

Re: Different OS's? Marketshare

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From: Kevin Kinsey (kdk_at_daleco.biz)

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To: freebsd-questions@freebsd.org

Anthony Atkielski wrote:

>I'm still quite ambivalent about it. I keep wondering if Linux is
>different enough and useful enough to be worth dedicating this machine
>to it ... or if I should just continue with FreeBSD and install X on the
>machine (and KDE, probably, since it seems to be popular, although I
>welcome suggestions).
>
>Which window manager is the closest to classic UNIX window managers (as
>opposed to wannabe Windows products)?
>
>

Well, you can do a little research yourself (I'm sure you will at some point, anyway):

(Hmm, a "store"? Browse screenshots and descriptions):

<http://xwinman.org/>

(A comparison article, 5 wm's and the XFCE environment):

<http://rootprompt.org/article.php3?article=8346>

IIRC, there's also a rather large thread on bsdforums.org where people are showing off their "desktops". You could also get a "look-see" there...

As for my own experience, I can't really answer your question, because "classic UNIX window managers" is somewhat meaningless to me as a newbie.

Part of Free Software is "freedom of choice" as you well know. There are so many choices out there that your head can spin while looking. My experience:

1. BlackBox. Small, light, fast. To me, rather mouse oriented. Collapsing menus. A small "app" bar at the top, but no default icon support, etc.

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2. FluxBox. BlackBox with more themes*.
3. Enlightenment. Larger than bb/fb. I didn't stick with it long at all, so I can't say much else.
4. XFCE. I liked it ... BSD licensed (IIRC), no larger than Enlightenment, certainly. One toolbar in default install, a few default tools. Icons on the toolbar (can't remember if you can put 'em on the desktop in default install).
5. GNOME. On my desktop now ... why? Curiosity, I guess. Lots of tools, takes lots of muscle. Probably a "windows wannabe" as you say (but it crashes less ... ;-). I wouldn't put a new KDE or GNOME on a very old box, but maybe I don't know how to go about that very well (I know there is a "gnome-lite", and there is probably a corresponding "light KDE"). It seems a tad slow ATM, but this box runs as gateway/firewall, SMTP/POP3, http (development server), DNS, rsyncd, samba on the office network, plus currently 9 windows in Mozilla, 23 in Opera, mail client, Dictionary app, this compose window, 5-6 terminals running SSH to 3 servers across 4 desktops, the GIMP with a rather big photo open, and a small word processor document.)

There are so many other WMs. It all depends on how you work. And, you can run some toolbars/docks, iconifying program, pretty much any X application, whatever, on just about anything -- "tools, not policy" after all.

Greg Lehey, for example, states (~to the effect of~) "I'm not into eye candy", and runs something rather simple (twm? fvwm?) that's all configured exactly the way he wants it across several monitors, at rather/very high resolution(s). He either has great eyesight, or has good glasses, I guess (and it's pure speculation and nothing personal at all) because he works surrounded by words, words, and more words, I suppose, whether it's code, mail, whatever.

I'm different, I was a M\$ user for quite a while, and apart from the differences in the "toolbar" at the bottom and the fact that I have top and right-side toolbars also, I'm not sure my desktop looks much different than it did back on Win98. (Well, on 10 items on this desktop --- but the toolbars [32 launchers now] make up for it.) Except, it never turns blue and give me ominous white letters, nor does it ever lockup without leaving me some option besides a power cycle.

Kevin Kinsey

*I'm sure there are other things, and my descriptions are at best those of the uninitiated. My apologies to the devoted, I do not aim to offend. That would extend to all users of \$YOUR_WM_HERE....

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