

The PCLinuxOS magazine

Volume 100

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The PCLinuxOS magazine

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The PCLinuxOS Magazine is a monthly online publication containing PCLinuxOS-related materials. It is published primarily for members of the PCLinuxOS community. The magazine staff is comprised of volunteers from the PCLinuxOS community.

Visit us online at <http://www.pclosmag.com>

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Welcome From The Chief Editor

With this, our 100th issue, I find it hard to believe that I started in this position 70 issues and 70 months ago!

Since then, I have learned a LOT! I've learned a lot about Linux. I've learned a lot about PCLinuxOS. I've learned an awful lot about Scribus, which we use to layout the PDF version of this magazine. And that all just barely scratches the surface.

Along the way, I've "met" many wonderful people, from all around the world. I've seen users come and

go, and some come back again. Like with all families, I've watched the battles, and witnessed the peacemaking. I've been present for the outpouring of care, concern and love whenever one of our PCLinuxOS family members face trying times and events. I've seen members of the family shake off all formality and engage in frivolous fun, and the sharing of unyielding humor.

But, most important for me, I've been a part of the rebirth of The PCLinuxOS Magazine. When I walked away from my career as a photojournalist, I actually

thought I'd never again call my journalistic training back into use ever again. It's funny how life throws you these curves, and prepares you – unwittingly – for things you could never possibly see coming.

Through it all, I'm proud to have been able to steer The PCLinuxOS Magazine back to being a thriving publication that showcases the best distro in the Linux universe: PCLinuxOS. While my journalism background has certainly helped to lay a solid foundation, there were many aspects of performing the duties of the magazine's Chief Editor that I was unprepared for.

Over the ensuing years, "we" have tried many things. Some were hugely successful. Others ... well ... not so much. But even when we've tried things that weren't as successful, we learned from the experiences. We've made an effort (and continue to try) to apply what we have learned towards making The PCLinuxOS Magazine the best community produced Linux magazine in existence.

In the time that I've been heading up the magazine, I've had other things in my life change. I've seen the birth of my son, which I shared right here in the magazine. Fairly recently, I've even quit one job and started another one. Don't get me wrong; I have no plans of leaving this position any time soon. I plan to be around to help steer The PCLinuxOS Magazine towards its second 100 issues. The one thing that remains consistent and unwavering is my desire to continue what we've built here. After all, me and the rest of the magazine staff – past and present – have a lot invested in what we produce here every month.

So, until next month, I wish for all of you endless prosperity, serenity and happiness.

Now ... on to the next 100 issues!



Woohoo! 100 Issues ... And Counting!

by Paul Arnote (parnote)

For any monthly publication, publishing the 100th issue is a big deal. Taking into consideration that a publication is produced entirely by a group of community volunteers, it becomes an even bigger accomplishment. Thus is the case for The PCLinuxOS Magazine.

It took us 104 months to publish our 100th issue. That works out to eight years, four months. Or 452 weeks. Or 3,164 days. Or 75,936 hours. Oh ... and for what it's worth ... we don't count the 10 Special Editions we have produced in our "issue" count. Our 100th issue represents our 100th *monthly* issue.

If you're interested, you can discover the reason(s) for it taking us a little extra time to reach our 100th monthly issue by reading "[The PCLinuxOS Magazine: A Timeline](#)" article, elsewhere in this issue. We're not trying to place blame or call anyone out, but the facts are the facts. Ever since I took over the Chief Editor role of The PCLinuxOS Magazine, we've tried to make everything concerning the magazine, its staff, and its publication as transparent as possible. These reasons are no exceptions. Since I've assumed this role, we have kept nothing "secret" or "in the closet." All that you are likely to find in our closet are possibly a few dust bunnies and cobwebs in the corner. Sorry, but we don't get time to clean much; we're much too busy putting out the magazine every month!

To mark our 100th issue milestone, here are some comments from members of the PCLinuxOS community and the staff (some current, some past) of The PCLinuxOS Magazine.



From Texstar:

Wow 100 issues already? From start to finish, you, Meemaw and all of the people who have contributed articles are incredible volunteers, and because of your dedication and hard work, the PCLinuxOS Magazine is a great success. Thank you so much for your commitment of time and energy to this important project.

From ArchAngel (Archie):

It isn't everyday that we get to see The PCLinuxOS Magazine publish its 100th issue. I am deeply honored to receive an invitation from our tireless and dedicated Chief Editor Paul Arnote to write a little something. So first, I would like to tip my hat to Paul and his staff for a job well done.

You ought to agree with me when I say that what Paul and everyone who helped him did is not an easy task. Think of contents and deadlines; reasons enough to pull one's hair out! They did not waiver and month after month, they continue to give us insights, howtos, humor, and most importantly, solid evidence of what a group of PCLinuxOS users can achieve when they come together. Let's not even think of the monetary equivalent these selfless and proud group of PCLinuxOS users had sacrificed. Nope. Paul and his crew are in it for the sheer enjoyment of having something to give back as Texstar had shown to us some ten years ago.

Proofs are on our Magazine ... the ocean of knowledge we share with one another, a tsunami of useful and truly helpful articles, and more. The PCLinuxOS Magazine is more than a service to our community; it is a proud tradition laden with colorful history.

A simple congratulations won't suffice yet this milestone marks a significant achievement ... and a new beginning.

Congratulations, PCLinuxOS Magazine.

From Old-Polack (O-P):
100 issues, how time flies.

I have to congratulate Paul and staff for taking over what was already an interesting and informative, but floundering, addition to the community and turning it into a truly stellar production. This has been a labor of love for those involved, and the love is obvious to all who read each issue. It takes a great deal of effort and dedication to produce such a fine asset to the PCLinuxOS community, and I hope everyone appreciates that dedication as much as I do.

A big "Thank You," to all involved. Our lives have been enriched, and made more joyful, due to your efforts.

From daniel:

Congratulations on the 100th issue. Wow, so fast can it be! I wrote some articles, and read more as I understand. Best read was the command line story from critter. Or the articles about LXDE, and KDE4.

Let's start the next 100th issues, and maybe I'll write some new articles for the magazine.

From Galen Seaman (gseaman):

I started working on the HTML for The PCLinuxOS Magazine about a year before Paul brought it back to life. I didn't have a lot of experience, but I had some ideas on how to make the process more efficient and manageable, so I volunteered. It was very rewarding to be able to make a meaningful contribution to promoting this amazing OS.

For a while, it appeared PCLinuxOS Magazine was running out of steam and may be discontinued. This was very disheartening for me, as I was very motivated to keep contributing. When Paul and the new crew took over, it was exciting to be a part of a very professional and highly productive team. The dedication and commitment was and still is very evident.

I continued for a couple of years, but then a change in my work environment did not allow me time to keep up with the monthly releases. Rudge stepped up and took over, and did a great job. I found a way to contribute that did not have deadlines and learned to do a little packaging. Thank you to everyone that keeps this great magazine and OS going strong!

From Mark Szorady (Georgetoon):

I recall when Paul (parnote) and company put out an open invitation to help with the magazine. I jumped at the chance. Now, I don't write code or HTML and I'm not very good with terminal commands. But I can draw a cartoon or two and absolutely LOVE using GIMP. When I offered contributing a cartoon features and a column discussing GIMP user tips, I

was immediately welcomed aboard! My main goal was to contribute and give something back to the PCLinuxOS/Linux community. Paul was always patient with me. I'd get anywhere from two to three email reminders from him that my features were going to be due for the upcoming issue. The REALLY cool thing was being given a Scribus template for my page. All I needed to do was write my column, then drop in my text and cartoon art, zip it all up, and email to Paul. He would then add the page to the magazine. I LOVED the process! Not only did it give me a bit of editorial control over how my page would look, it lightened the load for Paul and others in assembling the magazine. Plus, I learned a bit more on how to use Scribus. Funny how that works ... I volunteered to give something back to the Linux community and wound up learning some new skills.

From Rudge:

I will never forget my experiences as part of the magazine staff.

One thing that caught me "off guard" was the sheer amount of time and effort that goes into it.

When I first volunteered, I was thinking, "OK, an hour or two each month, no big deal." Boy, was I wrong.

I've been there, done that and my hat is off to them.

The people that put that magazine together spend a considerable amount of their free time doing it, and deserve way more than a "thank you" or a "pat on the back."

"Passion" is the only thing I can think of that would drive a person to continue that kind of work.

From YouCanToo (Mr. Cranky Pants):

How quickly time has gone by since Issue #1 back in Sept 1, 2006. It has been very popular, since the

beginning. I was disappointed when in January 2009 they announced the magazine would only be published quarterly. I remember Archie announcing in the July 2009 edition, "I take great pleasure, as this month's interim chief editor, to introduce to you to PCLinuxOS Magazine's new Chief Editor, Paul Arnote (aka parnote)." Once again, the magazine grew in size and popularity.

The November 2011 issue was a sad time for many PCLinuxOS users when we found out that Joe Gable, better known to us forum members as Joble, had been murdered by his estranged wife. Joble is still missed by those who knew him.

In the February 2013, the magazine saw some layout changes in the HTML, in an attempt to streamline the production of the HTML version. That same month, I started hosting the magazine's website, and also took over the HTML layout from Rudge. The magazine once again grew in May 2012, with the addition of the eBook version. It is published both in EPUB and MOBI formats.

The magazine has managed to grow, despite having such a small staff of members. The magazine is something that each and every one of us as PCLinuxOS members can be proud of. Yes, we are indeed a big family, spread across the Globe. Bound by a common interest - that is PCLinuxOS.

Please, help the magazine to continue to grow and bring enjoyment for many more issues to come! Got an idea for an article? Even if you can't write it yourself. Let the magazine staff know and we'll help you out.

From smileeb:

First: The OS. Second: The forum and members. Third: The magazine.

First: When I put my first version of PCLinuxOS on it was during their baby step start. It went on like a

fresh coat of paint, no skips, no drips and as smooth as glass.

I was so interested in Linux, I even paid for a couple of versions. But, being a novice and a complete dummy in how Linux works, I had major problems. I was almost ready to stay with Windows. Then I tried a few of those other free OSs and started to have a little luck.

PCLinuxOS 98 was the winner. I removed the version of Linux I was running and installed PCLinuxOS. It ran so much better, easier and the updates never caused a problem.

Second: When it comes to a forum and members, you can't beat the PCLinuxOS family. It is a family in every sense of the word, and I think every member wished their family could get along and be as talented as this one.

The fields of talent that the members of this forum have blows my mind when one of them steps forward with their aid and help. This forum is so friendly and helpful with solving problems. On other forums I belonged to, you either got no answer or were told almost to get lost. The LUGOR group I belong to here has a bad attitude. They are mostly IT people and don't seem to have time for newbies. When they have an install fest, they only want to install a particular version. They get mad at me when I'm able to install a version of PCLinuxOS on a machine that they could not install their version on. My foster father and a teacher once said to me you never talk over the heads of the people you are talking to. You do not want them sitting there and wonder what you said. This forum has a great example of a person who never speaks over your head and leaves you wondering. OP gives the best directions, and I think there should a PDF available with all his fabulous tips and solutions.

Third: The monthly publication done by people who are miles apart is another great feat by members of the forum and showing their talent. This publication

is a manual on how to run PCLinuxOS and use its many applications. The only part I feel bad about is they allowed me to be a helper and bring members info to the magazine, and I'm not getting any responses. Unfortunately, many of my PMs do not get answered.

From Pete Kelly (critter):

The day that I started to write my first article for the PCLinuxOS Magazine was also the first time that I had ever written anything intended for publication. The very idea that what I was putting down in writing would be read by who knows how many strangers was unnerving. Would these people think that I was an idiot? Would they laugh and criticise my poorly written efforts? After all some of the intended audience are very accomplished Linux users. Would I be good enough? Would it even be accepted for publication? I'm no journalist.

My concerns were unwarranted. The editing team of the magazine are a friendly lot who know how to tidy up and correct a text so that it reads as intended, and is suitable for publishing in what is a community magazine designed to be helpful and informative. Seeing your work in print is nice, and makes your creative efforts seem acceptable and appreciated.

Once I got started writing, I got a lot of personal satisfaction from what I produced. Not wanting to mislead people, I did a lot of reading to ensure that I did in fact understand the subject about which I was writing. I learned a lot along the way, much more than I would have learned in the normal course of events simply using the tools and applications that go into making the Linux operating system so flexible and comprehensive.

There are many thousands of programs written for the Linux system, many of them written by very clever and often professional programmers. A good programmer is, though not necessarily, a good documentation writer. Often a few pages written by somebody with a different perspective can help to

demystify the comprehensive but often baffling documentation supplied by the programmer. The programmer obviously understands his program and so cannot see why it is not obvious to others.

You may have used a program, but had to go through a learning curve to get it to do what you wanted. If you have studied the supplied documentation, searched the internet for examples and then repeatedly tried and modified them until you understood what you were doing, then why not write it up and submit it to the magazine in order that it may help others?

Open source software is given freely so that others may benefit. It is this free interchange that has helped to build Linux and to shape it into what it is today. It is not only the programs that form the Linux community, but also a general attitude of sharing ideas and information and of helping others to achieve their aims is what binds the whole system together.

Whatever your level of experience, you can share that experience with others and learn as you go. No one will laugh or criticise, I promise, and you will get a sense of satisfaction from doing so and, as a bonus, you will also have a permanent, personal account of how you achieved things.

From Rodney Adkins:

I had a pleasant surprise in my email inbox last night: it was an email from the Chief Editor of PCLinuxOS Magazine, Paul Arnote [parnote]. That email was an invitation to write an article for the magazine as it celebrates its one hundredth issue publication.

So with an invitation to write about the magazine, let me take you back to the very beginning of the project and my part in getting the HTML edition up and running.

It all started with someone suggesting the idea of a magazine on the forum. It did not take long for a few of us, DevNet, Archie, ClareOldie, Tim Robinson, Exwintech, and myself, Duf (with others I cannot remember) starting a group to bring the idea to life.

There was a system set up where documents that were submitted to the magazine went to the Chief Editor Archie. He in turn sent them to proof readers, and they in turn sent them on to others such as the people named above. They in turn would send them back to Archie, who would then turn the articles into a PDF magazine.

We were all excited about our first publication deadline. I do remember that my email inbox was very busy the month leading up to the first publication. Ideas on how the magazine was to look and feel were continually being discussed. It was a real community effort and I was thrilled to be apart of it.

Our deadline for the publication was a Monday in September 2006. The Friday before the deadline, someone proposed an HTML edition to go along with the PDF version. In the discussion on this issue, I volunteered to do the coding of the HTML edition and be responsible to getting it up on the net. I was told not to worry about getting it up and running for Monday morning launch, but it became important for me to have it live at the same time the PDF version was ready for download.

It was just after three o'clock in the afternoon Friday that I sat down at the computer and started to work on the HTML version of the project. My first priority was to have the HTML version live at the same time the PDF version was launched. My next concern was that I had to keep the site basic and easy to code. I did this because I had a serious health issue and did not know how long I could dedicate time to the project. The last thing I wanted was for me to leave and the HTML version close because the project could not find someone to code the articles.

My plan was simple, build a template for the site and make it as simple as possible. I knew what the PDF was going to look like, so I started on the templates for the HTML version. In those first days I used gedit to code HTML and CSS alongside Firefox to check the results. I worked through the night and all day Saturday. I did not stop until one a.m. Sunday morning. By that time I was quite pleased. I had the design and templates done and using the KISS principle, (keep it simple stupid) I was ready to start coding all the articles.

I was back at my computer early Sunday morning and started the process of adding HTML code to the articles. The deadline was fast approaching. As stated. I wanted the site live by midnight to make the Monday schedule but missed it by nearly an hour.

As I uploaded the site to the server, I had a great feeling of satisfaction. I checked the site to make sure it was working in different browsers and then retired for the night.

The first thing I did the next morning was check the forum to see if the magazine had launched. It had and the feedback was positive from the PCLinuxOS community.

I worked along side a group of very dedicated people on the magazine for months. Sometime after the launch of the 2007 PCLinuxOS operating system, I had to quit the project because of health issues. Thankfully keeping it simple worked and the guys took over coding the article and eventually found someone else to take care of the HTML version.

Those that I worked with – ClareOldie, Exwintech, Archie, and Tim – became internet friends. Some of those friendships are still going. Sadly, others that gave time and expertise are no longer with us. Some have moved on to other places. To the small group that started the project, (I believe PCLinuxOS was one of the first Linux distro to publish a magazine) and especially to those that now carry on the project,

I salute your dedication and congratulate you on achieving the publication of your 100th issue!

Rodney Adkins
<http://radkinsphoto.ca/>

From Meemaw:

I joined the magazine staff in 2007 as a proofreader. Tim Robinson posted a request for staff members on the forum, and I remember thinking, "I'm not too bad at proofreading - I could probably do that." I PM'd him immediately with my request to be added to the magazine staff, and started proofreading articles. I thought that correcting grammar and spelling was probably all I could do, since most of the articles were pretty technical, and I was just starting to learn about Linux.

I was sad when Tim resigned as Chief Editor in August 2007, but his medical problems forced him to give it up. I was equally sad when Papawoob resigned in August of 2008 for personal reasons. They were both very good Chief Editors. Doug Wilson (historyb) took over in September of 2008 and left in May of 2009. During this time, we saw some upheaval at PCLinuxOS and in the magazine. I won't spend any time describing those happenings because it is now "water under the bridge," but I will say that PCLinuxOS and the magazine survived the upheaval and came back stronger than ever. Archie resumed the job of Chief Editor, but made it clear to all that he was only temporary until he could find someone to take over as a permanent Chief Editor. We are very lucky that parnote took the responsibility, as he is also an excellent Chief Editor.

During that time, my work schedule became very busy, so I decided to take a few months off, but came back in September 2009, again as a proofreader. I had written a couple of things earlier, but in October, however, I wrote an article on scanners because of a problem one of my forum friends had voiced. Parnote soon asked me to do some articles on programs that I use all the time.

From there, I have written some sort of article nearly every month!

Eventually, I also started to lay out part of the articles that are combined every month into the finished PDF. I really enjoy it!

Near the end of 2010, Stricktoo (the Assistant Editor) notified parnote that he had gotten extremely busy with law school and had to give up the magazine

staff. At that point, parnote appointed me as an Assistant Editor along with Stricktoo, and in October of 2011, he removed Stricktoo from the staff (due to his inactivity with the magazine), and I have been the sole Assistant Editor ever since.

I enjoy writing for the magazine, and hope the readers enjoy my articles. I think every writer is worried about how their articles will be received. Since I came back to the magazine staff in 2009, I



have done several article series, including LibreOffice, Scribus, financial (checkbook) programs, photo viewers/editors and tutorials on Inkscape and GIMP. I also construct the puzzles every month (so if you find a mistake, please PM me and let me know).

I know it sounds like I do a lot, but parnote does even more! He writes more articles than anyone else does, and is instrumental in ensuring that the magazine production schedule runs smoothly, from the cover to the finished product and its posting to the magazine site. Between the two of us, we have constructed nearly all of the Special Editions (starting with the KDE 4 SC Special Edition in the Fall of 2010), as well as every monthly issue since September, 2009.

I just want to wish the magazine and staff, Happy One Hundredth Issue! May we enjoy one hundred more!

From Paul Arnote (parnote)

I remember it ALL very well. I remember all the discussions we had regarding the future of The PCLinuxOS Magazine in May and June of 2009. Archie had retaken the helm in an effort to revitalize the magazine after a tumultuous incident with the May 2009 issue, that paralleled some turmoil involving PCLinuxOS while Texstar was on a medical leave from his duties as the head of PCLinuxOS.

I had some journalism experience (I graduated from the University of Kansas with a minor in photojournalism, and worked for a number of traditional media outlets as a newspaper photographer). I had also written a couple of articles for The PCLinuxOS Magazine. So, when they were looking for a new Chief Editor, I tossed my name in the hat.

Originally, upon my selection to the top post of the magazine, Archie stated that it might only be for a

year or two, or longer if I wanted. How little did I realize at that time that I'd still be the magazine's Chief Editor nearly six years later! (It'll "officially" be six years with the July 2015 issue).

During that time, I have written over a few hundred articles for The PCLinuxOS Magazine. I actually

tried to count them up at one time and keep a running tally, but that endeavor fell by the wayside, as I focused more on each upcoming issue of the magazine. I also realized – as I'm writing this article – that I was announced as the magazine's Chief Editor in Issue 30. Now, here we are, 70 monthly issues later, celebrating the 100th issue of The

Screenshot Showcase



Posted by Crow, on April 8, 2015, running Trinity.

PCLinuxOS magazine. In other words, I'm responsible for 70 percent of the issues! That's just mind boggling!

I love writing for the magazine, and I also love leading The PCLinuxOS Magazine. When I write my articles, I try to make them fun when I can, and I also try to make them a definitive reference resource. If you think I can remember all of the topics I've written about, you would be sorely mistaken. Instead, I'm frequently going back and looking up old articles I've written, using them as I intended them to be used when I wrote them – as a reference resource. I also try to make them as easy to follow along as possible, so experienced users and new Linux users alike can benefit from them.

While our target audience is PCLinuxOS users, I'm also acutely aware that The PCLinuxOS Magazine is read by users of other Linux distros. Across several Linux forums, I see regular mention being made of the articles we run in our magazine. I see regular mention that users of other Linux distros regularly read The PCLinuxOS Magazine. Much of the information we include in our articles applies not only to PCLinuxOS, but to many different Linux distros. We just put a PCLinuxOS spin on it. After all, it's still all Linux.

I'm also ever cognizant that The PCLinuxOS Magazine doesn't belong to any one person. Rather, the magazine belongs to the PCLinuxOS community. This is THEIR magazine, and it has only been entrusted to my stewardship to nurture it, protect it, and help it grow. It is my continuing goal to honor the trust that's been afforded me.

Summary

Many, many people have contributed over the years to make The PCLinuxOS Magazine the success that it is today. Some of those people, unfortunately, are no longer with us in this world. Joble, exwintech, N1PTT, MikeH were either strong supporters of the

magazine or contributors to the magazine. It would be impossible to thank everyone individually, so I'd like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has helped to make The PCLinuxOS Magazine what it is today. We also hope that we have not left anyone out, and if we have, you have our sincerest of apologies.

The PCLinuxOS Magazine is unique. Our magazine is the first community magazine for any specific Linux distro, and definitely the one that has been published continually for the longest amount of time. The PCLinuxOS Magazine is an asset to the PCLinuxOS community, and characterizes how normal users come together to help their fellow users. I also believe that the magazine helps to bind us together as a community and family.

Over the years, we hope that we have met our goal of trying to include something for everyone in each and every issue of the magazine that we publish. We also hope that we will continue to do exactly that as we march towards the next 100 issues.



A magazine just isn't a magazine without articles to fill the pages.

If you have article ideas, or if you would like to contribute articles to the PCLinuxOS Magazine, send an email to:

pclinuxos.mag@gmail.com

We are interested in general articles about Linux, and (of course), articles specific to PCLinuxOS.

International Community PCLinuxOS Sites



The PCLinuxOS Magazine: A Timeline

by Paul Arnote (parnote)

Let's take a look at the history of The PCLinuxOS Magazine.

Hello PCLinuxOS users and friends,

It is with great pride, especially for me, to be part of a worthwhile project for an enthusiastic community serving an outstanding Linux distro, PCLinuxOS. The magazine project is another good example of how we can "give something back" to the developers and the whole community.

Do we really need another online magazine in this ever-so-bloated information library? What would be in the magazine? Who would be doing it? And most important, who is it for? These were the very first questions that came to my mind when I took up this post. My only answer is PCLinuxOS.

The contents of the magazine will be mainly contributions from community members. PCLOS users, like you or me, can participate in the project. It will, as Canonical likes to say, always be free of charge to the community and the digital universe.

Look around you. Aren't we among, if not the first Linux community to publish our own online magazine? This feat alone makes me very proud, and I hope you will be too.

In our milestone issue, we have put together the first collection of material from our users. It was going to be a simple layout; and it still is; and it was to be minimal yet we believe we have exceeded the expectations with our community's accomplishments in this project.

Finally, a request. Let us all work together, in whatever small ways we can, to make PCLinuxOS the best Linux distribution.

Peace to the world,

Archie

And that is how it all started with the editor's column in the September 2006 issue of The PCLinuxOS Magazine. The forum discussions about the earliest

origins and formation of the magazine from MyPCLinuxOS are long gone, lost to time in the digital ethernet. Even archive.org's WayBack Machine comes up empty. Most of the people who helped start the magazine have moved on. Those among us who were involved aren't retelling the story, either.

PCLinuxOS MAGAZINE
Issue 1 • September, 2006 • <http://www.pclinuxos.com>

INTERVIEW
TUXMACHINES' SUSAN LINTON

WINDOWS VISTA RANT
STAN WHALLEY

TEN REASONS TO TRY PCLOS
TIM ROBINSON

INSIDE
ELITISM
Are the forums truly new users friendly?

jaydot's
ode to texstar

ClareOldie's
Run Live from HDD

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The PCLinuxOS Magazine: A Timeline

For those “newer” users around here, MyPCLinuxOS was a forum site where PCLinuxOS community members could go to participate in a variety of special projects, learn to package, and discuss other advanced topics that (at the time) really didn't fit anywhere in the main forum. It was later made part of the main PCLinuxOS forum when a packaging board and advanced user's area were added.



Tim Robinson

Archie remained the Chief Editor of The PCLinuxOS Magazine for the September 2006 and October 2006 issues, before handing over the reins to Tim Robinson with the November, 2006 issue. Starting



John Paxton, a.k.a. Papawoob

with the September 2007 issue, the magazine saw its first “changing of the guard” when Tim stepped down as the Chief Editor due to health reasons, and John Paxton – a.k.a. Papawoob – took over as the magazine's Chief Editor.

The magazine saw its third Chief Editor in September 2008 when Papawoob had to step down from the position for personal reasons. The reins were then picked up by Doug Wilson, a.k.a. historyb. Between September 2008 and June 2009, things didn't go so well for the magazine. In that time, Doug only managed to publish four issues of The PCLinuxOS Magazine. This was also at a time of some turmoil for PCLinuxOS (which some term a mutiny, and others term a failed coup de tat), when some packagers left PCLinuxOS to create their own distro (which has since folded). Doug claimed there wasn't enough to write about for a monthly magazine, and had attempted to make the magazine a bimonthly publication. But even then, he couldn't publish the magazine on schedule. Finally, Doug tried to “kill off” the magazine after a disagreement with Texstar, by withholding the “keys” to the magazine's website and unilaterally declaring the magazine dead. He then aligned himself with those who had defected from PCLinuxOS to start their failed distro.

Once again, Archie stepped into the spotlight to help insure that the magazine project would not die. The PCLinuxOS Magazine was “reborn” in July 2009, with Archie once again sitting in the Chief Editor's seat. In that July 2009 issue, Archie announced me as the magazine's Chief Editor. It is a position that I've held ever since. Almost immediately, I announced Andrew Strick (stricktoo) as the assistant editor of the magazine.

Meemaw rejoined the magazine staff after a brief time away from the magazine, with the September 2009 issue. Soon, Andrew's time and life were consumed by law school, so Meemaw was announced as a second assistant editor in August

2010. Eventually, due to a lack of available time, Andrew had to give up his magazine role.

Back in those early days of the magazine's rebirth, we had a separate forum just for the magazine. That, too, has been shut down and all discussion about the magazine has been brought into the main PCLinuxOS forum. It makes perfect sense, so that PCLinuxOS users have only one place to visit to discuss the magazine. In hindsight, it probably should have been that way all along (but then, hindsight is always 20/20).

Since the time I took over at the helm of the magazine, we've managed not only to produce the magazine on a monthly publication schedule – every month, but we've also created 10 special editions of the magazine to help serve as additional reference resources for the PCLinuxOS community. During that time, we've seen the addition of several regular monthly columns. The current ones are ms_meme's Nook, Screenshot Showcase, Meemaw's monthly graphics tutorials, a Game Zone column, YouCanToo's PCLinuxOS Recipe, PCLinuxOS Puzzled Partitions, and smileeb's PCLinuxOS Family Member Spotlight. We also launched a new regular column last month, called Tip Top Tips.

Others, like the Wiki Wicket, Repo Spotlight, Mark's Gimp Tip & Double Take, ms_meme's Forum Foibles, and Gadgets & Gear are no longer published, but definitely had a role in shaping the look, feel and character of The PCLinuxOS Magazine during my tenure. It would not be unusual, though, to see any of the “retired columns” make an occasional encore appearance. I think it's important that the magazine continues to evolve as time goes on, to better reflect not only the changes in the Linux landscape, but also reflect the evolution of our user base.

Producing the magazine every month requires a multifaceted approach. We publish the magazine as a downloadable PDF file (which is assembled every month by Meemaw and me), an online HTML

version, and as MOBI and EPUB ebook versions. Over the years in my role as the Chief Editor, Galen Seaman (gseaman), Kori Tilcock (Sproggy), Russell Galloway (Rudge) and David Moore (YouCanToo) have managed publication and maintenance of the HTML version. Most recently, YouCanToo is responsible for adding the ebook versions of the magazine, allowing users of ebook readers to also enjoy The PCLinuxOS Magazine.

For all of us involved, it truly is a labor of love. It also allows us – and anyone who chooses to participate – to give something back to PCLinuxOS. After all, Texstar, the developers and the packagers already give so much to us in providing PCLinuxOS for us to use, free of charge, that it feels nice to be able to give something else back to the community.

Here's to looking forward to the next 100 issues! We hope that you have found something of interest in each of the 100 issues we have published thus far, and we hope to continue doing so for a very long time to come.



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Screenshot Showcase



Posted by francesco bat, on April 7, 2015, running IceWM.

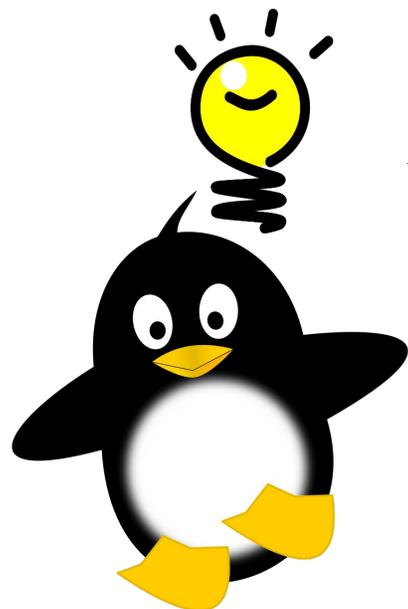


linuxfordummies.org
There Are No Stupid Questions



Landscape Printing In LibreOffice

Editor's Note: *Tip Top Tips* is a new monthly column in *The PCLinuxOS Magazine*. Each month, we will feature – and possibly even expand upon – one tip from the PCLinuxOS forum. The magazine will not accept independent tip submissions specifically intended for inclusion in the *Tip Top Tips* column. Rather, if you have a tip, share it in the PCLinuxOS forum's “*Tips & Tricks*” section. Your tip just may be selected for publication in *The PCLinuxOS Magazine*.



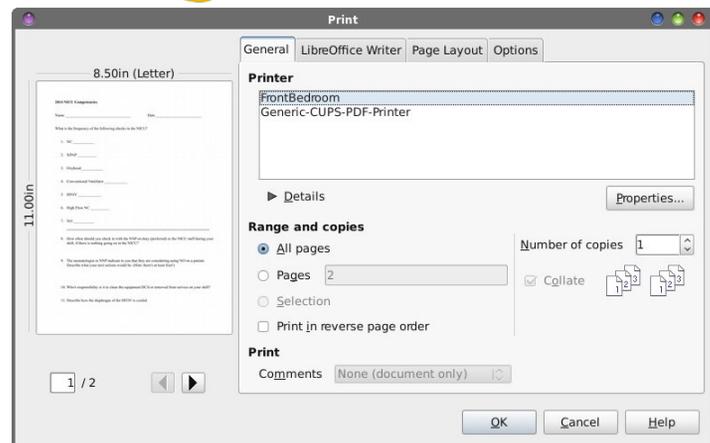
This month's **tip** comes from PCLinuxOS forum member Agent Smith, via PCLinuxOS forum member Crow.

A friend told me the way to print landscape documents in LibreOffice and I think is a good idea to share it.

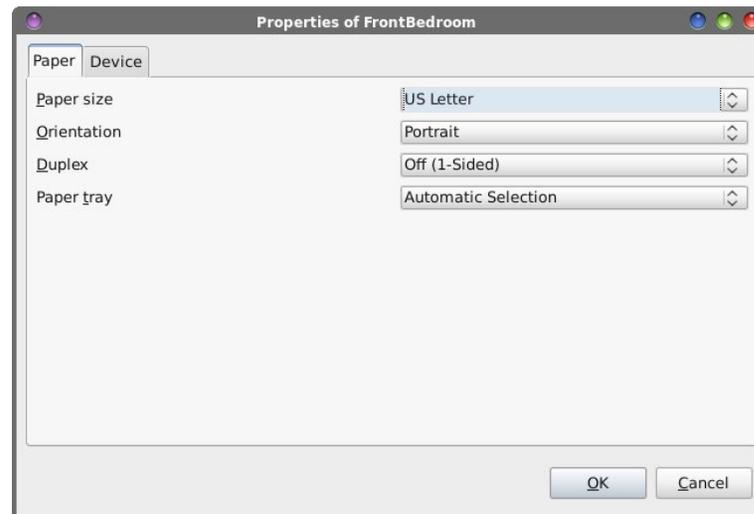
There's a fix. When you go to print your document, go to printer configuration, and change the language to send to printer. It's commonly selected PDF. Change to Postscript Level 1. If you don't hit in the first try, try the other PS levels.

Thank you Agent Smith!

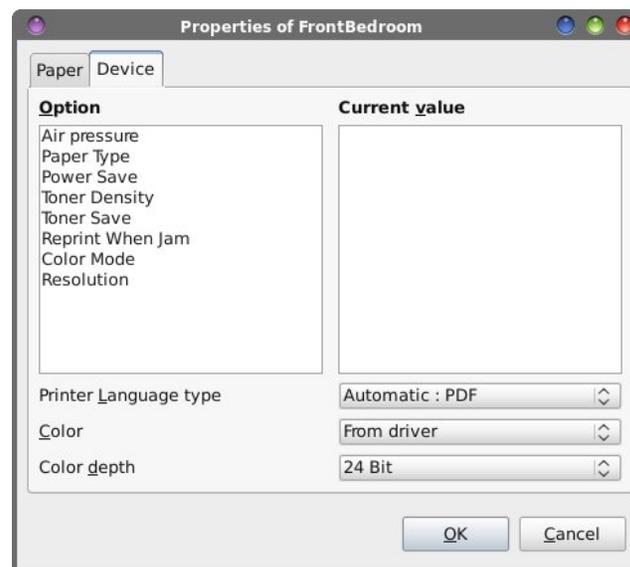
When you go to print a document in LibreOffice, you will see something like the



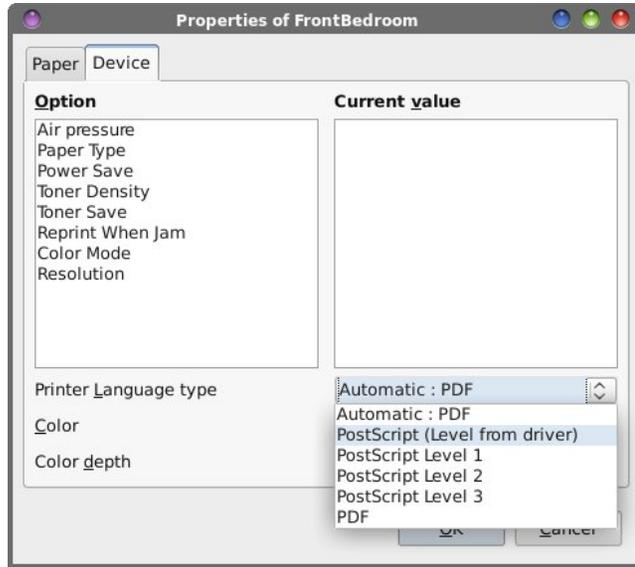
dialog box shown above. Click on the “Properties...” button.



The first tab that appears is the “Paper” tab. Here, you will need to change the “Orientation” to “Landscape,” if you want to print in landscape orientation.



On the “Device” tab, notice that the “Printer Language type” is set to “Automatic:PDF,” just as Crow and Agent Smith said it would be.



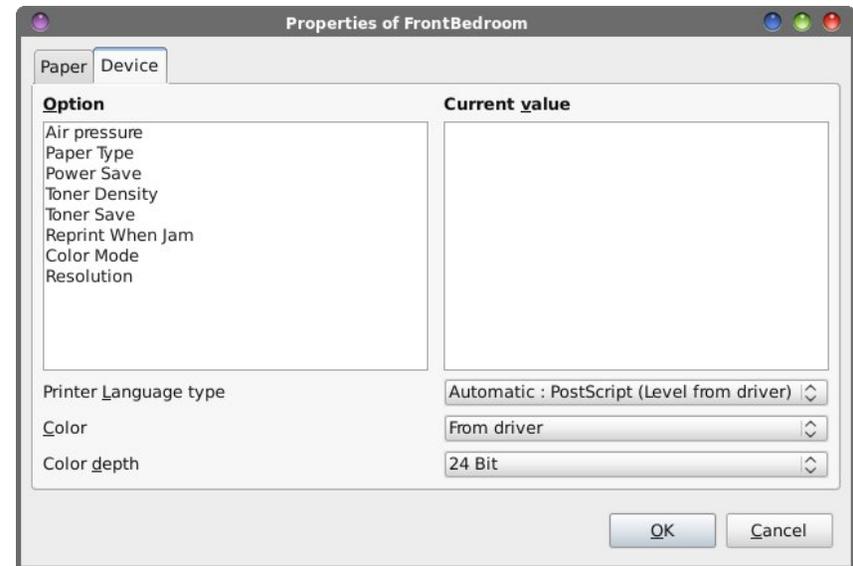
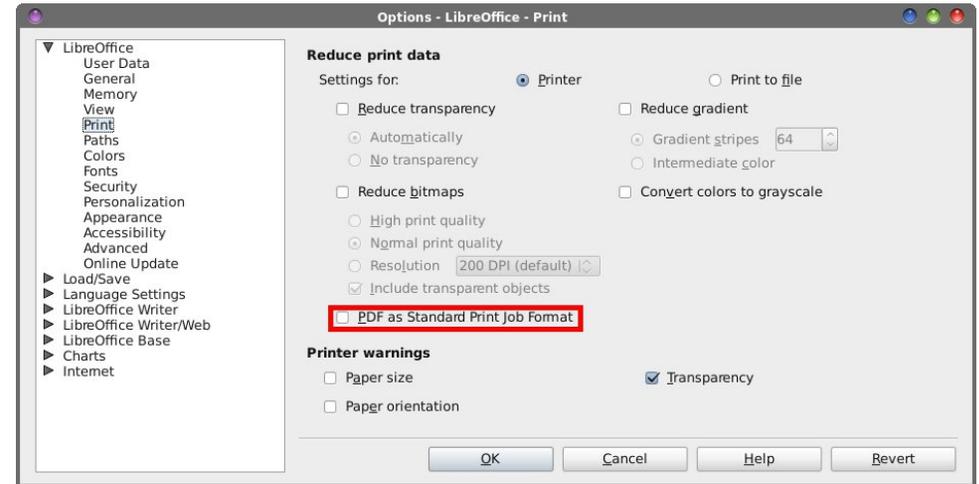
Clicking on the button to the right of “Automatic:PDF,” you will see six choices. Select one of the PostScript choices, to see which one works best for you. If the first selection doesn’t work, try the next selection, and keep trying them until you find the setting that works best for your printer.

There is one problem, though. That problem is that every time you want to print in landscape orientation, you will have to make the change manually. Or, do you?

One of the concerns expressed in the forum topic thread was how the setting didn’t “stick,” and how you had to make the change every time you wanted to print in landscape orientation.

It turns out that LibreOffice’s Print Language type default setting of “Automatic:PDF” may not be the best choice. Thankfully, the LibreOffice developers had the foresight to allow users to change that default behavior.

Select LibreOffice’s Tools > Options menu to bring up a dialog box from where you can control the various settings for LibreOffice. Under the LibreOffice category, go to the “Print” subcategory. About two-thirds of the way down the dialog box, make sure the checkmark in front of “PDF as Standard Print Job Format” is cleared (unchecked). Then, select the OK button. LibreOffice will require a restart after changing this setting, so go ahead and allow it to restart when it asks.



Now, when you go back into the “Device” tab of the Printer Properties dialog box, notice how the Printer Language type selection is now defaulting to “Automatic:PostScript (Level from driver).” This allows the print driver to select the best PostScript level to use, depending on its PostScript capabilities. Most modern printers support PostScript level printing, of one type or another.

Done this way, the setting for the printer language type will “stick,” and you won’t have to make this change every time you want to print a landscape document. In fact, you probably won’t have to make this change ever again.

Summary

Landscape printing in LibreOffice has been problematic for quite some time. Thankfully, this tip resolves that issue, once and for all. Now, your spreadsheets and other documents that need to utilize landscape printing will print out as needed.



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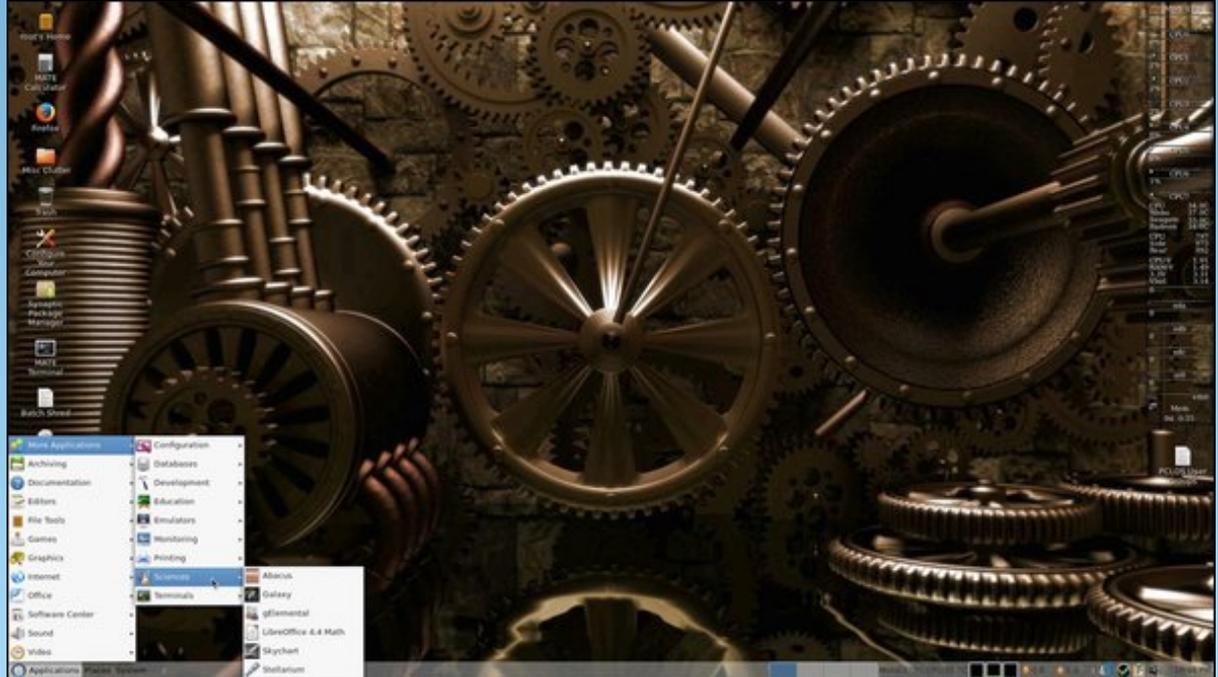
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Screenshot Showcase



Posted by Linadian, on April 7, 2015, running Mate.



GIMP Tutorial: Create a Lightning Bolt

by Meemaw

I always wondered if a realistic looking bolt of lightning could be created in any of the programs we use. I found a tutorial that does it in GIMP, and so I will share it with you. It's not too long and pretty fun.

Open GIMP and start a new document. I used 800 x 600. Click on the blend tool and create a grayscale gradient (FG to BG), linear shape, running left to right.



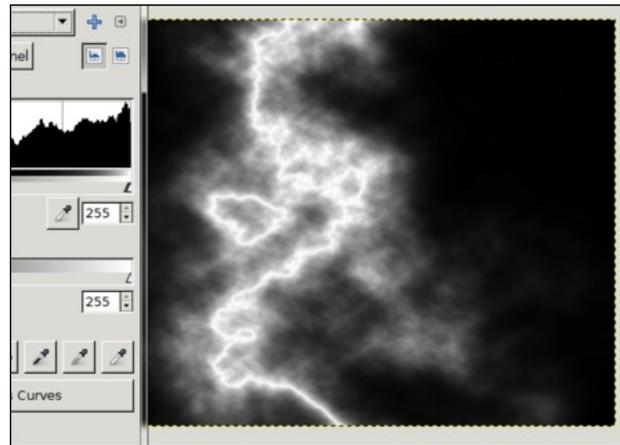
Click on **Filters > Render > Clouds > Difference Clouds**. Turn the **Detail** all the way up to 15. It looks cloudy, but notice that there is now lighter gray on the left and the black is mostly in the center of the page.



Now click on **Colors > Invert** to bring the lightness back to the middle.

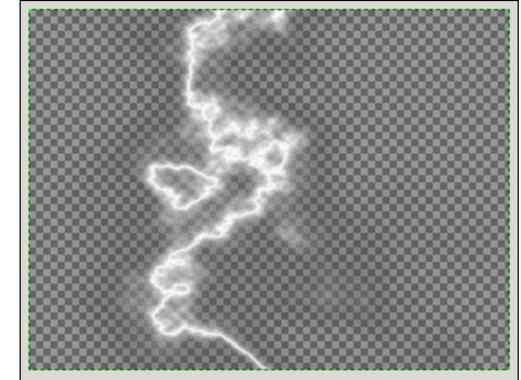


Click on **Colors > Levels**, then grab the center triangle in Input Levels and drag it far to the right. You can see in the tool window the two triangles at the far right under the histogram. You should now have a fuzzy-looking lightning bolt.

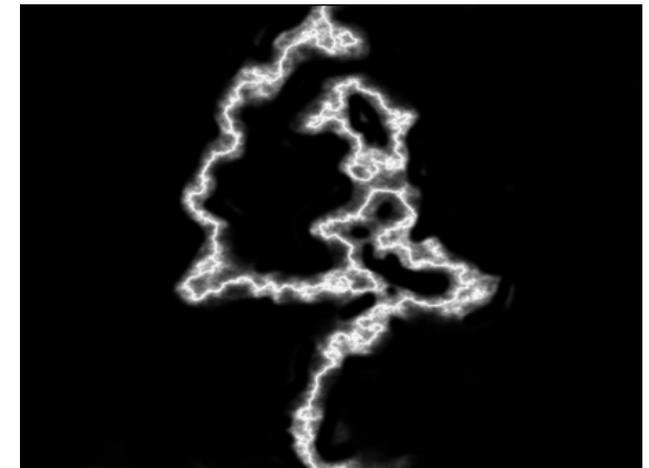


Right-click on the layer and choose **Add Layer Mask**. You have several options, but select **Grayscale copy of layer** and click **Add**. This adds a

transparent layer which will help us isolate the main lightning bolt. Use the **Paintbrush** tool with a large soft black brush on the mask to erase the rest of the unwanted areas.



To finish, I put a black background behind my lightning, merged the layers and exported the picture.

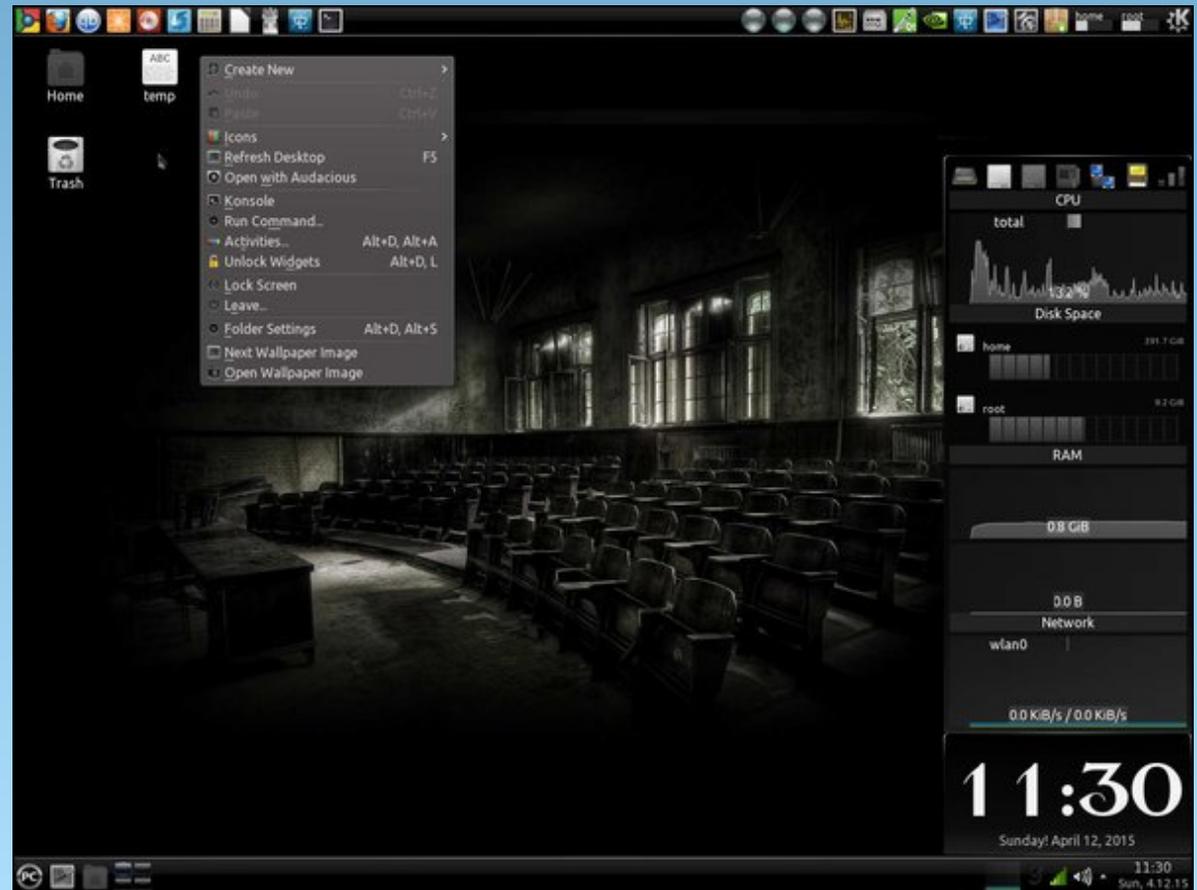


You can experiment with the difference clouds (clicking on New Seed) to get lightning that looks

different, and can also experiment with your gradient (maybe drawing from upper left to lower right) to get different effects. In the image below, I used a smaller brush, and drew my gradient from upper left to lower right.



Screenshot Showcase



Posted by trytip, on April 22, 2015, running KDE.



A magazine just isn't a magazine without articles to fill the pages.

If you have article ideas, or if you would like to contribute articles to the PCLinuxOS Magazine, send an email to:
pclinuxos.mag@gmail.com

We are interested in general articles about Linux, and (of course), articles specific to PCLinuxOS.



ms_meme's Nook: Just Take Five

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You will like the design

It will blow your mind



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Our future's looking so bright

New things always in sight

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Don't be uptight

The PCLinuxOS Magazine 100th Monthly Issue May, 2015

MP3

OGG

HTPC: Time For Popcorn Time

Paul Arnote (parnote)

If you have any interest at all in HTPCs, you've heard about [Popcorn Time](#). Still, I'm surprised by how few people have heard about this program. Talking to my co-workers, very few of them have heard of it, and they are intrigued when I tell them about it. Between my time as Mr. Mom and work, it's at work that I have the majority of my "adult" interactions. OK ... so I don't get out much.

So what is Popcorn Time? Popcorn Time is an open source bittorrent client which allows users to ~~stream~~ sequentially download movies and TV shows from torrent files, and play them using either its own built-in player or an external player you may have installed. But before we get into talking too much about how Popcorn Time works and how to use it, we first need to take a look at its history – so we can have a better understanding.

Popcorn Time History

Back in February 2014, a group of developers got together. They decided to cobble together a group of APIs to see if they could play back sequentially downloaded data from YIFY's torrents. After two weeks of work, they had created an application made up of JavaScript, HTML and CSS on top of Node-Webkit that rivaled Netflix.



Like setting a lit match to gasoline, Popcorn Time quickly gained popularity. Reports of it and the feat they had accomplished quickly reached the media. The initial reaction from the media was very positive. They noted how similar Popcorn Time's interface was to that used by Netflix. Of course, the media attention caused an even greater wave of popularity. As you can imagine, all of that "popular attention" wasn't necessarily good. The MPAA also noticed, and they threatened the developers with oodles of legal

entanglements. So, on March 14, 2014, the [original](#) Popcorn Time was taken down.

Based in Argentina, the original developers started Popcorn Time as a challenge to themselves. Basically, they wanted to see if it (playback of sequentially downloaded files from a torrent source) could be done. They also wanted to highlight how the archaic marketing model of the film industry hinders access to movies, especially in places many would consider "third world markets." From the original developers' "Goodbye" page:

You know what's the best thing about Popcorn Time? That tons of people agreed in unison that the movie industry has way too many ridiculous restrictions on way too many markets. Take Argentina for example: streaming providers seem to believe that "There's Something About Mary" is a recent movie. That movie would be old enough to vote here.

Normally, that would be the end of the road. But since they had created and released Popcorn Time using the open source model, others stepped in and forked the project. Today, we have the open source project at [popcorn.time.io](#), and another fork at [Time4Popcorn](#). The latter project has come under attack recently on [Reddit](#) for containing adware, spyware and malware, at least on the Windows version, so it's probably best to just avoid that particular fork of the project. Plus, it does not appear that the latter fork is an open source project.

To this day, Popcorn Time maintains its popularity. Whether it is legal where you live depends on the laws where you live. For most people, downloading and watching copyrighted content without paying is considered illegal. However, Popcorn Time itself was legal to create. The original developers checked. Four times. But use of the program may subject you to legal ramifications you may wish to avoid. Consider yourself warned. Typically, programs like Popcorn Time and Kodi are a few steps ahead of the law, and miles ahead when it comes to legal options. Users residing in the U.S. have access to Netflix and Hulu (although they are pay services), but users residing in other countries may or may not have the same access, even if they are willing or able to pay. This is where programs like Popcorn Time and Kodi shine. These programs are blind to arbitrary lines drawn on some map, bringing a Netflix-like experience to users otherwise left without access.

Installing Popcorn Time

Before we go any farther, we MUST issue this standard warning and disclaimer:

It is highly recommended to NOT install programs/packages from outside the official PCLinuxOS repository. Doing so may render your installation to be considered non-standard, and you may not be able to obtain support in the official PCLinuxOS forums for your install.

That's the official policy. However, because Popcorn Time is entirely self-contained, it does not make system-wide changes to your installation. Therefore, it is generally considered safe to install Popcorn Time to your system. The only person who can decide whether it is safe for you to install on your computer is you, yourself. I have installed it on no fewer than three computers, and I have never experienced any problems, whatsoever.

First, you will need to [download](#) the Popcorn Time program from their website. There are versions for 32 bit Linux, 64 bit Linux, Windows, Mac OS-X, iOS and Android. The Linux versions are packaged as tar.xz files.

Next, you need to extract the files from the archive file you just downloaded. On my HTPC, I simply extracted the files to a folder in my /home directory, called PopcornTime. Pretty original, huh? Don't try to run it yet ... we have one more thing to do.

Open a terminal session, and enter the following commands:

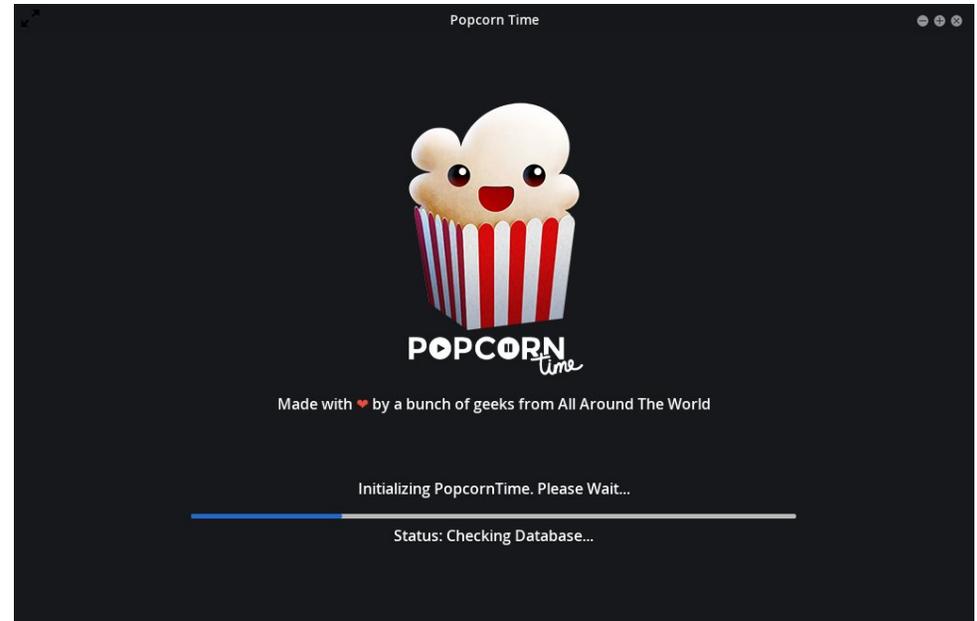
```
su
<enter root password>
cd /usr/lib
ln -sf ../../lib/libudev.so.0 libudev.so.1
exit
```

Go ahead and close the terminal session when you're finished. At this point, you could just open your file manager and double click on the Popcorn Time executable file in the folder where you extracted the Popcorn Time files (it looks like a gear on my computers, but may have a different appearance on your computer, depending on the icon theme you are using). That may fast get old, though. You will probably want to create a launcher, either on your desktop or on one of your panels. Using Google Images, you can search for "popcorn time icon," and you will find many candidates to choose from. I just stored the PNG file I liked in the same PopcornTime folder as I used to contain the Popcorn Time program files. My Popcorn Time launcher is represented by the icon on the far right side in the image below of my top panel in Xfce.



Setting up Popcorn Time is a lot easier and faster than setting up Kodi. However, Kodi can do everything Popcorn Time can, and more. If you're interested only in movies and TV shows, Popcorn Time may be all you need. But, as I recommended in my previous article, I would recommend installing both Popcorn Time and Kodi on your HTPC. Sometimes things that aren't immediately available under Kodi are available on Popcorn Time, and vice versa. Having that redundancy – both Popcorn Time and Kodi installed – means that you'll be more likely to find what you want, when you want.

Running Popcorn Time



Each time you first launch Popcorn Time, you will see a screen similar to the one displayed above. This screen is briefly displayed as Popcorn Time is initialized, and the database is loaded and checked.

The default "category" when you launch Popcorn Time is "Movies." Here, you can scroll through a seemingly endless display of movies. Click your mouse on the movie you want to view.



When you select a movie to view, your screen will change to something similar to that depicted above. An image for the movie will appear on the left, while the background changes to reflect a scene from that movie. Towards the top half of the screen you will see the title of the movie, the year of its release, the length of the movie, the category it belongs to, an IMDB icon, a rating for that movie, and a brief description for the movie. Clicking on the IMDB icon will open the IMDB entry for the selected movie in a web browser. Selecting the “X” in the far upper right corner will close the window for your selection, and return you to the list of available content.

At the far right of that screen, you will see a magnet icon. This icon will direct you to the magnet link for that torrent. Next to it, you will see a colored dot. In the image above, the dot is green. This dot indicates the torrent “health” of the selection. Green is good, with many seeds and peers. Yellow is marginal, with a few seeds and peers found. Red indicates poor health, with very few seeds and peers found. The better the health indicator, the better your selection will play. Selections with health indicators that are yellow and red – especially red indicators – may experience buffering issues during playback, if they play at all. Typically, selections with a green health indicator play without difficulty, as if playing a DVD on your computer or a file stored on your computer’s hard drive. Hovering your mouse over the torrent health indicator will display how many seeds and peers have been found.

At the bottom of the window, you will find a “heart” icon labeled “Add to bookmarks.” If you find content that you want to watch again, click on the heart icon. Popcorn Time will maintain bookmarks, similar to your web browser.

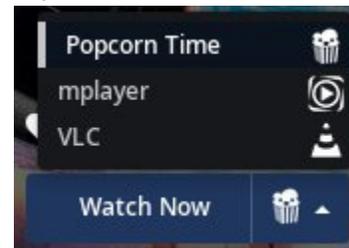


To the right of that is the Subtitles selector. Click on the down arrow next to the word “Subtitles,” and you will see something similar to the image above. Select from the flags shown to choose the language for your subtitles. Selecting the “flag” with the “X” in it turns Subtitles off.

Dropping down and working right to left, you’ll find an indicator that lists the display resolution(s) of the selected content. Often times, there is a choice, as in the larger image above. Realize that content with 1080p content comes from a very large file, while 720p content will be smaller – often times, more than 50 percent smaller. Content that is offered up with 1080p resolution will also take a very fast network connection to be able to play without buffering issues. Common resolutions you will encounter are 480p, 720p and 1080p.

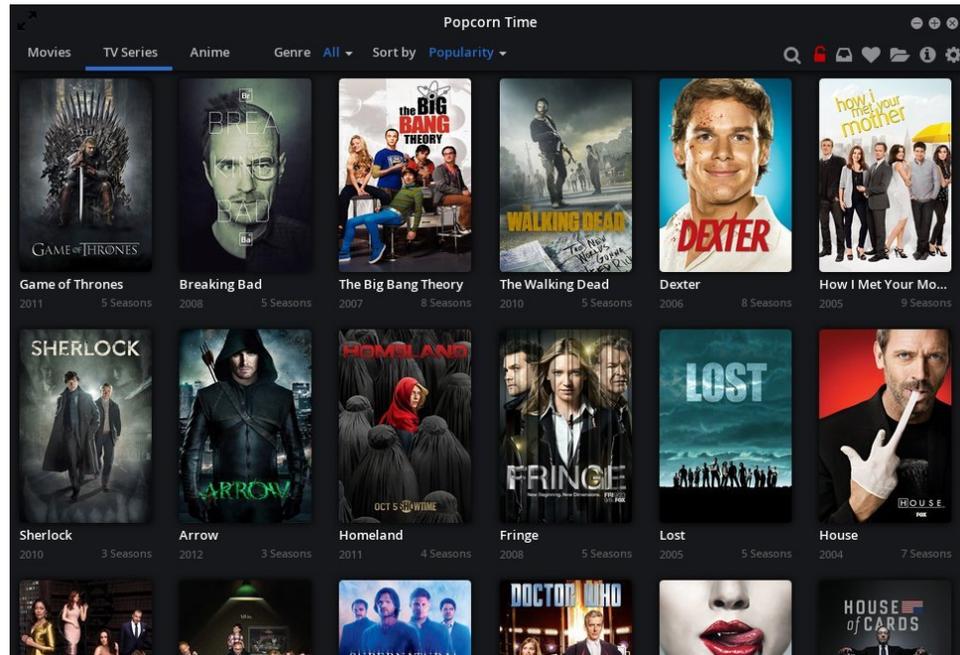
For most people, it’s unlikely that you’ll notice that much of a video quality difference between 720p and 1080p. It usually takes a very discerning videophile to notice the difference. If you’re having issues with content pausing during playback due to buffering issues, retry the selection at the lower resolution. Often times, it’s enough to resolve the issues, and will provide much more enjoyable playback of the selected content. Even the 480p content plays back clearer than the 480i content of a standard definition television picture.

If you want to watch the trailer for your movie selection, click on the “Watch Trailer” button. The trailer will play in Popcorn Time’s built in player.



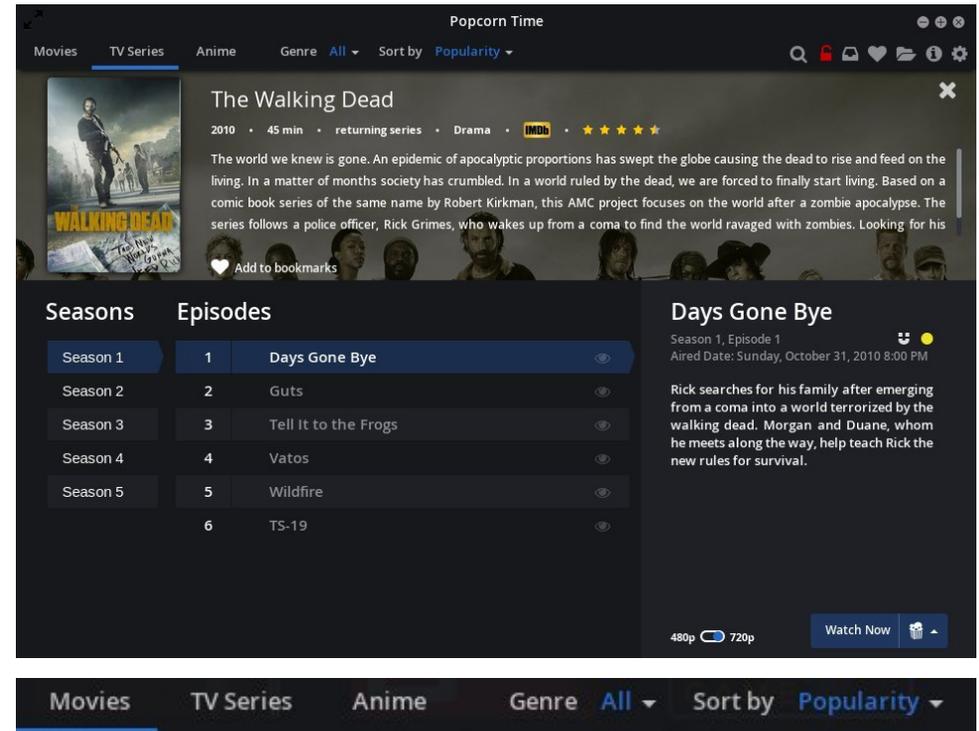
Clicking on the “Watch Now” button will start playback, either in Popcorn Time’s built in player, or in the selected external player. You can select the player to use for playback by clicking on the down arrow next to the popcorn bag, then

selecting the player from the list. On my HTPC, I have mplayer and VLC both installed, so Popcorn Time presents them as choices for controlling playback. Popcorn Time also has the ability to utilize the Google Chromecast device. If you have a properly connected and configured Chromecast device attached to your HDTV, your Chromecast device will be listed as one of the external player choices.



Switching to the TV Series category, you'll notice it looks very similar to the Movies category. Select the TV series you are interested in.

You'll notice that selecting a TV series opens up another window specific to that series. Across the top of the window is a synopsis of the series, with the same data as the movie content. At the bottom left of the screen, you can select individual seasons. From there, you can select individual episodes. At the bottom right of the screen is a brief synopsis of the selected episode. Notice that the health indicator is yellow in the screenshot above, indicating that you might experience some buffering issues. At the very bottom right, you have the same "Watch Now" button, with the same functionality as with movie content. You can also select playback resolution. In the screenshot above, the choices are 480p and 720p. Just as with the movie information screen, selecting the "X" in the upper right corner will return you to the TV series selection window.

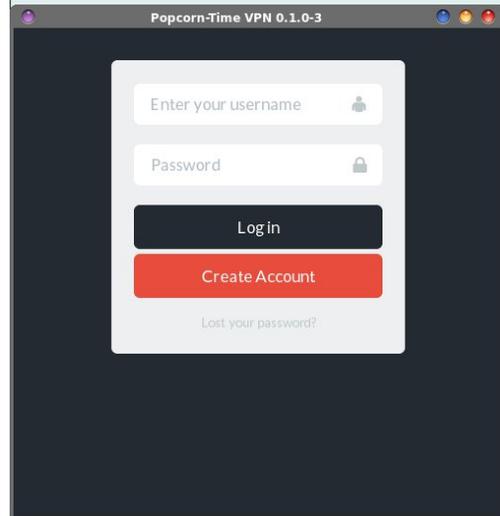


If you're an anime fan, there's a whole section just for you. It works exactly as the other categories. Popcorn Time also allows you to browse movies by Genre. So, if you're interested in musicals, westerns, science fiction, dramas, etc., just select the category that you're interested in. You can also control the sort order. The default is to sort by popularity, which is actually a good thing. The most popular titles will have the best torrent health (the most seeds and peers), and will experience better playback without buffering issues.



At the upper right corner of the main Popcorn Time window is the toolbar. Let's take a look at the items on the toolbar, from left to right. The first one is the search button. If you know the title of the movie or show you are looking for – or even if you know part of the title – click on the search icon (magnifying glass) and enter your search term in the window that opens to the left. Press "Enter" and the items matching your search criteria will appear in the Popcorn Time window. For example, I was looking for "Real Time with Bill Maher," but couldn't remember the first part of the name. Searching for "bill maher" brought the show right up in Popcorn Time's window.

Special Note: Use of the built-in VPN service of popcorntime.io may help save you from those “legal entanglements” we discussed/warned you about earlier. On March 30, 2015, an article appeared on [TorrentFreak](#) detailing how the makers of the film “Dallas Buyers Club” has turned its attention to prosecuting alleged downloaders of the film in Europe. This is after having sued hundreds of alleged downloaders in the United States. Currently,



efforts are concentrated on Denmark, where Popcorn Time has enjoyed immense popularity.

A [previous effort](#) to penalize users in Germany last year resulted in the government there to declare that viewing pirated streams was NOT illegal. Most governments across the globe are not so liberal in their views regarding the viewing of pirated streams, having been already “bought” by content providers.

Clicking on the red padlock icon brings up a node-webkit window – essentially a stripped down browser window – that allows you to enter your VPN account information, or create an account. If you

choose the latter, a tab will open in your default browser, pointed to <https://vpn.ht/popcorntime>. There, you’ll be given an opportunity to create a new account.

You can choose from two payment plans. The first one charges \$1 for the first month, with each subsequent month being billed to you at \$4.99 per month. The second plan allows you to pay for an entire year up front, and costs approximately \$40 for the entire year. That works out to \$3.33 per month, for even greater savings. All prices are expressed in U.S. dollars.

The popcorntime.io VPN service is private, anonymous and encrypted. Use of the VPN will make your ISP blind to your use of Popcorn Time, and your “downloading” of “illegal” torrent files. Their VPN server maintains NO logs of any kind, so your anonymity is further preserved, and your activities hidden from prying eyes. Your subscription also allows you to connect up to three devices to the VPN at any given time.

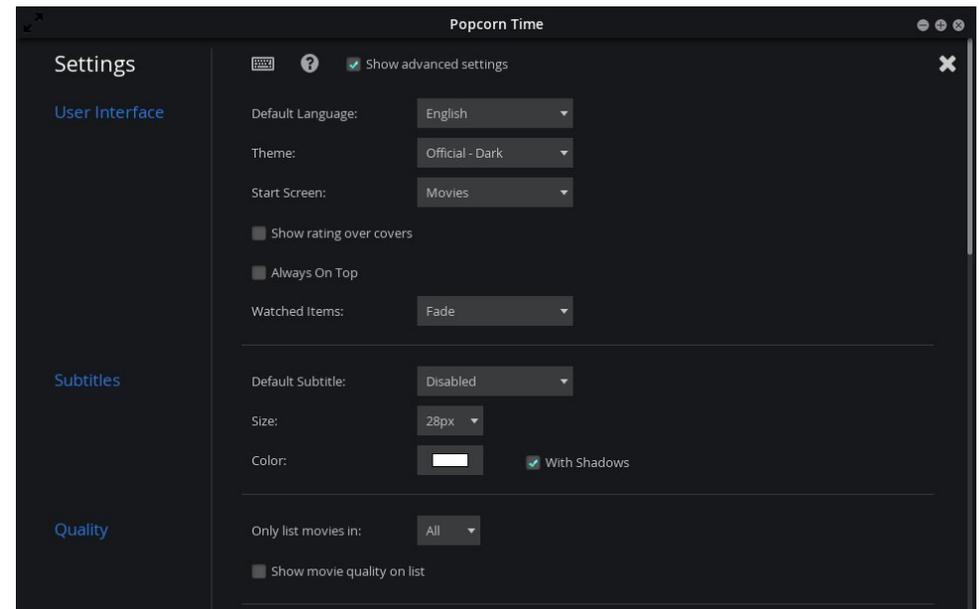
While this makes the use of Popcorn Time “non-free,” it’s still a bargain. Netflix will cost you \$8 per month, without a guarantee that you’ll have access to the latest movies (depending on your region and whether the movie you want to watch is even available in that market) – if you can even get Netflix. Plus, considering the hundreds of dollars (again, U.S. currency) you’ll have to pay out if you are successfully sued by those attempting to protect the movie studios’ outdated marketing methods, \$40 a year is quite the bargain.

The second icon, a red padlock, allows you to setup a VPN, through the built-in VPN in Popcorn Time. This may be to your advantage, especially if you use an ISP that frowns on torrent traffic, or if you want an extra layer of anonymity.

The third icon from the left is the “watchlist” icon. If you have a TraktTV account, and if you have chosen to sync it with Popcorn Time, your TraktTV watchlist will show up in the main Popcorn Time window. If you’re interested in setting this up, you will need to go to the TraktTV [website](#) and set up an account, and then link your account information with Popcorn Time.

Selecting the fourth icon from the left, the heart, brings up your “favorites” list. Of course, if you haven’t saved any favorites, none will be displayed in Popcorn Time’s main window. The fifth icon from the left, the open folder, allows you to open any torrent files or magnet links you have saved on your computer in Popcorn Time. Clicking on the “i” icon will display the “about” page for Popcorn Time.

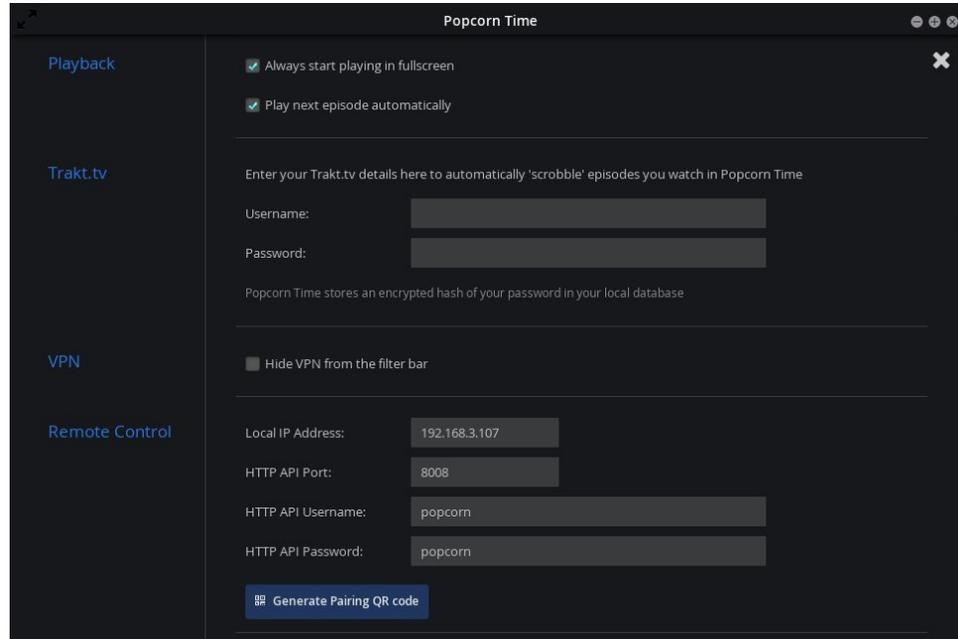
The last icon on the toolbar, the “gear” icon, brings up Popcorn Time’s settings window.



Across the top of the settings window, you can click on the keyboard icon to see a list of keyboard shortcuts for Popcorn Time. Clicking on the “?” icon will display a brief, built-in help screen. You will probably also want to make sure that there is a checkmark in the “Show advanced settings” check box.

The first section, User Interface, allows you to make selections that determine how Popcorn Time appears on your computer. You can select the default language, the color scheme of the theme, which category to show first (the default category is Movies), if you want ratings to appear superimposed over the cover images, if you want Popcorn Time's window to always appear over the top of all other windows, and how you want Popcorn Time to display content that you've already watched. The default value here is to "fade" those selections, but you can also choose to show them normally, or hide them from your view altogether.

Under the next section, Subtitles, you can control how subtitles are displayed. This includes the color and font size. Subtitles are disabled by default. The Quality section allows you to select if you only want to list movies that are available in only 720p or 1080p resolutions. The default value is to list them all. You can also select if you want the movie quality to be displayed in the list.

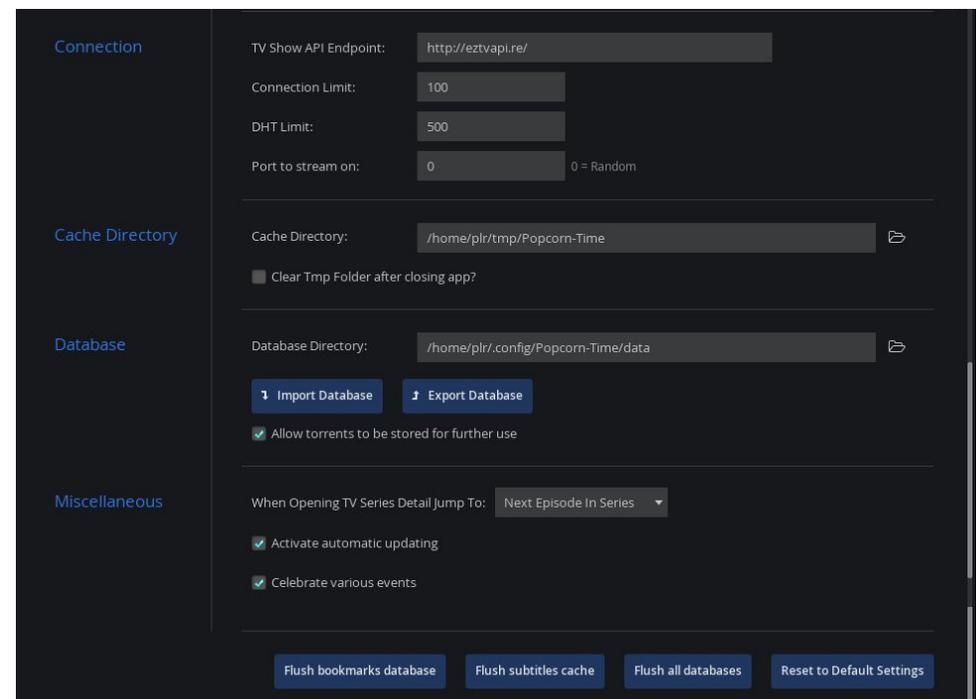


The Playback section allows you control over some aspects of the playback of content in Popcorn Time. Specifically, you can control whether or not Popcorn Time starts the playback of content full screen, or confined to the Popcorn Time window. Also, if you are playing back TV series content, you can set Popcorn Time to automatically play the next episode.

In the Trakt.tv section, you can enter your Trakt.tv account information to sync Popcorn Time with your watchlist on Trakt.tv. Under the VPN section, you can hide the VPN icon from the toolbar.

The next section, Remote Control, is a hit-or-miss setting. There are web interfaces for controlling the playback of content in Popcorn Time. I've not been successful in getting the web interfaces working. They run in Firefox (the only browser I tried it in), but they won't connect. I may be missing something here, but I fail to see how having a remote control is any advantage over the wireless keyboard and mouse that I use to control my HTPC. For me, the wireless keyboard and mouse give me absolute, 100 percent control over Popcorn Time. The local IP address of your Popcorn Time installation will be listed in this section, along with the port number used, as well as the username and password (which both default to "popcorn").

Still, besides the web interfaces for the remote, there are also apps you can download for Android, Firefox OS and Windows Phone. Search for "popcorn time remote" in the app store for your particular platform. iOS users need not bother ... there are currently no apps for the iOS platform. With Apple's chokehold on the iOS app store, they are not allowing any remotes for Popcorn Time, claiming it's an aid to illegal activity (streaming torrents). Some apps will require you to "pair" your remote control app with your copy of Popcorn Time. Popcorn Time will



produce a unique QR code, which you can scan with your phone or tablet, making this a relatively simple task. Just click on the button, aptly named “Generate Pairing QR code.”

Under the “Connection” section, you will find settings that control the offering of TV shows and series. The “Cache Directory” section allows you to set the directory on your computer that Popcorn Time uses to cache the content that is downloaded. The default location is in your /home folder, in the /tmp/Popcorn-Time directory. You can also select to clear the cache directory when Popcorn Time is closed, or to keep the contents of the cache directory. If you choose the latter, you will have to periodically go in and clear the contents out manually. Otherwise, you will soon have lots of pretty large files just sitting around – that you aren’t aware of – eating up hard drive space. So why might you want to keep the contents of the cache directory? You might want to save a copy of the downloaded movie or TV show ... that’s why.

The “Database” section allows you to specify where Popcorn Time stores its database(s). The default location is in your /home directory, under .config/Popcorn-Time/data. Under this section, you can also import custom databases or export your current database. There’s also a checkbox that will allow you to allow torrents to be saved for further use.

In the “Miscellaneous” section, you can control Popcorn Time’s behavior when watching TV series. You can specify to jump to the next episode (the default), or jump to the first unwatched episode. There’s also a setting to allow automatic updating. I recommend keeping this setting switched on, for two reasons. First, remember that we didn’t install Popcorn Time from the PCLinuxOS repository, so you’ll not find updates there when you update your system. Second, Popcorn Time is under very active development, and things may change frequently. So, it’s best to make sure that you are using the latest version, and to insure that your copy of Popcorn Time keeps working as it should. Recently, there was a problem with retrieving the thumbnail images of movies, making it so that movies were not able to be selected for viewing. An update fixed that problem, and it didn’t take long for the developers to set it right again. The last setting, “Celebrate various events,” allows you (the best I can tell) to tailor Popcorn Time to the celebrations that are unique to your locale. People living in the U.S. or Malaysia may not care much about Bastille Day, or some other “event” that is specific to a particular locale.

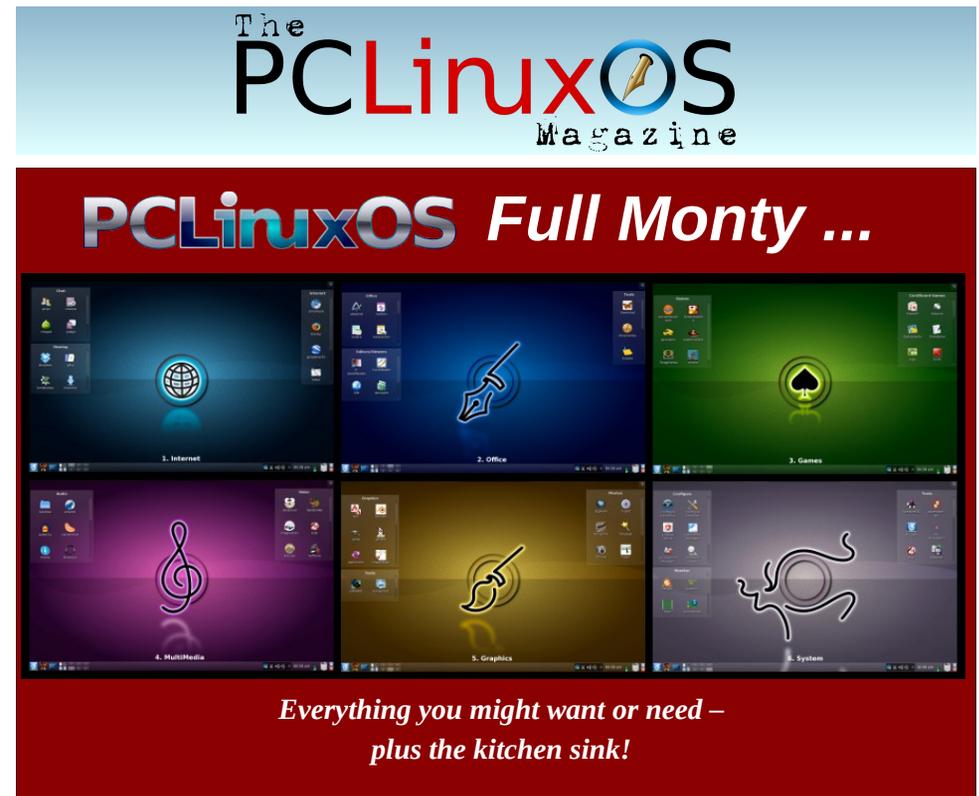
At the bottom of the “Settings” window, you can “Flush bookmarks database.” With one click of the mouse, you can remove/delete all of your bookmarks for your favorite shows. You can also “Flush subtitles cache,” getting rid of all subtitles that have been stored on your computer. Clicking on the “Flush all databases” button will do exactly that – remove/delete all the databases on your computer, allowing you to start afresh. Finally, if you make a royal mess of the

settings, you can click on the “Reset to Default Settings” button to set everything to default values.

Summary

Despite the legal issues that may arise from the use of Popcorn Time, it does an outstanding job for its intended purpose ... streaming playing back sequentially downloaded content to your computer. While attaching your computer to your HDTV is optional (some people are happy with just being able to watch movies on their computer monitor), it certainly is a lot nicer to watch Popcorn Time’s content on a much larger, high definition screen. Plus, if you have your system configured much as I have mine configured (see the article in the April 2015 issue of The PCLinuxOS Magazine), you’ll also get the added benefit of improved sound to accompany that viewing experience. In short, you’ll be able to largely recreate the theater experience, right there in your home.

So, what are you waiting for? Pop up a bag of popcorn, grab yourself a cold soda, kick your feet up, and enjoy some quality entertainment from your HTPC.



The image features the PCLinuxOS Magazine logo at the top, with the text "The PCLinuxOS Magazine" in a stylized font. Below the logo is a red banner with the text "PCLinuxOS Full Monty ...". Underneath the banner is a collage of six desktop environments, each with a unique theme and icon set. The desktops are labeled: 1. Internet (blue background with a globe icon), 2. Office (blue background with a fountain pen icon), 3. Games (green background with a spade icon), 4. MultiMedia (purple background with a treble clef icon), 5. Graphics (yellow background with a pencil icon), and 6. System (grey background with a circular icon). At the bottom of the collage is a red banner with the text "Everything you might want or need – plus the kitchen sink!"



The PCLinuxOS Magazine

Created with Scribus

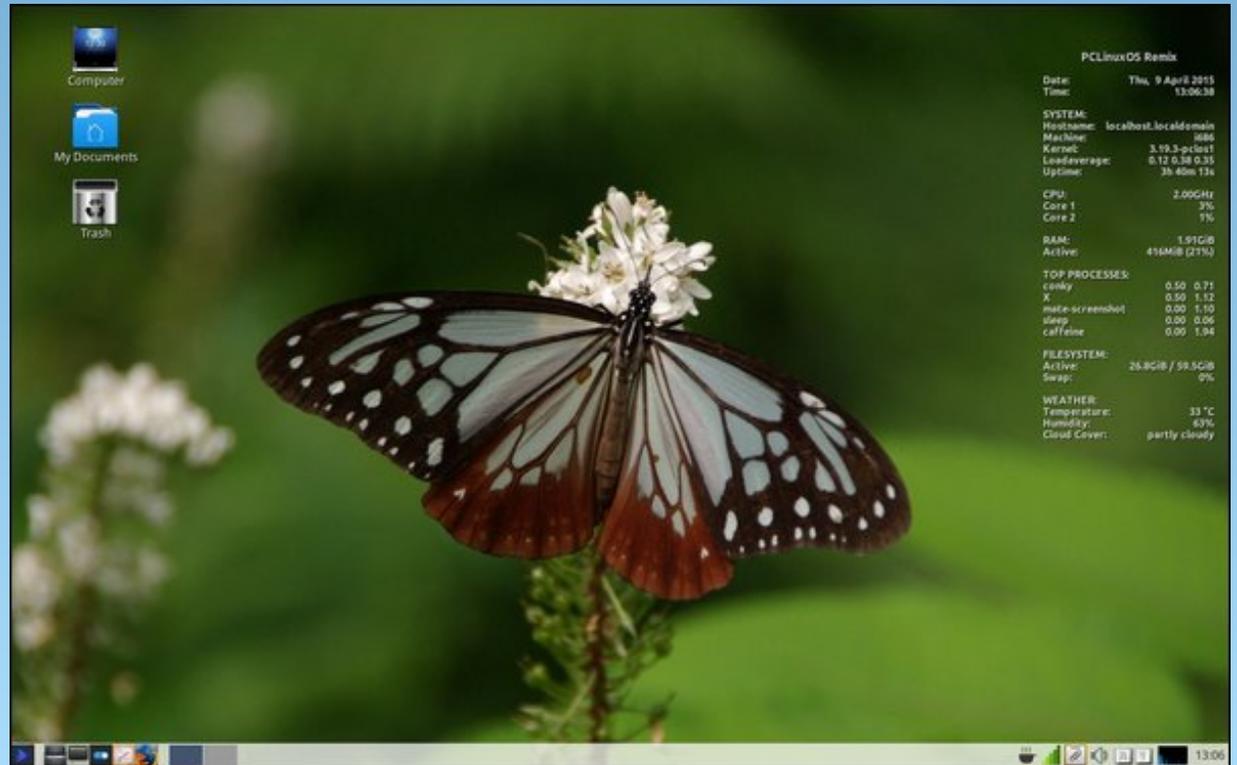
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Connect



Open Source Initiative



Screenshot Showcase



Does your computer run slow?

Are you tired of all the "Blue Screens of Death" computer crashes?



Are viruses, adware, malware & spyware slowing you down?

Get your PC back to good health TODAY!

Get

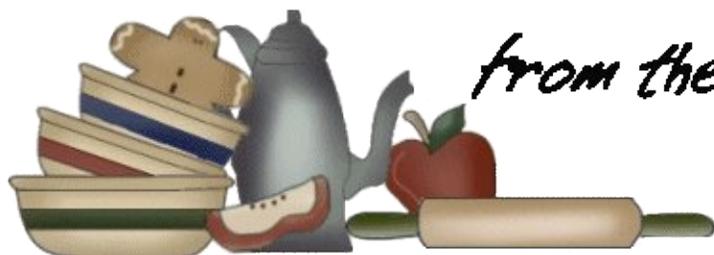


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Posted by zen-subz, on April 9, 2015, running Mate.



PCLinuxOS Recipe Corner



*from the kitchen of
youcantoo*

Easy Cottage Cheese Cheese Horns

Ingredients

For the Rolls

- 1 C salted butter, softened
- 1 1/2 C small curd cottage cheese (2% or better)
- 2 C all purpose flour
- 1/2 tsp salt

For the Glaze

- 2 Tbsp butter, melted
- 1 C powdered sugar
- 2-3 Tbsp water
- 1 tsp vanilla extract

Instructions

1. Cream butter, cottage cheese and salt together until combined. Stir in flour until no dry spots remain - dough will be sticky.
2. Use a spatula to move the dough to the center of the bowl into a rough ball, cover and refrigerate for at least 3 hours or overnight until the dough is manageable.
3. Turn dough onto a lightly floured surface and divide into thirds. Roll each third into ball and flatten into a disk.
4. Cut each disk into 8-12 wedges using a pizza cutter. Roll each wedge starting with the widest side and place the pointed side down onto a lined baking sheet.
5. Bake at 350 Degrees for 25-30 minutes or until golden brown.
6. While rolls are cooking combine the butter vanilla and sugar for the glaze. Drizzle in water until it's the consistency you'd like, mixing until smooth.
7. Drizzle rolls white still warm with the glaze and serve.



DOS GAMES ARCHIVE
WWW.DOSGAMESARCHIVE.COM

A collection of PCLinuxOS merchandise. On the left side, from top to bottom: a white polo shirt, a white mug with the PCLinuxOS logo and the text 'radically simple', a black CD/DVD case with the PCLinuxOS logo, and a white mousepad with the PCLinuxOS logo and the text 'radically simple'. On the right side, from top to bottom: a black t-shirt with the PCLinuxOS logo, a tan baseball cap with the PCLinuxOS logo, white shorts with the PCLinuxOS logo, and a white t-shirt with the PCLinuxOS logo.

**Support PCLinuxOS! Get Your Official
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Merchandise Today!**



Inkscape Tutorial: Creating A Photo Popping Or Photo Cutout

By Khadis

Photo popping or cutout is usually done in photo editing software such as the Gimp (like what Meemaw did in the PCLinuxOS Magazine, Volume 94, November 2014 edition, entitled GIMP Tutorial: An "Out-Of-The-Frame" Effect). However, it can also be done through Inkscape. Let's try to do it!

- Open up your Inkscape and import an image using **Ctrl + I** command or through **File – Import** menu. I myself used a random picture from Google Image (I took Synyster Gate's photo).

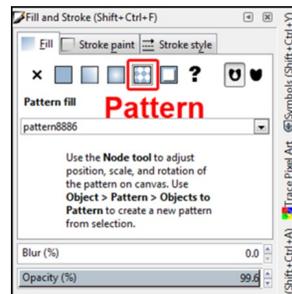
- To be able to see the popping / cutout result, you can first make a big rectangle behind the photo (as the background) and color it. Look at the illustration below:



- Now let's return to the photo and convert it into a pattern using the **Alt + I** command or through **Object – Pattern – Objects to Pattern** menu. Once you have done that, please create a rectangle with the size equal to the photo size. You can make the rectangle a little bit bigger or smaller than the photo,

and it is still okay. The color will not matter since we will flood it with the pattern, so you can choose any color for now.

- Access your **Fill and Stroke** panel by pressing **Shift + Ctrl + F** on your keyboard. On this panel, open the Fill tab and choose **Pattern**. Your rectangle will be now filled by the new pattern (the photo you imported to the document).



- Now, let's convert this patterned rectangle into a path by pressing **Shift + Ctrl + C** or through **Path – Object to Path** menu. After that, you can use the **Edit path by nodes** tool (**F2**) to modify this object. If it is possible, use the **Zoom** tool (**Z**) to get a better view.

- Now grab the top right corner handle (node) and move it lower. Then grab the bottom right corner handle (node) and move it higher. It should now look like a perspective photo, as in the picture here:



- Now, still using **Edit path by nodes** tool (**F2**), put some new nodes. For this

sample, I put some new nodes in these places (look at the yellow nodes):



- Now, let's "trace" the picture by moving the nodes one by one. Use the Synyster's body as the "path". You can add or reduce the number of the nodes by simply double click on the picture to add more nodes or click in a node and press Delete to reduce the node.

- Before we really move the nodes one by one, let's make a **Bezier** curve (**Shift + F6**) first to "extend" the picture so it will be easier to be edited. Draw a Bezier curve like this (look at the white Bezier. The shape might be different from mine):



- Do a **Union** by selecting the Bezier, then press the **Shift** button, click on the photo, then press **Ctrl + +**.

- Now, let's go back to the photo. Move the nodes one by one, by following the Synyster's body and his guitar shape. Still, you can add or delete more nodes if you need to do so. Use the **Zoom** tool (**Z**) to zoom any parts you need to see in detail. The final result might be like this (the better your imagination, the better the result will be):

Inkscape Tutorial: Creating A Photo Popping Or Photo Cutout

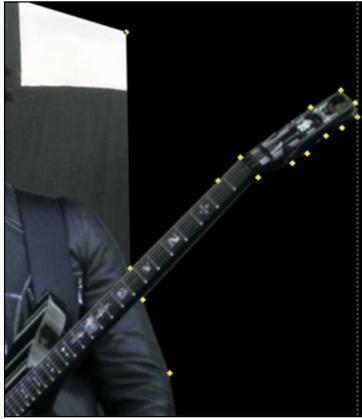


photo. Always use the **Zoom** tool (Z) whenever you need a better view.

- Zoom out the photo, and here is my result:



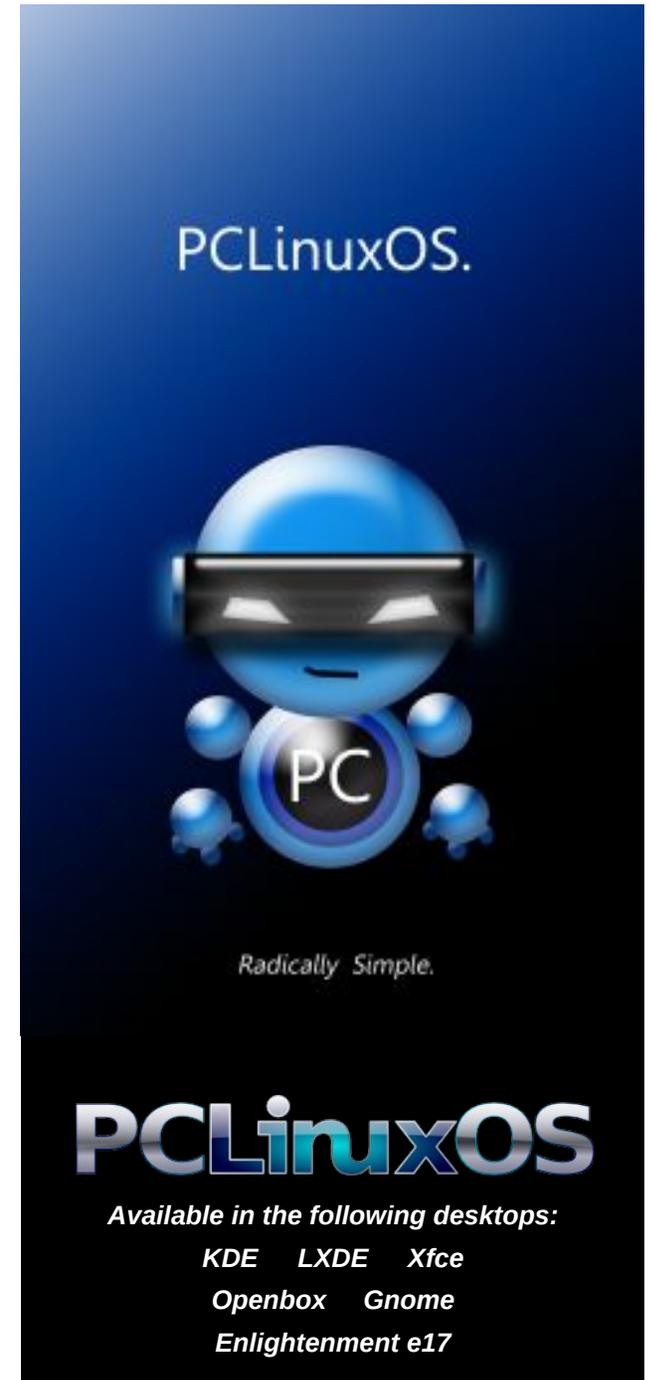
- After you are satisfied with your result, send the yellow perspective rectangle to the back of the photo by pressing the **Page Down** button on your keyboard. Once the yellow rectangle settled behind the photo, return its opacity to 100%. The final result could look like this:



- For the final touch, let's create a frame for the photo. Grab your **Rectangle** tool (F4) and draw a rectangle above the photo. The size can be bigger than the photo, and the color is up to you. I chose yellow.

- Call the **Fill and Stroke** panel (Shift + Ctrl + F) to appear. On the Fill tab, reduce the color opacity so the rectangle is now semi-transparent. Convert it into path by pressing **Shift + Ctrl + C** or through **Path – Object to Path** menu.

- Activate your **Edit path by nodes** tool (F2). Adjust the shape of your semi-transparent rectangle to form a perspective shape that following the shape of the



My HTPC Experience

by Only16

***Editor's Note:** In our continuing series on Home Theater Personal Computers (HTPCs), PCLinuxOS forum member Only16 offers up his take on what a HTPC means ... and must accomplish, for him. This illustrates that what comprises a HTPC for one person may differ for someone else. Your needs and desires are going to drive what you think or feel a HTPC should be capable of doing.*

My HTPC journey started several years ago, and it has been tuned and tweaked several times since.

First of all, it needs to be said that a Home Theatre PC in my home is useless without full Live Broadcast TV available, plus all the functions one would normally associate with Live TV, such as Time-Shift and Recording and Playback, etc. For my use, I am only interested in Free To Air broadcasts from Satellite and Terrestrial providers (DVB-S & DVB-T).

At my location, I have in excess of 2,500 'channels' on air. A lot of them are duplicates, and quite a number are empty at any particular time. In addition, a large number are 'pay to view' and encrypted. Of those that remain, a bunch are of no interest to me, such as channels aimed at specific sexual preferences, dating channels, soft porn, religious, marketing of goods and so on. When all the chaff is disposed of, I am left with some 80 to 100 broadcast channels I might wish to watch at some time or other.

For one TV, this can very easily be done by buying a small commercial set top box (STB) with the required tuners built in, and in addition, plugging in a USB HDD to save the recordings and time-shift files.



Some of these STB's now come with built in functions for subscriptions such as Netflix and other services, so of course they also need an internet connection. Most also limit what the user can do, as they are 'closed source'/proprietary. There are a few ranges of Linux-based STBs which allow the user to 'get down and dirty' - change the OS and functions, etc, but these are the top end of the price range. Like all commercial products, STBs are a mixed bag,

and it is very rare that one will have all your requirements covered.

So, to specify my own needs for a HTPC here is some idea of what I would require

DTT tuner: two at minimum

SAT tuner: two at absolute minimum but might wish to expand that as requirement builds.

IPTV: internet connection

Large Storage: internal HDD

It also must be silent, or very close to it. There is nothing worse than watching a quiet moment of TV, only to have the fans ramp up to cool some component. Horrible!

My First Exercise

I decided to build my own HTPC to suit my needs.

Choosing a case was the second most difficult decision, as it had to be able to accommodate the hardware, be well cooled and yet silent, and look good under the TV in the lounge. Essentially, it needed to look like another 'under-TV' device, somewhat similar to DVD or tape players/recorders of old.

Choosing the tuner cards was the most difficult, as I recall. I had a preference for [Blackgold BGT36002](#) cards, but I also wanted the tuner cards to be usable with a Linux OS, as I do not use Windows. Blackgold were promising the release of Linux drivers for a considerable time. I eventually got fed up of their promises and purchased my next preferred cards, [TBS](#), who already had Linux drivers and kept them updated.

I have been very satisfied with those cards over the couple of years I have had them. The icing on that cake is that very soon the cards I chose should have open source drivers in the kernel. Seems I made a great choice for a Linux user.

In any case, I built the PC, using a near silent PSU, a motherboard with the two PCI-e slots I needed for the tuner cards, and a Celeron G630 CPU (dual core). A DVD drive completed it. I reckon it cost in the region of €600 in total. I was satisfied with the performance and the functions, and how quiet it was and how it looked.

I ran a community version of Openelec on it, which had XBMC (now Kodi) and also the drivers needed for the tuner cards, so there was no work for me with drivers. I used Tvheadend as the backend to deal with the tuners, EPG, time-shift and so on. Kodi with the Tvheadend client was used to allow access to the TV channels, recording options etc. I controlled the whole thing with one of the remote controllers that came with each tuner card.

All was good and everyone happy. I set up several plugins to give access to various streaming services with films, TV series and so on.

All done!

I did tweak the one case fan that I connected (the others were not needed) - I reduced the voltage to so it ran much slower and quieter. One could barely hear the PC in a quiet room from about 7 feet away. It was not at all intrusive in normal use.

So that completed my first HTPC build ... but of course it did not end there ...



HARDWARE

Case: Silverstone GD04B Grandia HTPC MATX Black [Link](#)

OS drive: OCZ Technology 60GB Agility 3 SSD Series SATAGb/s 2.5" Solid State Drive

Storage Drive: Seagate 3TB Barracuda 64MB 7200RPM HDD

PSU: OCZ Technology 550W ZT Series Fully-Modular Power Supply

Tuner Cards: TBS Dual DVB-T2 PCIe TV Tuner Card TBS6280/TBS6281

TBS Dual DVB-S2 PCIe TV Tuner Card TBS6981/TBS6982

Motherboard: MSI H61MA-E35 (B3) mATX LGA1155 DDR3 MB Intel H61 - 2 x DDR3 - SATA600 / USB3.0

CPU: PENTIUM DUAL CORE G630 2.7GHZ LGA1155 Socket - Box

RAM: CORSAIR DDR3 1333Mhz 8GB Kit 2x4GB DIMM 240-pin - DDR3 - 1333 MHz / PC3-10600 - CL9 -

Miscellaneous: SATA optical drive; HDMI cable

Part Deux:

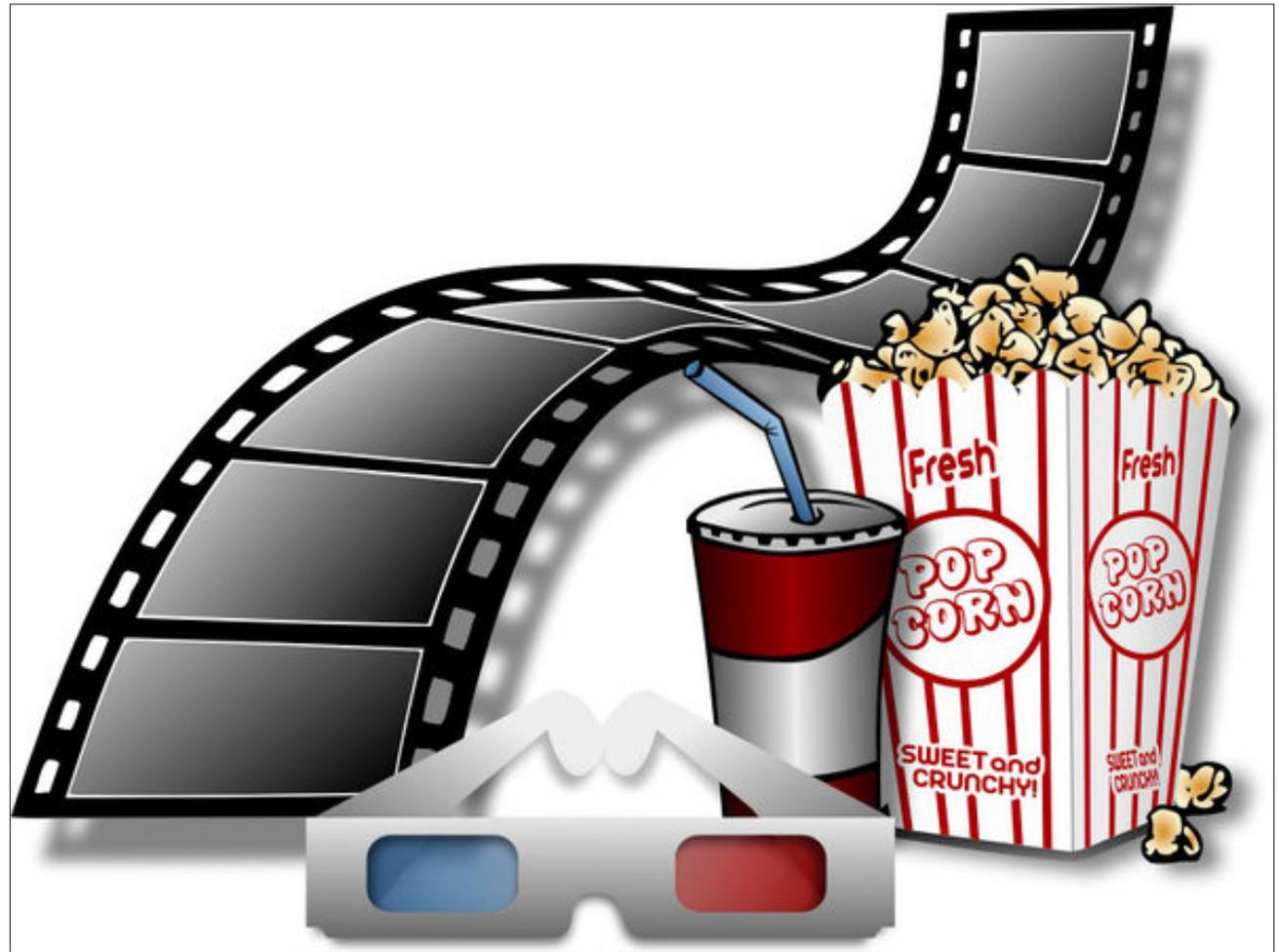
With my HTPC up and running, I began to experiment with getting more use out of it. I had a couple of older STB's at two other TV's in the house - kitchen and bedroom - which were on their last legs. One was an SD only for instance. So I began to wonder how I might improve things. By this point, I was aware I had very much overspent on my HTPC (but was not unhappy at all with the result) and intended anything further being done would be within a very tight budget.

The first thing I found I could easily do was to access all the functions of the HTPC from any PC on the network. There is now a plugin for VLC for HTSP streams which are produced by Tvheadend, so I had a choice. I used VLC and I also used XBMC (now Kodi) on my main PC, to view not only stored content on the HTPC, but also LiveTV from its tuners. I did similarly with the Laptop and then the Tablet. My daughter even used her iPhone to play some video on the main TV through it. The options seemed endless.

Next item was a Raspberry Pi Model B to act as a client device. I set that up with an official release of Openelec, attached it to the bedroom TV, and Hey Presto! Full live TV from both DTT and Satellite, plus access to all stored content on the bedroom TV. I could even set a recording on the Pi in the bedroom, and it would be saved on the common storage in the HTPC, so everyone could access it from whatever device they chose.

The R-Pi B was not the most responsive device one could have bought, but it surely was the cheapest with full HD out! The more recent R-Pi 2 (same price) is an excellent device for the purpose and does not lack in response. Other good client devices are the [Intel NUC](#) range and [Gigabyte Brix](#) range. I later acquired the [R-Pi 2](#) for the bedroom.

During this time, a friend was hassling me to build a similar system for him. I continually postponed it, as I



was still trying to decide what my own setup should *finally* be (yes, by now I was not completely satisfied any more). I did some tests on a couple of discarded Dell PCs I received around Xmas 2014, and found that the P4 dual core PCs were very capable of acting as the backend for my set up.

By now I had decided I wanted a small silent client device at my lounge TV as well as the bedroom. There was no need whatsoever to have a large box (no matter how good it looked) taking up space under the TV. The backend functions could be off-

loaded to a server/backend PC placed anywhere in the house and wired to the LAN.

I donated the original build to my friend instead of building another, and got two new tuner cards, plonked them into one of the old Dell Dimension 5150 PCs, connected it to the LAN, and added a NUC to the lounge TV in place of the big box. As before, all devices have access to LiveTV and stored videos & recordings, and are able to set recordings etc. All good. Silence from the client

devices at the TVs. Backend PC out of sight and not heard even if it does ramp up its fans a bit.

I can administer Tvheadend over the LAN from my PC, if required. There are various apps and such for tablets and phones to control Kodi on the client devices, or alternatively use the remote control. The NUC has a built in IR receiver, and I used a FLIRC for the R-Pi 2.

Things left to do

1. Move the backend to a permanent PC I am experimenting with an HP server for this purpose at the moment. It has the required PCI-e slots and lots of room for HDDs etc. The HP firmware might be problematic, but I am not sure yet. It is definitely problematic with fan speed control, so it looks like I will, at minimum, have to build a controller for the two fans.

It can then also act as a LAN server & NAS as well as serving all the live media to all connected devices.

2. Set up the R-Pi B for the Kitchen TV so that has all the same services available.

It is my fervent wish that by the time I get that done I will not have thought of any other 'improvement' I might wish to make. :D

The hardware cost for the 'new' set up

Dell PC free of charge

Tuner Cards ... ~€250 (2 x dual tuner cards) with 2 x Remotes

R-Pi 2 including case ~€45 (one per TV) I already had the [FLIRC](#).

The FLIRC is only needed if you do not want to use a phone or tablet to control the Pi.

So far there is no service I want that is not made available via plugins in Kodi. That might change in the future too.

So my definition for MY HTPC is that it must have the following features ...

Broadcast TV
IPTV
Media Server
General Server/NAS

I seem to have it covered at present.

Other thoughts:

Backend duties seem to be quite light on resources.

During tests I was able to record 5 different TV programmes at the same time, 3 of them in HD, without any problems.

My tests also included displaying 5 different channels on my PC at the one time.

Those tests were run with the Celeron G630 and not with the P4 but I expect the P4 could handle them also.

I thought to use PCLinuxOS as the OS of choice, but for several reasons discarded the idea:

1. It won't run on the R-Pi (ARM), and anyway the client devices would not handle a full OS very well.

2. Using a dedicated OS for the purpose seems the reasonable thing to do. Openelec is ideal as it is built for this purpose only.

3. Up to now, drivers for the tuner cards were not easy to manage on PCLinuxOS. Hopefully that will change as the kernels update and the open source drivers are included.

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Game Zone: Square Heroes

by daiashi



About The Game

Designed for multiplayer from the ground up. All maps support six players including bots as desired. Up to four human players can play locally without split screen. What's more, multiple local players can join online matches together, enabling online couch vs couch gaming.

Game modes include co-op, free-for-all, and team based options. Hunt for gnomes, survive alien onslaughts and fight to the death in any of the six stylish 2.5D arenas.

Choose your weapons at the start of each round and unlock them by collecting loot. Rounds begin with Melee combat and progress through: ranged, heavy, explosive and special item categories. Strategically choose your load-out to defeat your foes!

Level-up your Hero and unlock over 30 new weapons including: Grenade Launcher, Sticky Bomb and Chicken. Earn over 30 heroic achievements to unlock stat buffing hats!

System requirements:

Fully updated PCLinuxOS and Steam

Hardware:

Minimum:

OS: PCLinuxOS
Processor: Any with 2 or more Cores
Memory: 1 GB RAM
Graphics: OpenGL 3.0 with at least 256MB
Network: Broadband Internet connection
Hard Drive: 256 MB available space

Recommended:

OS: PCLinuxOS
Processor: Any with 2 or more Cores
Memory: 2 GB RAM
Graphics: OpenGL 3.0 or later with at least 512MB
Network: Broadband Internet connection
Hard Drive: 1 GB available space

About The Company, GnoMic Studios

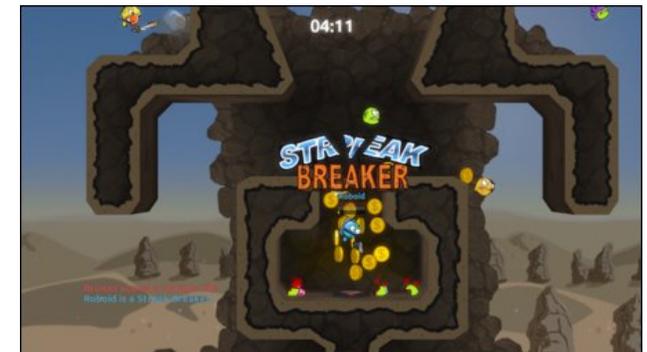
Build It And They Will Play. Founded in 2009 by Scott Millar and Aranda Morrison, GnoMic Studios went on to release Square Off on Xbox, Windows Phone, Ouya, iOS and Android. They are currently building the online multiplayer sequel, Square Heroes.

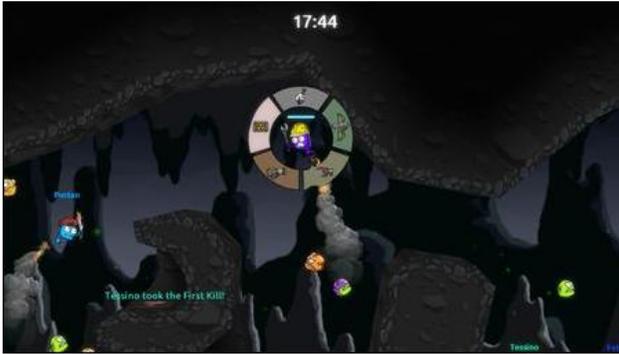
Impressions

I actually found this game fun. At first, I was a little skeptical due to the unclear layout between single player and multiplayer. It reminds me of a gun-wielding version of Kirby with a jet pack.

As simple as it may seem, it can definitely fill a gap during a rainy or snowy day.

Some Gameplay Screenshots





Getting It To Run

Install Steam (if you don't have it installed already), then start it. You will need to create a new account, if you do not already have one. Once you have Steam up and running, go to the store tab. Click on the Linux tab if you wish, and search for Square Heroes. Click on and download the demo. If you have updated your system, including graphics drivers, you should be good to go.

<http://store.steampowered.com/app/334560>



Screenshot Showcase



Posted by weirdwolf, on April 12, 2015, running LXDE.

Just Xdo It!

by critter

A few months ago my main machine died and I couldn't afford to fix it: the money was required more urgently for other purposes, as my wife reminded me. I was left with a five year old Lenovo laptop which, while perfectly serviceable, was prone to running hot. I had been using KDE but now I needed something a little lighter, something that used fewer resources and so did not push my poor laptop quite so hard.

After experimenting with all of the better supported desktop environments and window managers I settled for the PCLinuxOS Mate 64 bit offering. I wiped the hard drive, removing Windows and the recovery partition (this had been the laptop I used when I was working, and now I am free to choose).

Booting into this, I found that I had a fully operational desktop using just over 200MB of RAM and with both processor cores running at between 1% - 2%, processor clocked at half speed and the fan not even running yet - excellent!

But, and there had to be a but, Mate does not have all of the features of KDE, and some of those features I found really useful, so I started to search the internet for solutions. During my search I came across an article by a very resourceful young man named [Eric Zhiqiang Ma](#) which used a utility called **xdotool** (it's in the PCLinuxOS repositories) to pop up a gnome terminal on the desktop whenever a particular key combination was pressed. Now guake works similar to this as does KDE's yakuake, but this script allowed me to use my mate-terminal which is an excellent terminal emulator and requires no additional dependencies to be loaded. I could, of course, have chosen any terminal emulator application.

What follows is how I used this utility in the Mate Desktop Environment, but it should all work on almost any desktop (perhaps enlightenment may have problems, but I don't know, I haven't tried it). I installed **xdotool** then downloaded the script and changed the line

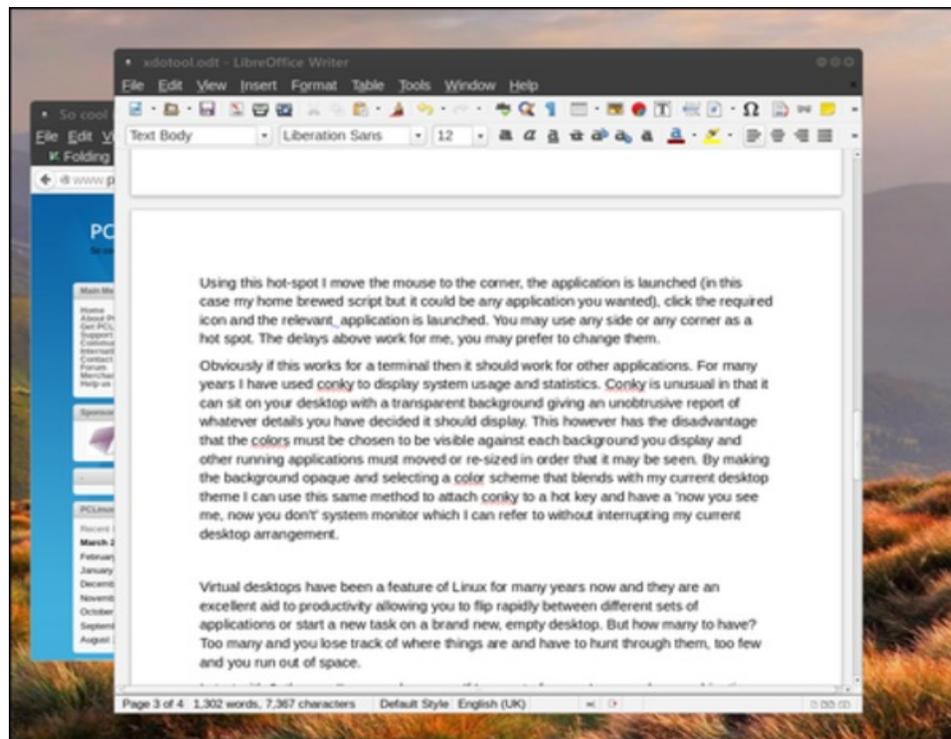
```
gnome-terminal --maximize &
```

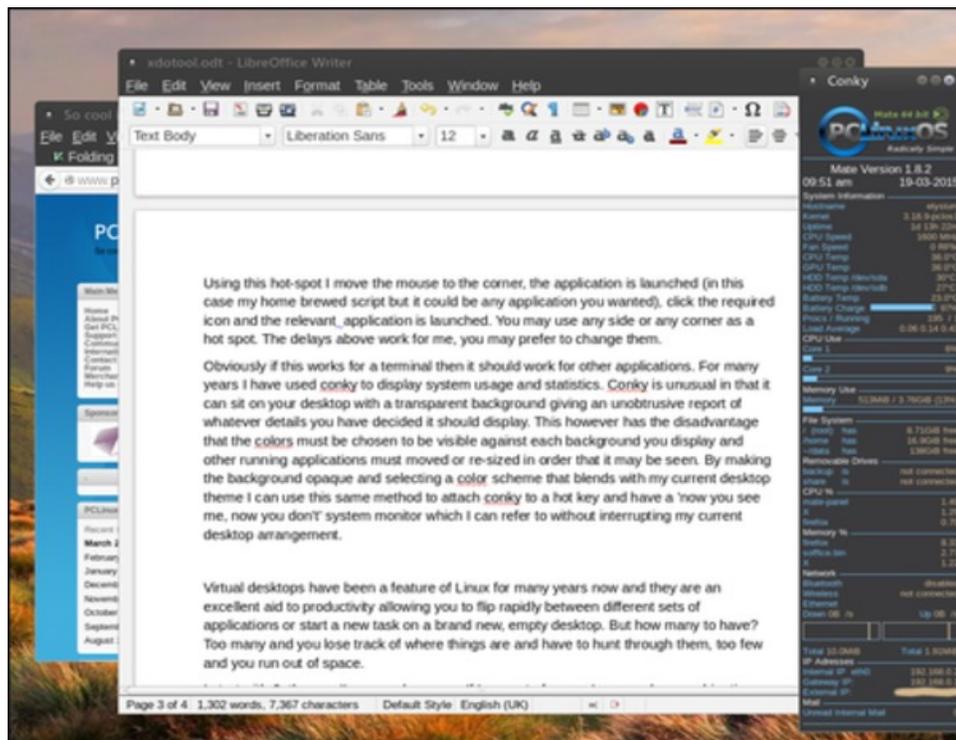
to

```
mate-terminal --geometry 120x36+180+100 &
```

And set it to run when F12 was pressed (*System-Preferences-Keyboard Shortcuts*). It worked flawlessly. How it does it is explained in the article referenced by the link above.

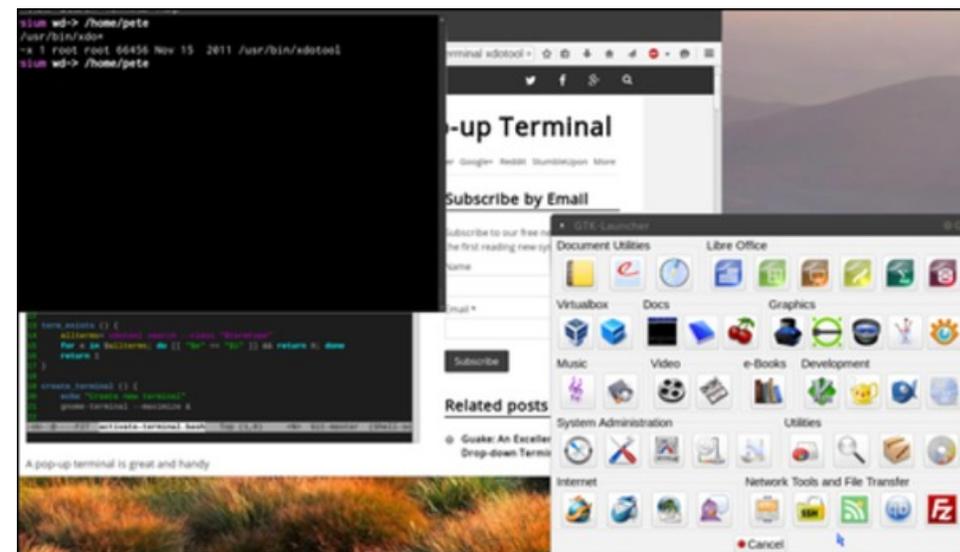
Obviously if this technique works for a terminal then it should work for other applications. For many years I have used conky to monitor and display system usage and statistics. Conky is unusual in that it can sit on your desktop with a transparent background giving an unobtrusive report of whatever details you have decided it should display. This however has the disadvantages that the colors must be chosen to be visible against each background you display and that other running applications must moved or resized in order that it may be seen. By making the background opaque and selecting a color scheme that blends with my current desktop theme I can use this same method to attach conky to a hot key and have a "now you see me, now you don't" system monitor which I can refer to without interrupting my current desktop arrangement and that is also always perfectly legible whatever background image I use.





So, although there is no mention of it curing the common cold, it does seem to be quite a useful tool to know about. One of the things that I missed from KDE was hot screen edges and corners but xdotool provides this and takes it a step

further. I have a little home made application called launcher.sh that allows me to quickly select from my most common applications.



So, what else can this xdotool utility do? Quite a lot, as it happens. It can send keystrokes to applications, intercept and modify keystrokes before sending them. It can also send typed messages to any available window, even delaying the appearance of each letter as it would appear if typed in real time (or, for those who remember them, on the old teleprinters.). It can move the mouse pointer to any position, to any application or to any screen using absolute, relative or even polar coordinates. The mouse position can be retrieved, mouse clicks simulated and operations may be performed on such events as entering or leaving a particular window or the cursor hitting a screen edge or corner. It can retrieve the window name, geometry and status, move, resize, focus, show, hide or kill a window. You can also move to a different workspace or send a window there and add or remove workspaces. When an event occurs it can execute a command or script. The commands can be stored in a file and either redirected to xdotool or executed directly if a 'bash style' header is included as the first line:

```
#!/usr/bin/xdotool
```

Note: This only works if all of the commands in the script are xdotool commands.

I thought that it would be nice to have instant access to this by activating a hot spot with the mouse cursor. To achieve this I set up an xdotool command to run on startup:

System-Preferences-Startup Applications

```
xdotool behave_screen_edge --delay 800 --quiesce 1500 bottom-right
exec /bin/launcher.sh
```

The above is all one line and should be entered into the Startup Applications dialog 'command' box. This is what it means:

- xdotool** call the utility.
- behave_screen_edge** look for the mouse pointer hitting a screen edge or corner and perform the following actions.
- - delay 800** wait 800 milliseconds before triggering the event to avoid accidental triggers.

- - **quiesce 1500** don't perform any other action for another 1500 milliseconds - this prevents multiple instances being launched before you move the mouse away from the hot spot.

bottom-right the screen location to monitor.

exec execute something when the trigger is pulled.

/bin/launcher.sh the something to execute.

Using this hot-spot, I move the mouse to the bottom right corner, the application is launched (in this case my home brewed script but it could be any application you wanted), I then click the required icon and the relevant application is launched. This a lot quicker and more convenient than hunting through multiple menu layers. You may use any side or any corner as a hot spot: left, right, top, bottom, top-left, top-right, bottom-left or bottom-right as I have used here. The delays above work for me, but you may prefer to change them.

Virtual desktops or workspaces have been a feature of Linux for many years now and they are an excellent aid to productivity allowing you to flip rapidly between different sets of applications or to start a new task on a brand new, empty desktop. But how many desktops should you have? Too many and you lose track of where things are and have to hunt through them, too few and you run out of space.

I start with 2, the one I'm on and a spare. If I run out of space I press a key combination and xdotool creates a new one for me. When I want to remove the additional desktops a different key combo will tell xdotool to remove them, one at a time. Any applications still open on the removed desktop are not lost but moved to the desktop on the left.

The code to do this is:

```
xdotool set_num_desktops $(( $(xdotool get_num_desktops) + 1 ))
```

and

```
xdotool set_num_desktops $(( $(xdotool get_num_desktops) - 1 ))
```

Typing this every time to add or remove a desktop is obviously not good and so I store the code as two scripts simply adding a one line bash header at the beginning of each file. For example:

```
#!/bin/bash
xdotool set_num_desktops $(( $(xdotool get_num_desktops) + 1 ))
```

The scripts are saved as *addwkspc* and *rmvwkspc*, and are then made executable with:

```
chmod +x addwkspc
chmod +x rmvwkspc
```

The `#!/bin/bash` header is required, rather than the xdotool header mentioned previously, as some bash features (arithmetic expansion and sub shells) are included with the xdotool commands but you can use the scripts without having to understand the finer details.

You can then assign each script to a keyboard shortcut (I use Ctrl+F7 and Ctrl+F8) making sure that you give the full path to the file, perhaps */home/me/addwkspc* or similar.

Xdotool also gives you the ability to move between the various desktops in almost any manner that you can think of. As moving backwards and forwards one desktop at a time is already catered for in Mate, I haven't found it necessary to use much of this facility. I feel that this rather defeats the object of simplicity. However, the options are there if you want them.

Manipulating windows is one of the great strengths of xdotool, and it has allowed me to add some of KDE's functionality to Mate. In KDE it was possible for me to have a particular window or application startup on a particular desktop, in a predetermined position and of a chosen size meaning that I always knew where it would be. This is also possible in Mate with the help of xdotool, although there is a little more effort required to set it up. This only needs to be done once, however.

To perform operations on a window you have to know something about it: its window id, the window name (as it appears in the titlebar), the window class or the window classname for example. These are things that your window manager uses to refer to individual windows. The xdotool utility can get these details for you but I use another utility called xprop which, if not already installed, can also be found in the PCLinuxOS repositories.

If I want to have pluma, Mate's text editor, open in the same place and the same size whenever I open it, then I need to know how to refer to that window. The window id is assigned by the window manager and is not consistent across instances. When I first open pluma the window name (title) is "Unsaved Document 1 - pluma", if I close the empty document tab it is a simple "pluma" but when I open or save a document this changes to incorporate the document name. The window class will however always be the same and to find this I open pluma and use the xprop command, piped to grep to display only the information I need as xprop is very verbose without this:

xprop | grep CLASS

Which waits for me to click inside the window for which I want the properties and then returns

```
WM_CLASS(STRING) = "pluma", "Pluma"
```

I can use either *pluma* or *Pluma* to refer to my pluma window, as both will work.

Alternatively, the class may be overridden by calling pluma with the GTK+ -class option.

To move and resize this window, I must tell xdotool to search for a window of class pluma and then to perform the operations on it. The code to move the window to the top left corner (0 0) and resize the window to 700 x 500 pixels becomes (typed all on one line):

```
xdotool search --class Pluma windowize %@ 700 500
windowmove %@ 0 0
```

However, this will only work if the application is already running. To launch an application and then apply xdotool commands to it requires a little more work. In a bash script launch the application and put it in the background by following it with &. Then issue the disown command which breaks the relationship between the bash script and the application allowing them both to continue running independently. Finally issue the xdotool statement with the -sync option to the xdotool search command. This option tells xdotool to wait until the application window is visible before applying the size and move commands. Here is the script.

```
#!/bin/bash
/usr/bin/pluma &
disown
/usr/bin/xdotool search --sync --class Pluma windowize %@ 700 500
windowmove %@ 0 0
```

The last line should be all on one line. This script is not the cleanest implementation of achieving these results as it briefly shows the application before moving and re-sizing it but that is a small price to pay for simplicity.

As your window manager may have several references to an application the %@ is required to ensure that xdotool catches the one that you need.

This may seem confusing, so by way of explanation I shall refer to an example from xdotools own documentation. By default, pluma allows only one instance to be displayed. If you try to open a new instance of pluma, a new tab will be

opened. Other applications allow you to litter your screen with as many instances as you want. Mate-terminal is one such application. Each instance is referred to as a position on a stack of window ID's, which is how the window manager knows each window. The first window of the classname mate-terminal is referenced as %1, the second as %2 and so on, %@ refers to all of them. Similarly, the parameters passed to a script are referenced as \$1, \$2 ... This script (I have named it fourterms) contains only xdotool commands, and so begins with the xdotool header rather than the bash header. This is more efficient, as bash is not required.

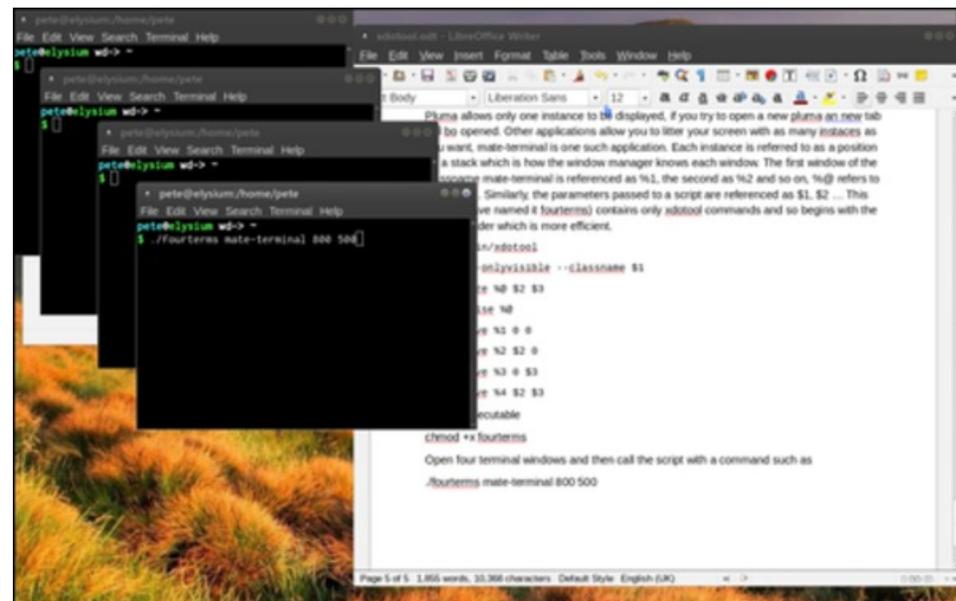
```
#!/usr/bin/xdotool
search --onlyvisible --classname $1
windowize %@ $2 $3
windowmove %1 0 0
windowmove %2 $2 0
windowmove %3 0 $3
windowmove %4 $2 $3
```

Make it executable.

```
chmod +x fourterms
```

Open four terminal windows and then call the script with a command such as

```
./fourterms mate-terminal 800 500
```



Only windows that have the classname 'mate-terminal' (the first parameter passed to the script) and are visible will be acted upon.

The line that reads

```
windowmove %4 $2 $3
```

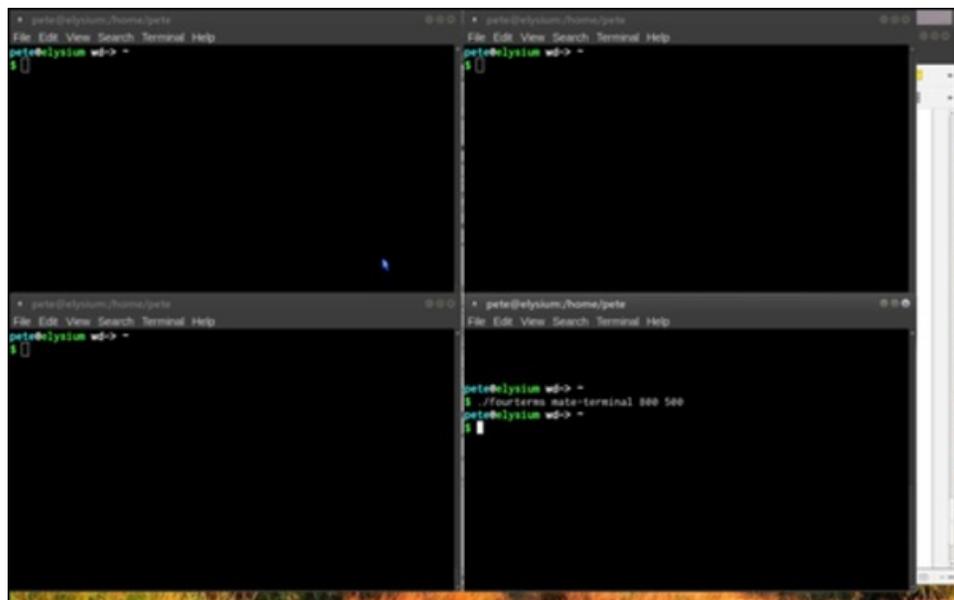
will move the fourth window (%4).

To position \$2 (the second parameter – 800) in the x direction and position \$3 (the third parameter – 500) in the y direction. 0 0 is the top left corner of the screen.

To simultaneously move the terminals to say desktop 3 (make sure that desktop 3 exists and notice that desktop numbering starts at 0 so this would be the fourth desktop) add the following lines to the script.

```
set_desktop_for_window %1 3  
set_desktop_for_window %2 3  
set_desktop_for_window %3 3  
set_desktop_for_window %4 3
```

And you will get a nice array of terminals on that desktop.



If you frequently use the same set of applications arranged over a number of desktops to perform a task, then xdotool can be configured to perform all of the opening, re-sizing and moving around as well as setting up the correct number of desktops, all from a single key combination.

Sometimes you will want to do something with a window of your choice at the time rather than a particular, pre-chosen window. Perhaps you would like to have a hotkey that would instantly move a window that is cluttering your desktop, but that you have not actually finished with. Move it to perhaps the fourth desktop (number 3), which you can later jump to and continue using it. In this case, you can't know the window ID or window class or any of those things, and so xdotool has the selectwindow command. When xdotool is given this command, it knows to wait for you to click on a window and then performs any additional commands on that window.

```
xdotool selectwindow set_desktop_for_window 3
```

Adding that line to a keyboard shortcut, perhaps winkey+4, will send the next window that you click on to the fourth desktop.

Often, I have Firefox open somewhere or other and I suddenly need to access a particular website. The following line of code will find Firefox, move it to the desktop where I have placed it, give it the focus (activate it), move the cursor to the address bar (ctrl+l) and clear any text there (BackSpace) allowing me to instantly start typing the address of the required website.

```
xdotool search "Mozilla Firefox" windowactivate -sync key ctrl+l  
key BackSpace
```

All of this must be on one line, and can be hooked up to a shortcut key combination.

That then covers the basics of xdotool. The man page covers all of the available commands and options and with these few examples you should be able to make use of any that interest you. How much use you get from this utility depends upon your requirements and not from any ability to perform complex programming. For me it did a nice job of bridging the gap between the mighty but demanding KDE environment and my lean, mean Mate machine.



PCLinuxOS Family Member Spotlight: Georgetoon

As Told To Smileeb

This month we have Georgetoon



How old are you?

I was born in 1958. So that makes me 56 years young.

Married, single or what?

I'm single. I've never been married. But, ya never know. Miss Right might still show up. Let's just hope I'm not at my drawing board when she does. It's distracted me before.

Children, grandchildren?

Nope. Lots of nieces and nephews though.

Retired or working and for how long and at what?

I work in a family business and have been at that since high school. Currently, I'm Vice-President of Trico Machine Products Corporation. I'm also a cartoonist. I started to cartoon seriously during my four years at The Ohio State University. I kept at it since graduating back in 1981. I was nationally syndicated for nine years with King Features through their weekly service. Then, I moved to DBR Media for eight years until they folded. Since 2008, I've been distributing my cartoon features myself via [georgetoon.com](http://www.georgetoon.com) and my [blog](http://www.georgetoon.com/blog)

What is the area you live in like? Weather, Quietness, Scenery?

I live in Northeast Ohio. Specifically, Chardon, Ohio. It's a nice semi-rural area about 45 minutes east of Cleveland. We're the Maple Syrup capital of the world! Come visit during our Maple Festival!



<http://www.maplefestival.com/>

We're also known as "The Hilltoppers" because we're at a higher elevation in relation to the rest of NE Ohio. Which means, we get A LOT of snow in the winter. We're in the snow-belt and our altitude makes us the highest target for all that lake-effect snow that comes off Lake Erie.

Are you handy with your hands and have any hobbies.

My main hobby has always been cartooning. Add to that my LOVE of computers and PCLinuxOS and Linux in general. When the digital revolution started in the late 1970's, I was right there with it. I used whatever software program or system came along to enhance and edit my cartoons. I got on the

computer learning curve early on and rode the wave. Surprisingly to many, I'm not a Mac user like a lot of my fellow cartoonists. I also love to read. I've always been a reader. Since getting rid of my cable subscription, I've made my way back to the local library. When you visit the forums, you'll see some threads I've started regarding reading and summer reading.

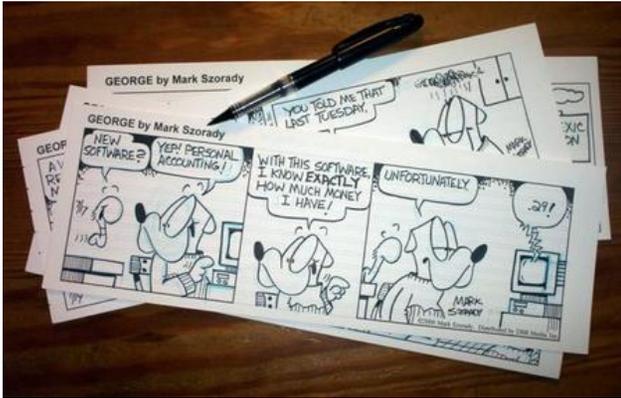
<http://www.pclinuxos.com/forum/index.php/topic,127219.msg1067350.html#msg1067350>

And, as I've mentioned in those threads, library used book sales enable you to find some real gems and treasures. I love my Kindle, but there is something so wonderful about having a good hardcover book on your bookshelf.



What is your education level?

BA in communications from the College of Arts and Sciences from The Ohio State University 1981. I was also accepted into a Masters program at Kent State University. However, I dropped out shortly after being accepted. I really wanted to be a cartoonist.



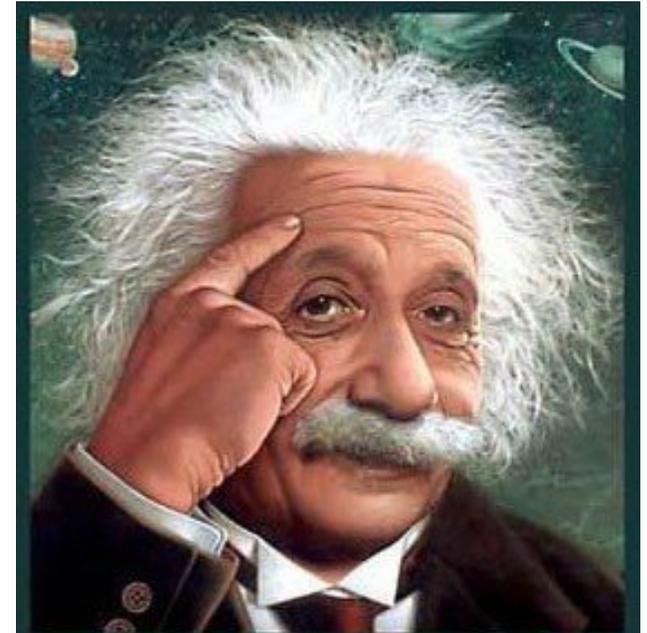
What caused you to try Linux and join this forum.

That's easy. A Windows virus. Somehow, my Windows 98 system became infected. It took me two weeks talking to Microsoft technical support to remove the parasite and clean the system. I'd been reading about Linux and decided to jump in. I moved from distro to distro, learning as I went along. I found PCLinuxOS because it was the most user friendly and the community was just as friendly and welcoming.



PCLinuxOS Family Member Spotlight is an exclusive, monthly column by smileeb, featuring PCLinuxOS forum members. This column will allow "the rest of us" to get to know our forum family members better, and will give those featured an opportunity to share their PCLinuxOS story with the rest of the world.

If you would like to be featured in PCLinuxOS Family Member Spotlight, please send a private message to smileeb in the PCLinuxOS forum expressing your interest.



It's easier than E=mc²
It's elemental
It's light years ahead
It's a wise choice
It's Radically Simple
It's ...



Do you like to travel, go camping?

Yes, I like to travel. Being a member of the National Cartoonists Society has taken me all over the country to attend the Reuben Awards weekend and Convention. I've been to Los Angeles, San Diego, Chicago, Pittsburgh, Washington, D.C., Kansas City, Boca Raton, Asheville, NC (chimney rock was cool!), New York, Phoenix, and the list goes on. I also like taking one tank trips. A great destination for me is

driving the two and half hours down the road back to Columbus to visit the campus at O.S.U. If you ever find yourself in Columbus, be sure to swing by The Ohio State University. O.S.U. is home to The Billy Ireland cartoon Library and Museum.



<https://cartoons.osu.edu/>

It has one of the finest and most extensive collections of original cartoon art on the planet!



PCLinuxOS Puzzled Partitions

			4			2	
		6	5				1
7	5		6		3		4
1				4	5	6	
		4	9	6			2
6	1		3		7		9
8					4	3	
	7				6		

SUDOKU RULES: There is only one valid solution to each Sudoku puzzle. The only way the puzzle can be considered solved correctly is when all 81 boxes contain numbers and the other Sudoku rules have been followed.

When you start a game of Sudoku, some blocks will be prefilled for you. You cannot change these numbers in the course of the game.

Each column must contain all of the numbers 1 through 9 and no two numbers in the same column of a Sudoku puzzle can be the same. Each row must contain all of the numbers 1 through 9 and no two numbers in the same row of a Sudoku puzzle can be the same.

Each block must contain all of the numbers 1 through 9 and no two numbers in the same block of a Sudoku puzzle can be the same.



SCRAPPLER RULES:

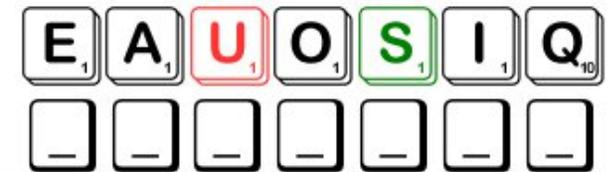
1. Follow the rules of Scrabble®. You can view them [here](#). You have seven (7) letter tiles with which to make as long of a word as you possibly can. Words are based on the English language. Non-English language words are NOT allowed.
2. Red letters are scored double points. Green letters are scored triple points.
3. Add up the score of all the letters that you used. Unused letters are not scored. For red or green letters, apply the multiplier when tallying up your score. Next, apply any additional scoring multipliers, such as double or triple word score.
4. An additional 50 points is added for using all seven (7) of your tiles in a set to make your word. You will not necessarily be able to use all seven (7) of the letters in your set to form a "legal" word.
5. In case you are having difficulty seeing the point value on the letter tiles, here is a list of how they are scored:
 - 0 points: 2 blank tiles
 - 1 point: E, A, I, O, N, R, T, L, S, U
 - 2 points: D, G
 - 3 points: B, C, M, P
 - 4 points: F, H, V, W, Y
 - 5 points: K
 - 8 points: J, X
 - 10 points: Q, Z
6. Optionally, a time limit of 60 minutes should apply to the game, averaging to 12 minutes per letter tile set.
7. Have fun! It's only a game!



Double Word



Triple Word

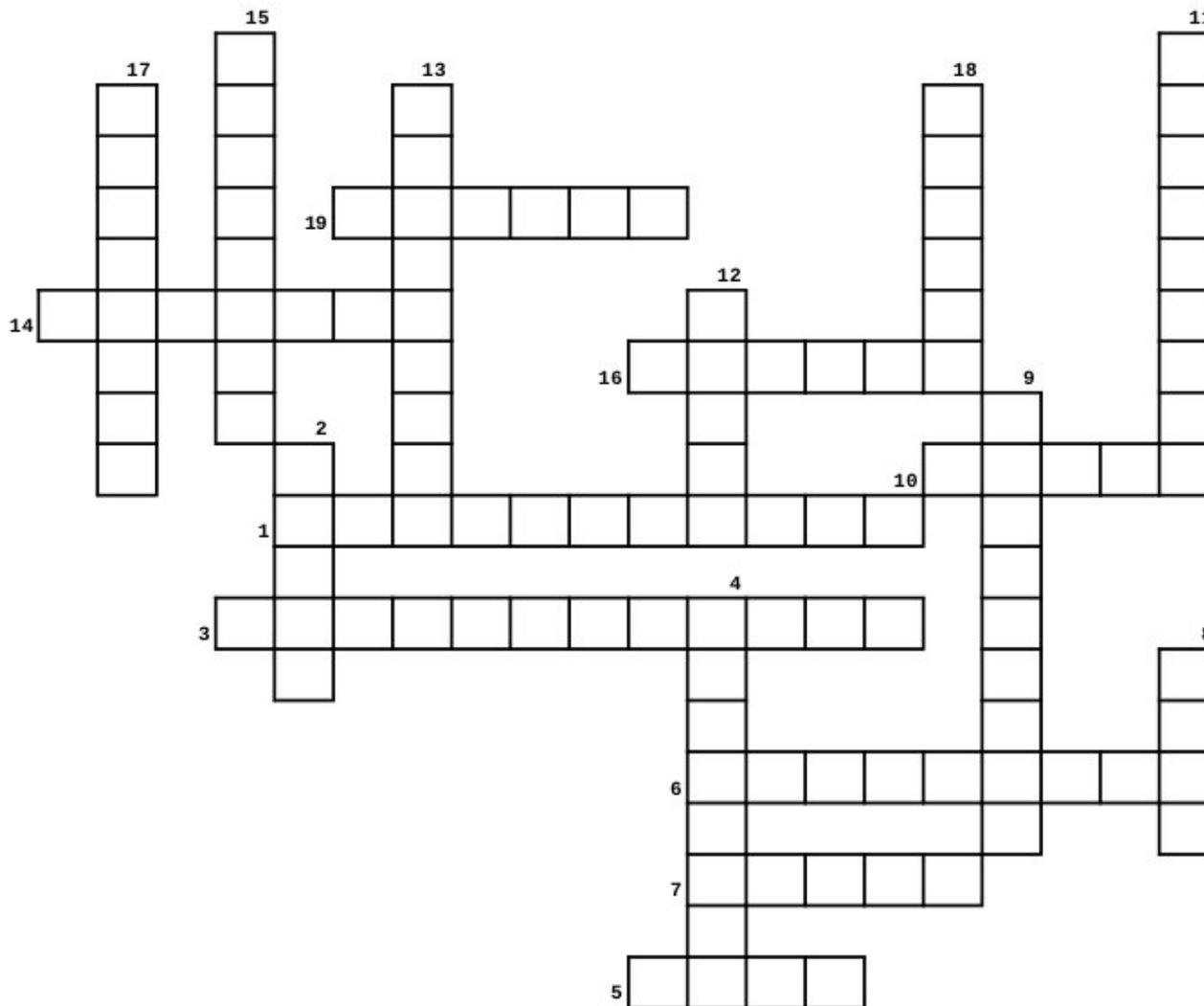


Possible score 293, average score 205.

Download Puzzle Solutions Here



PCLinuxOS Crossword Puzzle: May 2015



1. arching shrubs in the family Caprifoliaceae.
2. a genus of 67 species of perennial and annual plants in the family Polemoniaceae.
3. the common name for over 1,000 species of flowering plants in the family Convolvulaceae.
4. a genus of 39 known species of flowering plants in the mint family.
5. a genus of 300 species of plants with showy flowers with its name from the Greek word rainbow.
6. a well-known mountain flower, belonging to the Asteraceae (the daisy or sunflower family).
7. same family as the Sunflower.
8. a woody perennial of the genus *Rosa*, within the family Rosaceae.
9. in the Aster family.
10. a perennial, bulbous plant with showy flowers which belongs to the family Liliaceae.
11. member of the genus *Ranunculus*.
12. a species of flowering plant in the olive family Oleaceae.
13. a herbaceous perennial plant of the species *Dianthus*.
14. perennial flowering plants in the family Begoniaceae.
15. a plant in the genus *Calendula*.
16. a genus of plants of the sunflower tribe within the daisy family.
17. a genus of flowering plants in the coffee family.
18. flowering shrubs in the genus *Rhododendron*.
19. one of the two largest families of flowering plants

[Download Puzzle Solutions Here](#)

Flowers Word Find

Q I G Y D N U Q G P G H O L L Y H O C K O Y C B W M D G N L
 N O E C A D K J U V Z N V H A U S W D Q I G N O R L Y R U X
 S Z V S U F R Q K K Y W V I Z K M E O P O Q V M O O K K G C
 Y H P U D K Y D V Y T R N K I J M G Y L V R L G X P R E P T
 Z E A N Q I W N Q D D O L Y L H J B D V X Z I O S M J O N N
 I F S F B S C K O R G F A J A X U E I L T R L O D X E H Q A
 N E S L A E R O H E E I V E R V N L H X A H A A X P T A Q Z
 N R I O E L G O B J P N E N S R Z L C M P P C Z R C T J E B
 I K O W G C M C M W K M N P O O A F R E O X L O C K V B X X
 A Z N E A X A W R O N X D D Y E R L O H E W O E V M S T O D
 C D F R R L O N D N R K E A R B M O L Z V D X P O R A P S N
 F M L H D N T S R A B N R S V P E W U V H K C L Y K L U U R
 I S O A E A G D Z M U J I Z C F C E S P E I W K R I P L M R
 C M W B N S T K T P C E Z N R I X R B S E P V C J D F A F X
 F M E D I T Y G P A P T W E G V G N J K I V S G S M G K G I
 H I R V A U K H F M Z U E R A G V V P V D E C N K N K A D F
 B T J W H R X F H O X S H E N M L O P U L Z W O O N I I P E
 C K O W H T A H L Z I U L T H Z G O V X C E F L K N J Y H Y
 E X E O U I M I J A B A R L E U L A R Y Z R I O E T D N V D
 X Y Y O N U Y B S M Z N O A E P N B A Y P A E X S D J U Y K
 Y F L O D M B I E A K S J Q X B D F G I C L Q T E M E J G L
 Z J E L K C U S Y E N O H U C V E C M C U H I L T I U Y L Y
 R B L E Q R X C C H H B S E B P S U U G R L P E G U H E E N
 R Z G D W X Z U W Q S O N L L A Y Y L R J H Z G N I B P C X
 R T N T R F K S K Z A Y Z G Y U L D U B I L H K D V I I Y R
 J C W S R H U D J S S N U G F N U U Q N R O V J S E E L I O
 I Q Z A I R E T S I W I D A F F O D I L R S G S Z C C U X G
 I B N G Z K F C A R N A T I O N V U Z W C M F F N F V T J I
 Y A E E Q U P D O I I X U G G J M A V J P P J L C G Y T J N
 X F Q B E P Q Q Y Z A A N U R H O D O D E N D R O N F G P N

azalea
 begonia
 bellflower
 bluebells
 buttercup
 carnation
 daffodil
 daisy
 delphinium
 edelweiss
 freesia
 gardenia
 goldenrod
 hibiscus
 hollyhock
 honeysuckle
 iris
 larkspur
 lavender
 lilac
 magnolia
 marigold
 morning glory
 nasturtium
 orchid
 passionflower
 peony
 phlox
 rhododendron
 rose
 sunflower
 tulip
 wisteria
 yucca
 zinnia

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