In the past I’ve felt as though Tails was one of the better distributions available for people who wanted to communicate anonymously or visit websites without giving away their location. It was a solid tool, if somewhat held back by two issues. One was that some of the included software was either geared more toward technically experienced users or hadn't yet matured. Early versions of OnionShare come to mind as software which still had some problems when it was first introduced in Tails. The other issue was performance. GNOME is one of the heaviest open source desktop environments and early versions of GNOME 3 were particularly cumbersome, especially when run on lower-end hardware.

What I have appreciated about Tails 5 is it feels like a polished, evolutionary step forward without (as far as I can tell) any regressions from the 4.x series. GNOME 38 still isn't as responsive and smooth as later versions of GNOME (40 and newer) have been for me, but it feels a little better than past releases.

I really like the new Kleopatra tool which acts as a one-stop application for all our encryption key management, file signing, and encryption needs. Kleopatra is another tool I feel has become more polished in recent years and I enjoyed having it in Tails 5.

Both Tor Browser and OnionShare worked beautifully for me. I think Tor Browser has always been a solid experience and it continues to be good. OnionShare was a good idea in the past, but I sometimes encountered stability issues with it. The current version feels easier to use and entirely stable.

I like the initial configuration screen Tails displays when the distribution starts. The default settings lock down the system (using MAC randomization, locking the Unsafe Browser option, and locking admin functions). However, we can toggle these features if we wish to give more flexibility. This walks a careful line between being secure by default while allowing users latitude to perform more actions.

Last, but not least, I appreciate the detail and honesty of the Tails documentation. There are a lot of tips and guidelines on the project's website. I especially appreciate the project is transparent about both the features Tails offers and the limitations. Some projects boast they will prevent all viruses or will keep people safe on-line, or will keep you anonymous. Tails doesn't make wild marketing claims. The developers explain how their tools work and how they help, but also warn there are limits and nothing is guaranteed. I appreciate this balanced approach to keeping users informed.

In short, if you need to browse the web or want to share files without giving away your location, then Tails is probably one of the most secure and easiest to use distribution to do this.
Reviews

Source URL: http://www.tuxmachines.org/node/165395

Links: