

Ubuntu and the 'Average User'

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For years, free-software advocates have asserted that Linux is ready for the mainstream desktop. Critics have responded that, sure, Linux has come a long way since 1991, but it's still not for 'average users'. Until grandmothers can get an Ubuntu system up and running without having to hack a wireless driver or an xorg.conf file, we're told, the Linux user base will remain limited.

Admittedly, I'm a bit of an Ubuntu 'fanboy', so I can't pretend that I don't have an agenda. Even so, I think that a logical analysis of the anti-Linux arguments above exposes crucial flaws.

Most of the thoughts below are not very original—they've been made by plenty of people before—but I think they're worth repeating as Windows apologists assault Ubuntu's usability with renewed vigor in the wake of the Linux netbook surge (see comment #17 here for an example of these attacks).

[Who's Normal?](#) [2]

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