

The Consumer Electronics OS War

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Created 17/05/2010 - 11:06am

Submitted by srlinuxx on Monday 17th of May 2010 11:06:24 AM Filed under [OS](#) [1]



The PC operating system wars have been raging for nearly 30 years. Ever since IBM chose Microsoft's DOS for its PCs, other OSES have attempted to nudge their way into the market. Apple's "Get a Mac" campaign is a classic example of two operating systems vying for the hearts and minds of PC users. Of course, Windows continues to dominate the landscape, though Apple is slowly starting to convert users. While Apple will never dominate the PC market, the company has emerged as a serious contender in the battle for OS supremacy. The open source crowd, on the other hand, is pushing for Linux to become a mainstream OS.

There's a similar battle occurring in the smartphone space. Nokia, BlackBerry, Android, iPhone, Microsoft, and Palm are just a few of the 12 or so mobile operating systems battling to become market leaders. This battle is even more intense than the one occurring in the PC space. PCs sales are only around 330 million units a year, versus the more than one billion cell phones and smartphones sold annually. With these type of numbers, more is at stake for the makers of mobile operating systems.

There is yet another OS battle brewing that could make the PC and smartphone OS wars seem small by comparison. The goal of these operating systems is to deliver a consumer electronics client for use on hardware, tied to what is loosely called a Web OS.

[rest here](#) [2]

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