

Marari Network News

Special points of interest:

- > Vista, Linux, OSX oh my!
- > "Patch Tuesday" is November 13, 2007
- > Automate your updates and save time doing it!
- > How can Marari Network Solutions help protect your business?

What Will Your Next Operating System Be?



Windows Vista

Microsoft's latest and most demanding operating system yet. There's lots of eye-candy like the Aero Interface and Windows Sidebar (shown below), and new security features to help keep the system files better protected from vulnerabilities. But the big question is: are businesses ready for Vista?

After using Vista Business Edition for several months, I have finally written a review of my findings. Read about it on page 2.



Linux has long been snapping at the heels of Microsoft looking for acceptance in the business world as a desktop alternative. Ubuntu 7.10, codenamed "Gutsy Gibbon" has been released and features some exciting, yet subtle, changes over previous desktop versions. Is it time to consider Linux as a desktop alternative?

I've been examining Ubuntu over the last few versions - 6.06 "Edgy", 7.04 "Feisty" and now 7.10 "Gutsy". Read about it on page 3.



The long awaited update in the OSX family of desktops has finally arrived. All hype aside, has Apple made the right decision moving their software to Intel architecture? Does the Mac still have the edge or it is just "elite-ware" now?

Admittedly, I am not really a Mac user. I have had limited exposure to "Tiger" which is the OSX v10.4 flavor that was released prior to this. I have, however, compiled the findings of several other reviewers for you to peruse on page 4.

"Patch Tuesday" November 13, 2007

On the second Tuesday of every month, Microsoft releases updates to patch vulnerabilities found in their operating systems and other software products.

This month's "Patch Tuesday" falls on November 13, 2007.

If you do not have automatic updates enabled on your PC's please make

sure that you go to [Microsoft Update](#) and keep up to date with security patches.

SERVICE ADVISORY

For those of you that have a current block of time agreement with me, I will be handling your server update(s) after hours to avoid any reboot and/or disruption during normal work hours.

The patches will be installed and the server rebooted and verified. This process should not interfere with your regular backup schedule.

Don't have a block of time with me? This is just one of many services you're missing out on. Call me at (204) 981-2646 or email me at ari@marari.net and I'll personally take care of you.

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Microsoft Windows Vista "Longhorn"



I've been using Vista for several months. I've found that while the increased security is a good thing, and the sidebar gadgets a very convenient feature, the system presents a number of challenges to businesses.

Application compatibility. Businesses have invested a lot of money in application suites - both "off the shelf" and "custom" - and really can't afford to gamble on whether or not this OS is going to handle these applications as expected. There have already been numerous challenges reported with common software such as Intuit Canada's Quickbooks (admittedly it's in the way Intuit's software interacts with the OS - not Microsoft's fault), antivirus applications, and other "legacy" applications.

Then there's the hardware requirements. Realistically, for Vista Business to operate in any

efficient manner, the PC should have a minimum of 1 GB RAM. With RAM prices as low as they are now, it's probably not a bad idea to bump it up to 2GB. But the graphics and processor requirements (at least if you want to enable the Aero interface and the other "eye-candy" that Windows Vista offers) are pretty high. I've run Vista on my notebook (a Pentium 4 2.4 GHz with 1 GB RAM) and it "ran". Not well. But it ran. Vista ran "reasonably" well as a virtual machine in VMware Workstation on a dual-core system with 1 GB RAM dedicated to Vista. It runs flawlessly on my Core2Duo with 2 GB of RAM and an nVidia 7900GS video card.

Now I'm sure I don't need to remind you all of the headaches we all had in 2001 when Windows XP first came out. There were a lot of the same

problems with application compatibility then. There were security problems too. In fact, there were hardware issues as well when XP first came out. And look where we are now. We've come full circle. The only complaint I have is that we are forced to do this all over again. Microsoft has announced that Windows XP OEM will no longer be available by the end of the year. As of January 31, 2008, Microsoft's contracts with computer makers will require companies to sell only Vista-loaded machines. Fact is we're going to be forced to look at Vista - at least as an option.

In my opinion, Vista is just not ready for the business community, "YET". We'll see what happens after Service Pack 1 comes out in Q1 2008 - apparently it will address a lot of the challenges mentioned above.



Ubuntu Desktop Linux v7.10 "Gutsy Gibbon"

Released on October 18, 2007, Ubuntu's newest version of Desktop Linux (free to download) has a strong offering right out of the um... download folder?

I've been seriously following Ubuntu Linux since version 6.06 "Edgy" came out. It was a good package, but there were still a number of challenges to make it a contender for the business workspace.

Today, however, I have a VERY different opinion. Since it's release, "Gutsy" has been just that. A lot of oomph and power packed into a FREE operating system.

Ubuntu's website claims that it just "works". It's no marketing hype. It really does just "work". I've installed it on an older notebook, an older Pentium 4 PC, and a new Dual-Core system with a 22" wide-screen all with different components, different

amounts and types of RAM, hard disks, controllers, network cards, video cards, and sound cards. All of them installed easily after a few clicks and a Tim Horton's extra-large double-double.

But what about ease of use? Isn't Linux for more "advanced" users?

No. There's a flavor of Linux for everyone. Ubuntu happens to have all of the requirements for a linux novice - graphic interface, easy to read and understand menus, inability to change system files without really wanting to - all the way to advanced users including the ability to write and compile your own drivers or recompile the kernel (if you really want to).

The average business user is going to need an office productivity suite and since their company has likely invested a fair chunk of change on Mi-

crosoft Office, the suite has to support office documents. In fact, it has to be able to use, save, and manipulate office documents like Word .doc files and Excel .xls files. Ubuntu comes with OpenOffice v2.3 and can even fully support the new Office 2007 .docx and .xlsx standards too! Even Exchange servers are supported through the Evolution mail client that also comes with Ubuntu.

There's an amazing Ubuntu support community and powerful forums to find that answers you're looking for.

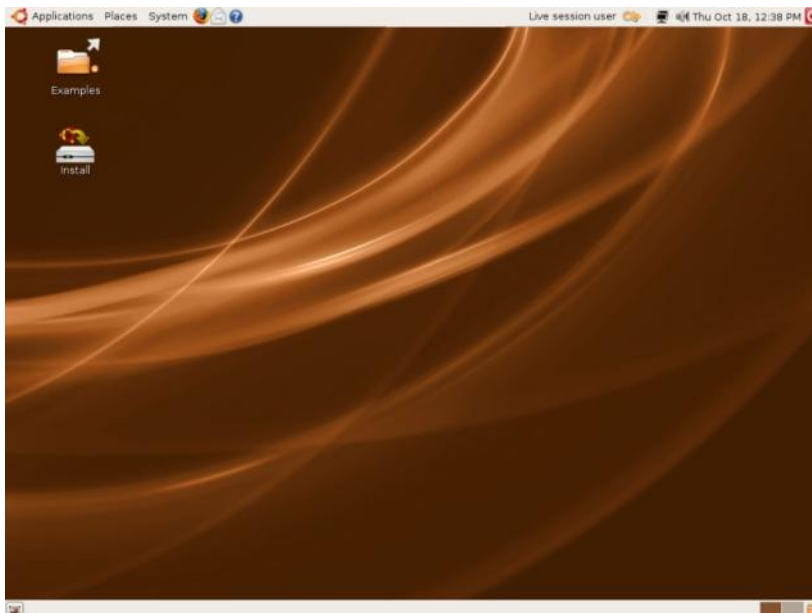
You can download a live-CD version to test it out for yourself at:

<http://www.ubuntu.com>

The challenge is in market share. Microsoft really does own the business desktop OS market. This product, however, is worth the look!



ubuntu



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Apple Mac OSX v10.5 "Leopard"

As I mentioned on the cover, I'm not really a Mac user. I've "played" around with OSX 10.4 "Tiger" and I've even gone so far as to setup my Ubuntu desktop to look like the Mac interface with the application dock, transparencies, and other "enhancements". But at the end of the day, Mac OSX is Unix with a graphical interface.

The new "Leopard" flavor, released into the wild on October 26th, 2007, has been well received by Mac devotees abound. Even traditional PC publications have scored it favorably.

[PC Magazine](#) gave the OS 4.5 out of 5 saying it is "arguably the best consumer operating system available - but you may want to wait for the first or second update before upgrading." The reviewer particularly liked the new features like the automated full backups and

the ability to preview images in folders, but cautioned that as of right now there is no classic application support on older Macs and that some of the distracting graphical effects are difficult to turn off.

[Laptop Magazine](#) called Mac OSX Leopard "part useful, part flash, and all beautifully easy" and also gave it a rating of 4.5 out of 5.

[cnet](#) gave Leopard an 8 out of 10 rating but cautioned that "Should you pay for Leopard? If you're happy with the way Tiger works, then maybe not. If you need Bootcamp, however, then you must have Leopard. And if you're considering the purchase of a new computer, Leopard makes Macs more enticing than Tiger did."

There are a few things that need to be said. Apple has long controlled

the hardware that the Mac OS runs on. With their recent move to Intel chipsets, they're finally admitting (without actually saying) that the PC is now a contender for Mac space. Why?

Well... price is a big factor. Heck, it's the biggest factor. Macs are not cheap. In fact, for the price of one average Mac, you can get two average PC's. Other factors include support (Mac users argue that they don't need support but I've personally seen otherwise) and software. Hardware used to be a concern, but more and more hardware vendors are including Mac drivers for their peripherals.

In the end though, aside from some graphic and audio shops, the business world is predominantly PC-based and until Mac brings its pricing in line, that's not likely going to change.



My Reality Check

It's November and that means it's time to honour and remember the great sacrifices made by countless men and women over the course of different conflicts that have occurred in the past, and present around the globe.

It's a time for thanks and for introspective recognition of that for which we are grateful.

Every November 11th I sit in the living room with my son, Jakob, and watch the national service on

CBC. I try and teach him a little more about what this day means and its importance. And every year, after I've explained it to my son, I have him explain it back to me in his own words so that I am confident that he understands the message.

My son is the greatest gift I have. Last year, he explained Remembrance Day to me like this:

"Remembrance Day is for remembering the people that didn't get to grow old

so that I can."

This Sunday, November 11th, is Remembrance Day.

When we observe that moment of silence, think about that for which you are grateful and cherish it.

"We shall remember them, and we must teach our children to remember them also."

-- LCol M. Bourduas



Focused Partnership - M9 Corporation

Roger Syntak is the president of [M9 Corporation](#), a web development company, and a member of my [BNI chapter](#).

The M9 Web Design Corporation focuses on building technology that works for their clients. Their success is based on traditional business principles and a decision towards customer service. By employing in-house design

professionals, along with computer programmers and content writers, M9 can provide a complete range of services for their clients. This approach guarantees a quick and accurate response to any changes in the business world.

Operating in Winnipeg since 2001, M9 Corporation has built more than 125 websites and grows

at a rate of 20% per year. M9 is proud that they retain more than 88.6% of their past clients and still service many of their original sites.

For more information on M9 Corporation, please visit their website at:

<http://www.m9corp.com>



Reader Reviews

Thanks for the newsletter. It is well organized, well written, relevant and informative. It takes me approximately 10 minutes to read it, and it's well worth the read.

-- Kevin Masse, CA
Holukoff, Chiarella

The newsletter is great and I will pass it along to my IT department if you give me the OK.

-- Paula Hartfiel,
Leasing Representative
National Leasing

Paula: "OK" 😊

Thanks for the kind words so far! If you have any comments, I really want to know! Send me an email to:

ari@marari.net and you may get featured in the next issue of **Marari Network News!**

Until the next issue!

-- Ari



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* - Carry-in warranty to local service depot only. Parts only. Does not include the provision of software reinstallation. Labour is extra.



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