

Let's Take a Zenwalk

By *srlinuxx*

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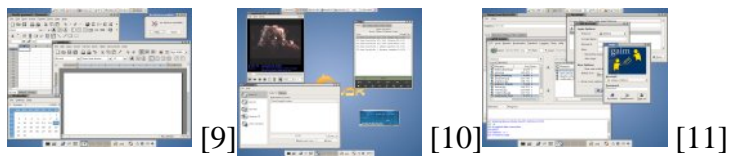
Submitted by srlinuxx on Sunday 16th of October 2005 03:02:08 PM Filed under [Linux](#) [1] [Reviews](#) [2] [-s](#) [3]



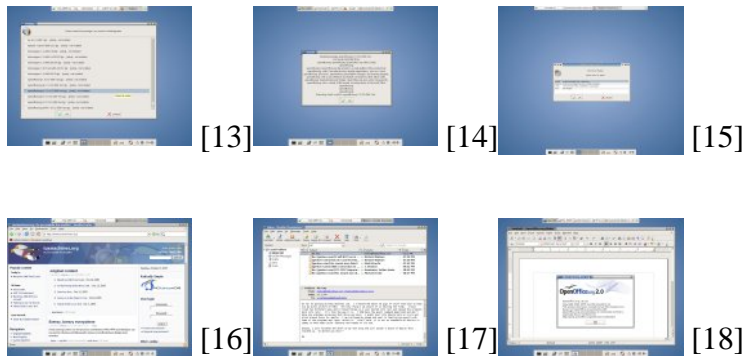
[4]I reviewed MiniSlack 1.1 several months back and at that time Tuxmachines found a few issues in which I truthfully revealed. Although the developers remained silent, several loyal users gave us quite the business. As Zenwalk 1.3 was recently released and [announced](#) [5], we thought we'd give this slackware-based distro another looksee.

I downloaded the zenwalk-1.3.iso and went through the familiar Slackware install (with few differences). It installed without a hitch and booted to terminal prompt where I set up my user account using groupadd and useradd. [urubu](#) [6] states that the script "adduser" is better suited to this task and there is also a gui front-end available in the menu for those who prefer that method. Then I rebooted because I had chosen to boot to a graphical login and wanted to see if that worked. It did and presented a lovely customized blue Zenwalk login screen. I logged in and began my journey with this new version of the former Mini-Slack.

The 400mb download includes many applications to complete your daily routine, usually in the numbers of one application each. It uses Firefox 1.0.7 as its main browser and Thunderbird for email. Zenwalk comes with gimp and I was quite appreciative. It too comes with a customize splash screen matching the Zenwalk theme running throughout. Zenwalk features Abiword for word processing, Gnumeric for spreadsheets, gxine for video playback, grip for cd ripping, beep for audio playing, graveman for cd burning, anjuta for development, gaim for instant messaging, gFTP for ftp uploads, and Bluefish for html. The [system](#) [7] and [accessories](#) [8] menus contain many gui applications for administering and configuring your Zenwalk operating system. One of its key features is the online update tool.



One of the most notable packages/tools in Zenwalk is their online update tool. Netpkg is setup with a Zenwalk package repository and can download, install, or upgrade packages. Netpkg can not only be run from the commandline, but Zenwalk also includes a nice graphical front-end for it. Although there is no search function in the graphical version, it is still a really nice tool and the functions available work without any problems. I installed the kernel sources from the cli netpkg and OpenOffice from the gui. OpenOffice even [appeared in the menu](#) [12] afterwards! Also available is installpkg as well as its graphical interface. It can install or upgrade from a local directory (or cd) and uninstall unwanted packages.



Zen sits on a 2.6.12.6 kernel and features Xorg 6.8.2 and gcc 3.3.6. The kernel sources installed with no issue and I was able to install the nvidia drives without any problems. I edited a few files and restarted Zenwalk into a nice accelerated environment. Zen defaults to Xfce4 and includes all the wonderful things that implies.

Zenwalk 1.3 was found to be very stable at this time as well as all tools and applications tested. A few niggles include no plugins installed or available through package tools; gaim couldn't connect to msn, instead shooting an error about ssl although it was installed (requires "netpkg gnutls" as informed by [urubu](#) [6], thanks to him); xsane didn't pickup my usb scanner (automagically); xfce [sound mixer inoperative](#) [19], although alsamixer works.

So despite having major issues when testing Mini-Slack 1.1, Zenwalk 1.3 was found to be a stable operating system on which one could build a complete system and make themselves at home. This is one of the few Slack-based systems that ships with a 2.6 kernel (default). The developers chose the Xfce4 environment and built the packages for the 486 arch so their system could be used by folks with older machines and tuxmachines experienced no noticeable performance hit using a newer 686 system. If I discouraged anyone from trying Mini-Slack/Zenwalk with [my earlier article](#) [20], I urge you to reconsider as I did. If you don't mind, or even enjoy, doing some of your own configuring and setup, Zenwalk 1.3 can be a solid foundation. Visit [zenwalk.org](#) [21] for [full announcement](#) [22], more [screenshots](#) [23], [documentation](#) [24] and [download links](#) [25].

I've posted more [Screenshots](#) [26] in the gallery.

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Source URL: <http://www.tuxmachines.org/node/3085>

Links:

- [1] <http://www.tuxmachines.org/taxonomy/term/63>
- [2] <http://www.tuxmachines.org/taxonomy/term/101>
- [3] <http://www.tuxmachines.org/taxonomy/term/102>
- [4] <http://www.tuxmachines.org/gallery/zen/desktop>
- [5] <http://distrowatch.com/2976>

- [6] <http://www.tuxmachines.org/user/557>
- [7] <http://www.tuxmachines.org/gallery/zen/sysmenu>
- [8] <http://www.tuxmachines.org/gallery/zen/accmenu>
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- [19] <http://www.tuxmachines.org/gallery/zen/nosound>
- [20] <http://www.tuxmachines.org/node/1308>
- [21] <http://www.zenwalk.org/>
- [22] <http://www.zenwalk.org/article.php?story=20051015124019544>
- [23] <http://www.zenwalk.org/staticpages/index.php?page=20050823225608223>
- [24] <http://www.zenwalk.org/staticpages/index.php?page=20050321023525832>
- [25] <http://www.zenwalk.org/staticpages/index.php?page=20050321012513489>
- [26] <http://www.tuxmachines.org/gallery/zen>