

Review: Ubuntu 12.10 Quantal Quetzal a mix of promise, pain

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Created 20/11/2012 - 8:40pm

Submitted by srlinuxx on Tuesday 20th of November 2012 08:40:52 PM Filed under [Ubuntu](#) [1]

Write this down: Ubuntu 12.10, the late-year arrival from Canonical's six-month standard release factory, marks the first new release within the company's current long-term support cycle. Got it? Good, because it may be the best takeaway from the latest Ubuntu release, codenamed Quantal Quetzal. After that, it's a bit of a rocky ride.

The product's development lineage is important to note from more of a business/adoption side perspective. The release of Ubuntu 12.04 LTS in April was Canonical's fourth long-term support product and signaled the end of one full two-year development cycle. Quantal Quetzal is the first standard release on the road to pushing out Ubuntu 14.04 LTS in Spring 2014 (undoubtedly to be codenamed "Uber-rocking Unicorn" if the pattern holds), and it sets up themes and directions which will mature over the next two years.

Standard releases aren't terribly different from the bi-annual LTS products, though they tend to be slightly less conservative in code offerings. The Ubuntu development community lets off the brakes a little and sticks some shiny back in.

Ubuntu 12.10 is no exception, so make no mistake?there's some shiny goodness in this release. We'll get into what makes this a decent desktop and even more decent server release. But there's a little tarnish mixed in, too, and that makes Ubuntu 12.10 less special than previous editions.

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