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Ultima Linux: Ultimate Disappointment

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[2]I'm not sure this can be classified as much a review as a rant. This is why I'll file this as a blog instead of a news/review. I love slackware, I've stated that numerous times. In fact one of my first reviews here [3] at Tuxmachines was on slackware [4]. So why is it that more times than not when someone goes to try and "improve" upon slackware, it just makes a mess. Oh they have their communities that'll come down on me for stating the truth and even accuse me of hurting linux and open source advocacy. They go as far to declare me an incompetent and my hardware garbage. So, when I state that I found ultimalinux the ultimate disappointment, it's with saddness in my heart and a bit of trepidation. But I have to tell the truth.

Sure perhaps it's my hardware. Perhaps it was my kernel appends. But my hardware does rather well on most distributions and I always try many many configurations before I shrug my shoulders and say "oh well!"

It all started on September 4, 2005 when DistroWatch [5] announced a new version of Ultimalinux ready for download. It took 2 days to get two 600 mb cds in, I kid you not. First the torrent tracker was shooting errors, then the ftp refused connections. Finally on the 5th the torrent started working, but it trickled in at anywhere from 0 to 30 kb/sec. It was quite frustrating. I told a friend, 'I guess they really don't want anyone to try their distro.'

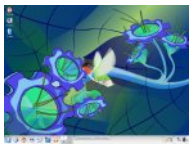
However it finally finished on the evening of the 6th and I forgot the frustrations of obtaining the isos. I was open-minded upon boot of the 1st install cd and saw the familiar slackware installer and became rather optimistic when I saw all the extra great packages included and being installed. I was disappointed to see a 2.4.31 kernel as well as the packages being built for i486. Still I had hope.

It booted fine and I had no problems installing nvidia drivers. I'd seen during the install configuration where one has a choice of kde or kde+e (among others such as window maker and fluxbox). kde+e is KDE using the Enlightenment window manager. I thought for something different I'd default to that. It starts and appears to be doing fine until one starts opening and closing applications.

Konqueror was the first application to crash when I was trying to read the Ultima Linux website [6]. I was looking to see if there was some package management system available. I was trying to see if there was a ssl package available as gaim couldn't connect to msn without it. Ho hum. I didn't find anything out about package management other than they say they have an update utility for security fixes called ulupdate.

Trying a couple different stock wallpapers (the usual KDE fare), just previewing mind you, the whole computer locks

up.


[7]Next boot I delete all of .kde and .enlightenment files and try with just a straight kde (3.4.2). While trying to get screenshots of OpenOffice.org 1.14, it froze up as soon as I clicked file > new > text document. A crash report window had time to open before the whole desktop just locks down. I was able to ctrl+alt+F2 and kill openoffice and get back to kde, but the window manager had crashed. The desktop was crippled and I restarted.

[8]

[9]

[10]

gxine locked up as well. First I was trying to see if it'd play a movie .bin and it just locked everything up, so the next reboot I try an .avi and it shot an error stating it couldn't allocate memory.

Throughout all these reboots I tried various boot options. The first time was a blank append line and other boots I tried things like apm=off, acpi=off, noapic, acpi=ht, and even mem=nopentium. I even tried using vesa graphics. It was no use. That distro was just not going to run.

So, I'll forego all the description, changelog, goals and philosophy. I'll leave it up to you to test.

OSDIR [11] has a whole shi^H^Hcart load of screenshots, but it turns out they were provided by the developer. Is this an indication I know of which I speak?

I'd like to hear from my readers, but only in a positive sense. If you have ultimalinux running stably on your system, please contribute. But if anyone insults me, my intelligence, my grandmother, my machine, or my site, I'll just delete them and turn off committing.

UPDATE: Please see my updated review on a new version HERE [12].

Reviews

Source URL: http://www.tuxmachines.org/node/2552

Links:
[1] http://www.tuxmachines.org/taxonomy/term/57
[2] http://www.tuxmachines.org/images/ultima/kde+e.jpg
[3] http://www.tuxmachines.org/node/140
[4] http://www.slackware.com
[5] http://www.distrowatch.com
[6] http://www.ultimalinux.cjb.net/
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