

Memo to Linux Devs: Focus on Design, Not Technology

By *srlinuxx*

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In the open source channel, many developers could stand to focus a bit less on technology itself, and a bit more on making products look and feel smart, intuitive and elegant?especially when it comes to communicating with end users. Most Linux distributions don?t get this right, but Canonical, the company behind Ubuntu Linux, shines as an outlier. Here?s how.

I started thinking about this issue as I read a recent post by New York Times blogger Nick Bilton about the crucial importance of elegant and intuitive design?rather than impressive technology?in the IT world today. As Bilton wrote, the IT industry has matured to the point where most consumers care little about technical specifications. Instead, they want products that, in Apple?s famous formulation, ?just work??regardless of what happens to be under the hood.

When it comes to pitching open source platforms, Canonical appears to grasp this crucial reality.

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