

# Can the Linux desktop best the Mac desktop?

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Mark Shuttleworth, the founder of Ubuntu Linux, wants desktop Linux to "shoot beyond the Mac." Can it?

Shuttleworth was speaking to the open-source faithful at OSCon in Portland, Ore., but I'm sure even they had their doubts.

Today's Mac OS X 10.5, Leopard, is a work of the user-interface designer art. My wife recently bought a MacBook Pro, and as I've been migrating her data and applications from her elderly XP-powered ThinkPad, I've been reminded of just how smoothly integrated everything really is on a Mac. It's like driving a top-of-the-line Mercedes sports sedan.

For better, and for worse, the Mac, and Apple's other top devices like the iPod and iPhone, are the epitome of proprietary design. Everything fits together; everything works, because everything is under Apple's control. Linux has taken an entirely different course.

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