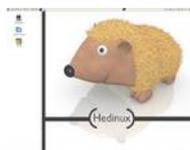# Meet Hedinux

By *srlinuxx*
Created *20/02/2006 - 7:48pm*
Submitted by srlinuxx on Monday 20th of February 2006 07:48:00 PM Filed under Linux [1] Reviews [2] -s [3]

[4]Distrowatch [5] says that 'Hedinux is a beginner-friendly, i686-optimised desktop Linux distribution built from scratch.' Hedinux [6] released their 2006.1-alpha recently and Tuxmachines thought, "yippee, freshmeat! [7] " Well, it turns out Hedinux isn't exactly brand new [8], but they were to us. This is what we found when we booted their livecd.

Hedinux's announcement states the following improvements:

- The distribution was build with the "Linux From Scratch" book, gcc 4.0.2.
- The latest stable kernel is available in version 2.6.15.4.
- spca5xx and ov51x-jpeg webcam drivers are included.
- The installer was rebuild.
- Performance improvements for the "hed" package manager, and bugs fixes. Here is a list of new commands :
    - hed update upgrade (update packages list and upgrade the system)
    - hed list (list installed packages)
    - hed list not_installed (list not installed packages)
    - hed install mypackage (installation of "mypackage" package)
    - hed remove mypackage (remove "mypackage" package)
- Faster boot up process
- New major packages: cups, ssh, sane...
- A simplier GNOME menu.
- Latest versions of desktop environments: GNOME 2.12.3, KDE 3.5.1, XFCE 4.2.3.2, Enlightenment 0.16.999.023.

Hedinux comes in several formats. They offer a 622mb livecd featuring the gnome 2.12 desktop, a 604mb more traditional install cd, and a 73mb net install cd. We chose the livecd. You can download any of them here [9].

LiveCD

As we booted Hedinux we recognized the linux live boot up debian live distros seem to prefer. Hed's is a bit customized in that you find pumpkin orange OK's. If all goes well, you'd be asked at what resolution you'd prefer and probably end up in a Gnome desktop. Having problems with my graphic chip and the xorg 6.82 combo, I ended up at a commandline. Changing "nv" to "vesa" and killing X allowed the X server to restart and drop me into Gnome.

It's a cute little gnome desktop. Mostly default, it features a white background with Hedinux's mascot and logo. I'm assuming this is a hedgehog. But their rendition is a much cuter almost cartoonish version. I never thought a hedgehog could be cute before, but never say never. I wonder if we are to draw some parallel with it's ability to roll itself into a ball. 😵

In the menu one can find several useful apps for browsing, email, office tasks, graphic manipulation, and sound and video enjoyment. One can find a im and irc chat client as well as an ftp, voip, download and some emule apps. Also included are some basic linux system and development tools. I thought it was a fairly good general purpose menu.

[10]   [11]   [12]

[13]   [14]

[15]   [16]   [17]

Harddrive Install

One highlight in the menu is their hedinux-installer. I was hoping I'd might find one, but given their download choices, I wasn't sure I would. The included installer must be their net-installer as that was it's method. It downloaded packages it needed, upon execution and setup, to install a base system. Then after first boot, it downloads the rest of your package selection and installs them.

One of Hedinux's goals is to be newbie-friendly, but I'm not so sure this installer, at least on the livecd, would qualify. For anyone with a bit of Linux experience would probably not have a problem, but someone straight from windows would run away probably screaming into the night.

The first step is cfdisk. Now I can fdisk in my sleep, but I hate cfdisk. Personal feelings aside, this is not as newbie-friendly as some fans may profess. Would qtparted be much larger? The next few steps are easy enough in choosing packages and setting up users and such. Although after installation configuration is another step that could send Mandriva and SUSE users next door. Given a choice of vi or nano, the user is expected to edit certain configuration files on their own. Most are easy enough and anyone with moderate experience knows the format, but some are not as common and all are daunting for the newbie. They do have a non-expert setting, but as far as I can tell, it's the same procedure, one just doesn't choose the steps from a menu. Instead they are presented to the user in a predefined

sequence.

 [18] [19] [20]

After the install of the base system and one boots into Hedinux for the first time. During the boot process, the system stops and finishes the install. For my install, I chose all 4 window managers and all packages. This added up to 280 packages and took approximately an hour to download. The installer looked very apt-get like to me, but it's called Hed. It did it's job admirably and ... amazingly. 280 packages and no errors. I was stoked.

One has to reconfigure some of their services again after installation, such as your X server. But then one might find themselves at the lovely login screen. You've seen this one before. It's the one with a kde-like blue wavy background with a big yellow lazy susan or daisy in the corner.

After login you can choose from any of your installed desktops, except for enlightenment which didn't show up in the menu. KDE and xfce4 were stock installs, meaning no customizations, but they seemed complete and fully functional. Gnome on the other hand was not fully functional. It did start but shot an applet error and all components were launched in seperate windows, including the desktop itself. Given the choice to delete the troublesome applet from configuration, I did, yet it did not fix the problem. After reboot, Gnome still behaved in the same manner. I thought it was rather strange since this was their system of choice and default on the livecd. If any one should have worked, it should have been gnome.

 [21] [22] [23]

Conclusion

Hedlinux is based on noone so they claim. I recognized the linux live startup scripts, they used Linux From Scratch as their build method, and the package installer/updater is apt-get. So to state they aren't based on anyone is stretching it a bit far. However, it all comes together to work pretty good. I liked it. The system installs, mostly works, and offers above average performance with an adequate variety of applications. I had no stabilty problems and all apps seemed to function well (except mplayer which wouldn't start due to a missing libmad). The only hardware issue was with usb devices not detected. To call it newbie-friendly is a misnomer however, at least in the version tested here. All in all, I think it's a wonderful effort and a great project. Considering this is an alpha release, I'm quite impressed. More screenshots here [24].

Linux Reviews -s

Source URL: http://www.tuxmachines.org/node/5162

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/gallery/hedinux/desktop
[5] http://distrowatch.com/?newsid=03245#0
[6] http://hedinux.org/index.php?page=&id=

[7] http://freshmeat.net/

[8] http://distrowatch.com/table.php?distribution=hedinux

[9] http://hedinux.org/index.php?page=1&id=16

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[21] http://www.tuxmachines.org/gallery/hedinux/kde

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[24] http://www.tuxmachines.org/gallery/hedlinux