Bisoños Usuarios de GNU/Linux de Mallorca y Alrededores | Bergantells Usuaris de GNU/Linux de Mallorca i Afegitons

The Best Linux Distro? or The Great Linux WAR. (46049 lectures)
 Per **Carlos Cortes Cortes**, *carcoco* (http://bulma.net/~carcoco/)
Creado el 04/05/2002 01:45 modificado el 04/05/2002 01:45

I'm trying to answer to the questions: **What's the best linux distribution?** Are good so many distros of Linux?. The answers are very personal and it's only my view of point about this. All distros have great and interesting **features** (and **differences**) to share with the rest ...

There are a lot of **linux distros**, there are small, medium and big linux distributions (They fits from a simple floppy, ZIP disk, CD-ROM to a DVD format), there are simplisted, very completed (9000 packages), gerenals, specifics, secured, embedded, minis, wireless, diskless, region specific, non graphical (text mode), GUI desktop, easy, hard, platform specific, etc ...
In lwn.net[1] are trying to enumerate all the avaliables **linux distros**. They have around 280 distros, that are organized into several categories:

- Leading Distributions
- Also well-known
- Non-technical desktop
- Education
- General Purpose
- Country-specific
- Embedded Distributions
- Handhelds/PDAs
- Secured Distributions
- Special Purpose/Mini
- Floppy-based
- CD-based
- Zip disk-based
- Small Disk
- Wireless
- Hardware-specific
    - Alpha
    - ARM
    - Beowulf
    - IBM
    - Oracle's NIC
    - PA-RISC
    - PowerPC
    - Sparc
    - Older Intel
- DOS/Windows install
- Diskless Terminal
- Historical (Non-active)

Oh no!!!, that's horrible, there are at least 280 linux distributions, all of them differents and with its particularities and flavours. But this is all the contrary, you have **liberty**, you can **choose** the best distro than fits with yours necesities and solve yours problems.

Sometime ago I read that *"Unix are like the panel of a Radio-Cassete of a car, if you can manage/control one, then you*

will control all the differents models/marks/versions", and is **true**.
First you learn the basic (comun for all version of unix) and then with the help of man, info, doc, howto's, try'&'error, etc... you can administration all the unix's (of course your need some time to learn the differents ways to do the job) , because all have the same base and the same philosophy.

When I say **unix**, you can undestand **linux** distro too, where the differents are always lesser.

I think it's good that they have many distros to choosen, because everyone have his unique "features" and caracteristiques, and then they competes to be more better than the other. Everyday a **linux distro** has to be better of all the rest, then they make news features, (R&D) **I+D**, news releases, better support. And all of this is **good for Linux**. But it's very important that all complains the linux standard bases, to avoid problems withs instalations and execution of programs.

Gaël Duval, founder of Mandrake Linux explains it better:
*"Diversity is always good. It allows new experimentations and eventually fits new needs. If a new Linux distribution brings nice innovations and respects the open source spirit, then **Mandrake-Linux** will include them. Also one of the advantage of Linux, is that you have a Desktop and a Server in the same product. This leads to a new and different usage of computers."*
 http://www.desktoplinux.com/articles/AT4698611406.html[2]

All distros have their **own** support for Community, colaborating in the projects that they think are more interesting. Here are some examples of this support:

- SuSE:
    - ReiserFS
    - Xfree86
    - Kernel
    - KDE
    - ALSA
    - USB
    - Compilador GCC
    - SITAR - System InformaTion At Runtime
- Mandrake:
    - Kernel
    - KDE
    - Gnome
    - Prelude
    - HardDrake, DrakX and DiskDrake
    - PhpNuke
    - www.frozen-bubble.org
    - urpmi
- Red Hat:
    - gcc
    - rpm
    - Kernel
    - Tux http server
    - Cygwin
- Conectiva:
    - apt4rpm
    - Kernel
    - libservices
    - Device Drivers
    - gnome-linuxconf
    - Linuxconf
    - MacroSystem
    - NetFS
    - Parted
    - Porte Alpha
    - Regexx

- ♦ X11
  - ♦ Synaptic
- Others linux distros
  - ♦ ....

What I don't like is the new (from version 7.0) polity of SuSE, of not putting online a demo (not live-eval) of his distro.

Here you have the oficial explication for SuSE, about **NOT** avaliavility ISO images for INTEL/AMD platforms: (extracted from this URL: http://sdb.suse.de/sdb/en/html/lmuelle_suselinux_internet.html[3])
"ISO images of SuSE Linux:
SuSE Linux AG is one of the leading providers of Open Source software worldwide: this forms the backdrop to the reason why we, too, have committed ourselves to the support and further development of the Open-Source community. SuSE Linux AG, with over 100 full time developers, is making a substantial contribution to the further development of the Linux Open Source operating system and its related programs. We are one of the main driving forces in the fields of development of the kernel, KDE, XFree86, compiler, ALSA, USB and multiple-platforms, and we are in addition supporting the internationalization of the Linux project.
In our SuSE Linux Open Source operating system we bring together a wide range of freely available programs, applications and tools. This is our carefully assembled product, which we provide and distribute for 6 platforms (Intel/AMD, IA64, PPC, AXP, S/390 and Sparc).
Above all we strive to ensure the high quality of SuSE Linux, and that it is as up-to-date as possible. In addition we want to guarantee the constant high quality of our documentation and our support, in the interest of all customers. In order to be able to maintain this service in the future, as well as meeting the accompanying wishes of our customers, we are dependent on sales of our products and services, and must ensure that an adequate cost structure exists within our company.
For the purposes of testing and evaluation, we have made a great effort to provide a variation of SuSE Linux which does not have to be installed, and which makes it extremely easy to try out SuSE Linux or examine its hardware requirements. ***With our SuSE Linux FTP[4] version (SuSE Linux Professional, excluding commercial program packages, which we are not allowed to offer on their own for download) we provide a free service for all those who wish to install SuSE Linux via FTP.***
We are currently providing ISO images for download for most of non-Intel/AMD/PPC platforms (IA64, S/390 and Sparc), since these products cannot be made available everywhere, worldwide and at the accustomed speed."

Well, at least we have access to all (non-commercials) packages of every new **SuSE** version in the SuSE ftp[4] server and mirrors[5] (like ftp://ftp.gwdg.de/pub/linux/suse/[6]).
In this spanish article: Paquetes binarios actualizados para SuSE Linux[7] there are links to more **news SuSE rpm** packages ;-)

This linux distro's **heterogeneity** are one of the secrets of the enormous **success of linux**, because there are several solutions for the same problems, and this effect are very **enriching**. Sometime ago, here in Bulma[8], I read in bulmailing[9] an interesting message about distros, XFree86, video cards and linux:

The message are in spanish (I'm sorry for the inconvenience) but it explains that: Someone have problems installing an **ATI Rage 128 Pro TF** video card in Debian Sid, but it works ok with linux Mandrake, then using the packages and drivers of Mandrake (converted with alien[10]) now the card works ok with Debian Sid.

```
Driver r128 y tarjeta ATI Rage 128 Pro TF

> > Pero me parece que esa tarjeta funciona sin problemas con el xfree,
> > sólo tienes que poner los datos correctos en el /etc/X11/XF86Config.
>
> Nohhr, tiene razón, si te fijas al cargar el driver ati no menciona
> la TF.
> Yo no me fijé , y perdí una mañanita detrás de la tarjetita :P
Bueno pues eso, cambiando /usr/X11R6/lib/modules/drivers/ati_drv.o y
r128_drv.o por los de mkd a mi me ruló.
> > Resulta que tengo una tarjeta de video ATI Rage 128 Pro TF (AGP)
> > que no he podido configurar en mi Debian Sid.
>
> Me pasó lo mismo en el trabajo. Tienes razón, no está soportada con
> el driver de la sid.
> Yo lo solucioné a lo basto, copiando el driver de una Mandrake 8.1
```

```
> (Manda gués, no entiendo que esté más actualizada la mdk que la sid)
>
> Bueno pues eso, cambiando /usr/X11R6/lib/modules/drivers/ati_drv.o y
> r128_drv.o por los de mkd a mi me ruló.

La solución de Bernardo es efectiva :)
Lo que hice fué bajarme un paquete de mandrake llamado
XFree86-server-4.1.0-17mdk.i586.rpm
pasarlo por el alien
dpkg -x nuevo_paquete.deb
y copiar ati_drv.o y  r128_drv.o a /usr/X11R6/lib/modules/drivers/ y
listo!
de nuevo muchas gracias !
```

You can read this spanish article, that explains why there aren't packages of **XFree4.2** in **Debian Woody**: ¿Por qué no han salido los paquetes de XFree4.2 en debian?[11] or the original post of **Branden Robinson** in Slashdot.[12]

More Links about **linux distros**:

- 157 linux distros at LinuxOnline!:
  http://www.linux.org/dist/index.html[13]
- Old lwn.net distro list:
  http://lwn.net/Distributions/OldList.php3[14]
- Linux Distributions at ibiblio:
  http://www.ibiblio.org/pub/Linux/distributions/[15]
- Comparison of Linux Distributions:
  http://www.distrowatch.com/[16]
- Linux Distributions:
  http://www.fokus.gmd.de/linux/linux-distrib-full.html[17]
- LinuxISO
   http://www.linuxiso.org[18]
- Kernel:
  http://www.kernel.org/[19]
- Linux Standard Base. New version 1.1
   http://www.linuxbase.org/[20]
- Free Standards Group
   http://www.freestandards.org/[21]
- Filesystem Hierarchy Standard
   http://www.pathname.com/fhs/[22]
- The Austin Common Standards Revision Group
   http://www.opengroup.org/austin/[23]
- LSB Test Suite Results
   http://www.linuxbase.org/test/results/index.html[24]
- Internationation
   http://www.li18nux.net/[25]
- Freedesktop.org has standards for desktop functionality like drag-and-drop and window managers
  (implemented by GNOME, KDE, &c)
   http://www.freedesktop.org/[26]
- Linux backers seek to avoid Unix-like splintering - InfoWorld
   http://www.infoworld.com/cgi-bin/displayStory.pl?99035.whlinser.htm[27]
- LSB in the Press
   http://www.linuxbase.org/press/[28]
- Atalaya: Los leones del Ngorongoro y las moscas
   http://granavenida.com/atalaya/ngorongoro.htm[29]
- Who was vulnerable to Melissa? Only users and companies who'd standardized on a software "monoculture"
  -- like Microsoft's.
   http://www.salon.com/tech/feature/1999/04/07/melissa/index.html[30]

Conclusion: It's very good for the Linux all this alternatives because:

- Competition between distribution

- More freedom to chose
- I+D and feedback
- Documentation
- All have the same kernel --> the same core
- Different solutions to the same problem
- If a distro do anything good the rest narrow it (GPL philosophy)
- Colaboration and good relations between distros
- The distros do thing for the Community
- The different distros would have to complain the standards (LSB)
- . . .

The best linux distro, is the distro
that you know, use and enjoy every day ...
because you choose it,
between more than 280 distros/alternatives.

--
$ alias carcoco="echo Carlos Cortes"
 http://bulma.net/todos.phtml?id_autor=132 (31)

Lista de enlaces de este artículo:

1. http://lwn.net/Distributions/
2. http://www.desktoplinux.com/articles/AT4698611406.html
3. http://sdb.suse.de/sdb/en/html/lmuelle_suselinux_internet.html
4. ftp://ftp.suse.com/pub/suse/
5. http://www.suse.com/us/support/download/ftp/int_mirrors.html
6. ftp://ftp.gwdg.de/pub/linux/suse/
7. http://bulma.net/body.phtml?nIdNoticia=1206
8. http://bulma.net
9. http://bulma.net/pipermail/bulmailing
10. http://bulma.net/body.phtml?nIdNoticia=1186
11. http://bulma.net/body.phtml?nIdNoticia=1279
12. http://slashdot.org/comments.pl?sid=30663&threshold=1&commentsort=0&tid=90&mode=
13. http://www.linux.org/dist/index.html
14. http://lwn.net/Distributions/OldList.php3
15. http://www.ibiblio.org/pub/Linux/distributions/
16. http://www.distrowatch.com/
17. http://www.fokus.gmd.de/linux/linux-distrib-full.html
18. http://www.linuxiso.org
19. http://www.kernel.org/
20. http://www.linuxbase.org/
21. http://www.freestandards.org/
22. http://www.pathname.com/fhs/
23. http://www.opengroup.org/austin/
24. http://www.linuxbase.org/test/results/index.html
25. http://www.li18nux.net/
26. http://www.freedesktop.org/
27. http://www.infoworld.com/cgi-bin/displayStory.pl?99035.whlinser.htm
28. http://www.linuxbase.org/press/
29. http://granavenida.com/atalaya/ngorongoro.htm
30. http://www.salon.com/tech/feature/1999/04/07/melissa/index.html
31. http://bulma.net/todos.phtml?id_autor=132

E-mail del autor: carcoco _ARROBA_ gmail.com
Podrás encontrar este artículo e información adicional en: http://bulma.net/body.phtml?nIdNoticia=1301