

# Being a Grown-up Computer User

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The philosophy of Windows and Linux is completely different. Windows philosophy is about what's best for Microsoft. In many cases, that turns out to meet your needs too, which is the beauty of free markets. On the other hand, many times it doesn't. Unfortunately, there isn't another true choice as far as commercial operating systems for end users is concerned. Linux, and open source, is about having a computer that does what you want it to do, with as much or as little control as you want. With the ability to change it to suit your needs. Linux is NOT a replacement for Windows. Viewing it as a replacement for Windows will set you up for failure if you are thinking about moving to Linux. Linux is an entirely different computing philosophy. Linux and open source are about what the users and developers want and don't want, Windows is about market share and profit margins.

The awesome thing about the open source philosophy is that it enables profit margins and market share too. But, instead of paying large sums of money to Microsoft, Oracle, IBM, etc. for software that constrains you to do things the way they think best, you can pay somewhat smaller sums of money to a professional who will implement software that does things the way you think best. And, if you can't find it already in existence, you can probably find a developer who will. When Microsoft asks "Where do you want to go today?", they really mean, which destination that we have predetermined for you do you want to go to? And that's appropriate for proprietary, commercial software. It's the model they have to adopt to make their profit margins and make their shareholders happy. But, that doesn't mean it's right for you and I.

So, back to why I prefer Linux, Unix and open source to Windows. I like the flexibility. I like the power and control that the command line gives me. I love the fact that I can change it to meet my needs. I like not being constrained by commercial software licenses. I think it's great that the people developing software don't limit what I can do because I might do something they don't like. I like being an adult computer user.

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