Boot Vector

By Roy Schestowitz
Created 09/05/2021 - 11:39pm
But in the 1990s, as Linux was first emerging as a potential operating system with mainstream appeal, the options weren’t necessarily so easy to grasp, which meant that you had to put it on a disk drive before you could actually use it. But doing so in a way that wasn’t destructive went over the heads of new users.

And given that Windows already gave users enough heartache, if Linux was going to win over a large audience, it was going to have to be presented in a way that a regular person could try without the risk of breaking anything.

There was just one problem: The technology wasn’t yet ready. The original alpha of Yggdrasil Linux/GNU/X, considered the first Live CD built expressly for Linux, released well before the term ?Live CD? was even in use, required 8 megabytes of RAM, at a time when that much RAM was not necessarily common in mainstream computers. (The final release, still downloadable today, lowered the number to 4MB of RAM.)

While a landmark of sorts today, Yggdrasil quickly faded from view, and that meant that others would be left to try again.

The passage of time was a useful thing, however. In 2000, the Pentium III was common, and the Pentium 4 had just been released. The CD-ROM drive, long having gotten past the caddy, had reached speeds of as high as 52X, whirring along at more than 6,000 revolutions per minute, to draw read speeds above 6 megabytes per second. (By comparison,
the average SATA SSD maxes out at 600 megabytes per second; a modern high-end hard drive can hit maybe a third of that speed.) And DVD-ROMs, which started at 1.25 megabytes per second in speed (nearly 10 times that of a 1X CD-ROMs) were becoming mainstream by this point, and could hold significantly more data, to boot.

But then, there was the portability factor?how were we going to get these live CDs out to lots of people? If you ever went to a Barnes & Noble and picked up a Linux magazine off the rack, you know the answer already?the live CD distros that were often distributed with magazines! But that didn?t necessarily make itself clear at first.

[3]

GNU Linux

Source URL: http://www.tuxmachines.org/node/150968

Links:
[3] https://tedium.co/2021/05/07/linux-live-cd-history/