

Reviewing OpenLab myself

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[A regular at] TuxMachines.org has asked me [the lead developer] to do my own review of OpenLab, I won't deny that it feels rather odd to be doing so. After all, I am obviously biased. But the request does justify the idea very well, so I reckoned I would give it my best bash. I'm not going to try to be dispassionate - any attempt at that is unlikely to completely succeed anyway, but more than that it would feel dishonest. So rather, I will try to explain how we were thinking at various stages of the system, what motivated certain decisions over others and what is really happening sometimes. Such a review will actually be useful to people trying to make a decision, without being either too much like false marketing or too modest.

So let's start at the beginning, the CD-bootup screen. This screen has drawn praise from other reviewers as it shows one of the things we spent the most time on - trying to be explanatory at all times and give newbies an easy point of departure with lots of help and tips. We did do that but it's not all you can say about this screen. The text color there actually needs a bit of work, this is already on the list for next time, the colour we chose is nice but on some screens hard to see. A bigger thing is that since you cannot test on all pieces of hardware, I really wish I could rewrite the troubleshooting page now - as I now know two more entries that I wish I had known about when we first wrote that.

One little thing here that I'm very proud of is that if you do need to follow any of the troubleshooting things to boot the LIVEcd, and you then install - OpenLab will automatically make sure your troubleshooting lines are in your lilo.conf file so that you won't need to worry about adding them later.

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