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Stx Linux 1.0 Final Look

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 [4]Stx Linux is a small lightweight operating system for the x86 arch. It is based on Slackware and slackware derivatives. One of the key features of Stx is it's ability to perform admirably on older hardware, and it's minimum requirements are a pentium 1 with 32 mb ram. Tuxmachines has covered some of the developmental releases, RC2 [5] and RC3 [6], but since final was released today [7], we felt it deserved yet another look.

The Stx site [8] says, "STX Linux is a desktop Linux distribution especially targeted to older hardware. It also works quite well on new PC's." If you already have an older Stx install, Stibs has made some update patches available here [9] . Today, we will report on a clean install as well as how the patch process went for us on our rc3 install.

The Changelog [10] since rc3 includes:

- 3 packaged Patches from the download page applied
- Installer corrected for creating an fstab that allows normal users to mount cdrom and floppy drives
- The usual package updates
- Included Elleo's hacked eworkpanel with notification area
- Included recompiled pyfltk (XFT font rendering now also in STXCC) Thx Mike
- GTK 2 and EDE Themes switched to STX for a more uniform appearance, also Thx Mike 😊
- Included gnome-cups-manager for printer administration (more common than the CUPS web frontend)
- Included Requiredbuilder for creating dependecy files for Slackware/STX packages

Upgrading Current Install

My first test was upgrading my current rc3 install with the 3 patches made available on the Stx site. The install of the packages went smoothly and the upgrades were indeed implimented. I could see some new features already. Most noticable was the new login splash, wallpapers, and the incorporation of the Stx ede theme. I stated in my article on rc3 that I hoped the viagra logo didn't make it into the distro, but I knew it would. I was right. The new login screen and wallpapers now feature the new Stx logo. The root desktop wallpaper has a big old stop sign with the warning embossed "Think twice before you hit Enter." As you can see the "file splitter" (or menu entry) is now functional.

 [11] [12] [13]

To patch/upgrade a rc3 install, download the 3 patches from the Stx Linux site and issue the command: `installpkg <stxpatches>` It probably isn't necessary to reboot, but I did anyway. The process took less than 5 minutes start to finish. The patches are small to download and take a mere seconds to install.

Fresh Install

The installer has been discussed [5] briefly before here on Tuxmachines, but for the newcomer I'll reiterate that it is what I call ascii-graphical. By that I mean that it's not a full blown fancy frame-buffered beauty like one finds in suse or mandriva, but yet it's not a text install demanding manual fdisks, mountings, and confusing commands. It does offer a 'graphical interface' of sorts, yet one uses the keyboard to navigate. It's one of the easiest and fastest installs to date. Missing is setting up a user account, but one is provided a chance to change the root password and a "demo" user (password: demo) is already setup. Once the system is in-place, you can setup a regular user through the Stx Control Panel.

As usual for Stx, the install went without a hitch and a nice light desktop resulted. For those who don't know, Stx features the Equinox Desktop Environment [14]. It's main goal appears to be ease of use within a familiar environment, perhaps for those coming from Windows. Ede looks very much like a Win98 desktop. The newly included default Stx theme continues to appear very windows-like. I don't recall if this is exactly the same Stx theme that's been available on the Ede site for a while, but probably is. ...Which brings up another subject, there are quite a few nice themes available on the Ede site [15]. But I'm getting off-topic.

The big ugly root stop sign wallpaper encountered in the patched system did not appear on the fresh install, but the viagra pill wallpaper did. It's not particularly repellant, but I prefer something with less of a message. I quickly changed my background to one of the others available thru the background settings module. In fact, ede comes with a control panel [16] of its own in which you can change many settings such as the font, theme, and colors. As an aside, the fonts render much better in my fresh install.

Stx comes with lots of great applications for most popular tasks. One can, for example, listen to music, watch videos, surf the internet, answers emails, chat with friends, write a review, take screenshots and manipulate images, play some games, and even write a webpage.
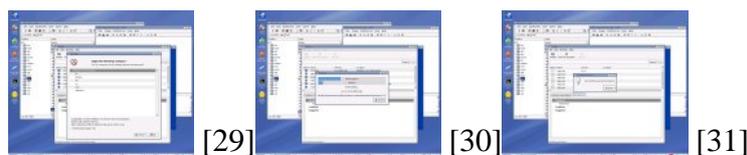
 [17] [18] [19]

 [20] [21] [22]

Another difference in the patched system and the fresh install was the printer setup dialogue. Now that parellel ports detection was working, I clicked on printer setup in the Stx Control Panel. In the patched system, one is offered the browser based cups admin. In the fresh install, a little setup module opens a more familiar applet. They both do pretty much the same thing and both seem to work, but I like the gnome-cups-manager much better.

 [23] [24] [25]

The Stx Control Panel is a really great thing. From there one can configure hardware, (un)install software, configure a network/internet connection, and set some system settings. It's a wonderful application, nice and light and all the modules seem to functional really well.

 [26] [27] [28]

Through the Stx Control Panel one can install software. Stx includes slapt-get and the nice front-end gslapt. Already configured to use a Slackware 10.2 repository, one can, as an example, install jre, eog, or even KDE. I tested it installing jre, eog, and Fluxbox. I wanted eog because the image viewer provided couldn't seem to handle .pngs. In fact, I'd suggest to Stibs replacing Xfi with eog. Slapt worked wonderfully. I didn't even have to restart my browser for java to start working, eog rendered the images with no problems, and Fluxbox started right up. I'm not sure if KDE would go smoothly, perhaps I'll test it later. One needs to be cautious with gslapt/slapt-get as some things listed as installed aren't. Some things listed as not install are. So I "which binaries" and "locate libraries" before each installation to make sure. I'm guessing the "installed software" list slapt-get is using is left from Stibs' development system and it's not exactly accurate. Just a bit of caution is required. For example, gslapt states the kernel-source is installed, but it isn't. One can build a vanilla kernel from kernel.org (if they slapt-get --install diffutils) if desired to build any drivers you may need like nvidia. But it'd just be better if the ones matching the default kernel were included in the iso.

 [29] [30] [31]

Several browser plugins worked out of the box such as the gxine movie player, flash, and javascript.

 [32] [33] [34]

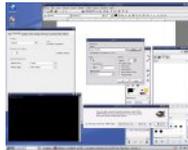Then after installing java through gslapt:

 [35]

Conclusion

So, as delivered Stx is a very capable yet light weight desktop system that has lots of personality and functionality. As installed one can accomplished most of their day to day tasks. Stx is ultra-stable and blazingly fast. As I've said before, I really like Stx a lot. If I mention it needs this or that, it's because I like it and plan to use it. The patches work fine, but I found the fresh install much cleaner and saw a few improvements not readily apparent in the patched system.

Stx is available for [download](#) [9] primarily from [ibiblio.org](#) [36], but there are also two mirrors listed. They are the [one in Germany](#) [37] and [one in Bulgaria](#) [38]. I had the best luck from the one in Germany as ibiblio is always slow for me in my part of the world. For those who prefer bittorrent, they have that [option available](#) [39] as well. Further, Stibs even offers the iso [in 29 15 MB parts](#) [37] for those users on dial up. In addition, some [Arabian Fonts](#) [40] are offered.

Previous coverage: [RC3](#) [6], [RC2](#) [5], [RC Screenshots](#) [41].

[Current Screenshots](#) [42].

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Source URL: http://www.tuxmachines.org/node/4448

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[4] http://www.tuxmachines.org/gallery/stx10/desktop
[5] http://www.tuxmachines.org/node/3979
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[29] http://www.tuxmachines.org/gallery/stx10/gslapt

[30] http://www.tuxmachines.org/gallery/stx10/gslapt1

[31] http://www.tuxmachines.org/gallery/stx10/gslapt3

[32] http://www.tuxmachines.org/gallery/stx10/plugins

[33] http://www.tuxmachines.org/gallery/stx10/javaetc

[34] http://www.tuxmachines.org/gallery/stx10/pdfs

[35] http://www.tuxmachines.org/gallery/stx10/jreinstalled

[36] http://www.ibiblio.org/pub/linux/Incoming/stx-1.0.iso

[37] http://www.inconnect.de/stx/

[38] http://mirrors.punko.net

[39] http://linuxtracker.org/torrents-details.php?id=1211

[40] http://stibs.cc/stx/files/arabttf-1.0-noarch-1.tgz

[41] http://www.tuxmachines.org/gallery/stx

[42] http://www.tuxmachines.org/gallery/stx10