Window Maker Live (WML) takes an unusual approach to desktop interface management. It has an old-fashioned look with a productive new feel.

The latest version of Window Maker Live (0.95.7-4), released this month, is a Debian-based Linux distribution that uses the Window Maker window manager as the default graphical user interface. It integrates well-known open source components in a surprisingly satisfying interface.

Window Maker itself has been around since 1997. It is an X11 window manager originally designed to provide integration support for the GNUstep Desktop Environment, a free adaptation of Cocoa (formerly OpenStep).

A framework with application development tools for Unix-like operating systems and Microsoft Windows, Window Maker is part of the GNU Project.

If you are into retro computing, you will marvel at Window Maker's success in reproducing the cool look and feel of the Nextstep user interface. That nostalgia is reminiscent of Thinkpad T61 technology.

If that level of computing nostalgia is not your passion, WML's user interface can bring you a productivity boost without the excessive GUI bloat of modern-day Linux desktop environments.