive interview with David Suzuki last July set a benchmark for 2NimFM podcasts, and Marie Cameron's interviews with Anti-Nuclear activist, Gareth Smith, and anti-war activist Ciarinn O'Reilly were all heavily downloaded and widely distributed over the international community radio networks.

These were the podcasts that established 2NimFM as an international player. And it was discovered, when the Ecotone program was posted for the first time recently, environmental themes strike a chord that resonates strongly with the new audiences.

Broadband

Getting a broadband Internet link for 2NimFM in late October has streamlined the process of podcasting and researching noticeably.

Presenters are now able to find the most recent material for their programs quickly and

painlessly, and podcasts can be easily loaded up and published before content based on current issues becomes stale.

This, as well as the growing experience and expertise of the 2NimFM presenters might explain the surge in downloads over the last month.

Even more exciting than the nameless hundreds downloading the 2NimFM sound files, is the feedback from other community media workers from around the world. The spin off from this kind of radio is the sharing and exchange of radio productions, and networking with producers from other community radio stations around the world.

Scooter, from the community radio station in Houston, Texas. (Radio4Houston) wrote to say that they were using Martin Jansen's ScanDotOrg satirical mixes on their radio network, and asked if 2NimFM was willing to do a station-to-station Internet voice interview as part of a Community Radio talkback program initiated by Radio4Houston.

Martin has already gone to air with them via a normal phone link, and the interview can be heard on their website <http://radio4houston.org/>.

2NimFM has also been approached by Alex Smith from Radio Ecoshock (www.ecoshock.org) from Canada and Radio Squat-FM (<http://squatfm.riseup.net/>) to use NimFM material from the Ecotone show and other programs with an environmental message, and have made an open offer to share their material.

Ecoshock particularly wants a regular feed from Australia of environmental news stories, and is keen to rebroadcast environmentally oriented programs from 2NimFM on a regular basis.

These are exciting developments. The true radical potential of podcasting is best realised through constructive networking. In these times, with cross-media ownership laws being battered into irrelevancy, independent journalism reduced to a handful of stayers, with the rest becoming mouthpieces for corporate propaganda and government disinformation and legalised intimidation, it is more important than ever for alternative media and community based radio stations and newspapers to grasp the nettle and present fresh alternatives. In fact, it is essential.

2NimFM is proud to stand up and be counted. The Nimbin radio podcast site can be found at <http://nimbinradiomedia.libsyn.com>

Nimbin's 39 Hours counts down!



Nimbin's 39 Hours Short Film Competition and Festival, to be held over the Australia Day Weekend is only 3 weeks away!

Due to judging and time constraints there is a limit to the number of teams that may enter, so if you haven't done so already, pick up your entry forms from the Nimbin CTC Visitors Centre or download them from the website www.nimbinfilmindustry.org and get them in! Entries will be accepted on

a "first in best dressed" principle.

There are three categories: Documentary, Drama/Comedy and Goori (Indigenous Australian). Each category has a youth (under 18) and adult section.

Over the weekend there will be editing suites for hire at the Nimbin CTC for \$10 per hour, on the Saturday (10am till 10pm) and Sunday morning (7am till 9am) of the competition weekend. There are 2 Adobe premiere suites and 5

Sony Movie Studio equipped suites available at the Nimbin CTC. Please book ahead to avoid disappointment. Bookings can be made at the Nimbin CTC Visitor Centre.

Remember the deadline for completed entries is 10am Sunday 27th January, so don't leave it to the last minute. Planning your shots well and editing-in-camera will save you time. This is a short film competition and any film less than 8 minutes long (including credits) will be eligible.

Workshops

Camera

Paul Tait from award winning Gaia Films will run a half day 'digital video camera' workshop on Sat 14th Jan from 9am-1pm at the Nimbin CTC learning centre. His workshop covers basic camera operation and editing in-camera. This workshop limited of 15 people and will fill fast. For bookings phone the Nimbin CTC visitor info centre 6689-1388. The cost is \$25 if you are waged, concession \$15.



Editing

Sony Movie Studio is a user-friendly editing program that will be available for use at the CTC. Editing workshops will be held at the Nimbin CTC on Thursday 19th and Saturday 21st January. The workshops will run for 2 hours from 10am till 12pm and cost \$10 per person.

Final Cut Pro

Paul Tait will run an editing workshop using final cut pro if there is interest. Phone the CTC on 6689-1388 if you are.

SEPTIC TANK PUMPING
GREASE TRAP CLEANING
LIQUID WASTE REMOVAL
OILY WATER PROCESSING
NIMBIN & ALL SURROUNDING AREAS
Local Since 1932
RICHMOND PUMPING
6621-7431 After Hours 0407-433-405

pool solutions
Sales, design and installation
of onsite waste management systems.
Authorized Biolytix dealer.
BIOLYTIX
Ph Stuart 66897 496
0427 897 496

Nimbin
LAWN & GARDEN
Maintenance
TOTAL SERVICE & SATISFACTION
RODNEY SMITH
0428 891 192
• Residential / commercial • Weed removal / spraying
• All general garden maintenance