Goodgoat - A shortcut to Gentoo?

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[4]Continuing my search for an easy shortcut to gentoo, tuxmachines has taken a little looksee at GoodGoat. Goodgoat Linux is an installable liveCD that uses the portage (gentoo) package manager. It is presently on [DistroWatch's](#) [5] [waiting list](#) [6], yet I had high hopes. Would this be the one?
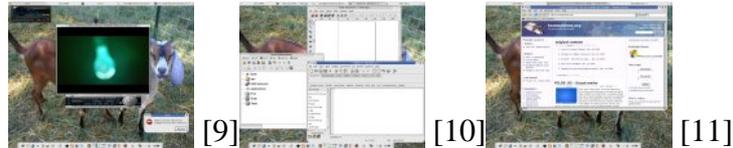
Goodgoat's [site](#) [7] states, "The goal of goodgoat is to make an easy to use Linux that has few duplicated applications so that you don't have to dig through the menus to find the program that you want. If you like gentoo all you have to do is install goodgoat and run su -; emerge sync from the xterm and you have a gentoo system. I add a few additional applications that are not included with gentoo and I installed newer applications than gentoo supports by default." In fact they [outline](#) [8] their goals quite succinctly:

- Keep it Simple Stupid
- Cover the needs for a desktop for most people
- Limit the app list to less than 100 instead of thousands
- The distro is zero install
  - Hit the button to install (less choices)
- upgrades are monothic
  - tar the home directory (/home/ben) and copy the new version over
- Some security
  - desktop runs as user not root
  - the usr and opt directoies can be compressed and read-only
- In compressed mode it can run with less hard drive space
- **able to be upgraded to full gentoo**

- fork new functionality instead of trying to do too much
- use stable but current versions of the software

The download was fast making for a pleasant experience, rare these days, especially for a relatively unknown distro. md5sums checked out and the burn was uneventful. Now it was time to boot.

Good gawd, it's goats! That was my first thought. The developer says he named this distro goodgoat because "I live on a small farm and we have goats, chickens, horses, and dogs. My wife and I started saying what a good goat one day and it sounded cool. I thought goodgoat would be easy to remember and no one had taken the domain." The wallpaper reflects this. It is a close-up of two garden variety goats. It's distinctive, if not particularly attractive, and it does adhere to the overall naming scheme.

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But my first problem is the lack of a menu. The developer, whose name I ascertained from the home directory of the system is Ben, says he trimmed the distro to about one application per task to avoid the user having to dig through menus, but I didn't realize that meant having no menu at all. At your fingertips are "shortcuts" for popular applications on the xfce panel.

Booting the livecd brings up a xfce4 (4.0.6) desktop with the usual launcher and a task bar at the top. Located on the desktop panel are launchers for a web browser (firefox), filemanager (xfce4fm), gimp, bluefish, a skype client, evolution, xine, xmms inkscape and gaim. Some didn't work like the gftp (which actually needs a terminal and the launcher is setup like a gui application), realplayer, and the manual icon launches firefox, but leads to the firefox site instead of any 'help'. I did find emerge in the /usr/bin directory as well as the hard drive installer.

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However, the hard drive installer couldn't be tested as the readme states, "This cd can help you install Linux or you can just run the distro on the CD. Be careful, the installer is setup to format (erase) the whole hard drive." Thanks Ben for the warning, I'da been terribly upset to discover this on my own thru trial and error.

This iso was released in March of this year, so many of the apps and base system are quite dated by now. The kernel is 2.6.10-gentoo-r6, with X version 6.8.0 from Sept. 2004, and gcc 3.3.5.

In the binaries directory we find abiword, cdrecord, fortune, gentoo (file manager), gnumeric, links & lynx, lp, mplayer, qemu, samba tools, ssh & telnet, wvdial, xscreensaver, and zip & unzip amongst the built ins and other command line tools/utilities. So there really is more to Goodgoat than meets the eye.

The bad points: no menu to speak of, only a few launchers, and a hard drive installer that will wipe out your entire hard drive. On the good side it was stable and fast, will result in gentoo, and has a few more applications than is obvious. I suppose if you had a spare hard drive, or no system you cared about, this could indeed be a shortcut to gentoo. But for me, the search continues...

Linux Reviews -s

Links:

[1] http://www.tuxmachines.org/taxonomy/term/63

[2] http://www.tuxmachines.org/taxonomy/term/101

[3] http://www.tuxmachines.org/taxonomy/term/102

[4] http://www.tuxmachines.org/images/gg/desktop.jpg

[5] http://distrowatch.com

[6] http://distrowatch.com/dwres.php?resource=links#new

[7] http://www.goodgoat.com/distro/

[8] http://www.goodgoat.com/distro/support/doku.php?id=about

[9] http://www.tuxmachines.org/images/gg/mm.jpg

[10] http://www.tuxmachines.org/images/gg/apps.jpg

[11] http://www.tuxmachines.org/images/gg/firefox.jpg

[12] http://www.tuxmachines.org/images/gg/about.jpg

[13] http://www.tuxmachines.org/images/gg/background.jpg

[14] http://www.tuxmachines.org/images/gg/com.jpg