Slackware Derivatives: The Superb Mini Server Project

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SMS, short for Superb Mini Server, is one of those niche distributions built on a major that are not really needed but fulfill a particular purpose and might save you time if what they offer is exactly what you want. SMS is built from Slackware and provides a ready to go server setup with many additional useful packages and tools pre-installed. Slackware itself of course makes a fine server, but SMS has a few more tricks up its sleeve.

With 1.6.4 the project is offering a live CD as well as an install image, both in 32-bit (i486) and for the x64 architecture. Although it looks fairly young on Distrowatch it has a good number of years behind it and has proven that it isn't just a one-man effort and about to fade away after two releases. Version 1.6.4 is built on the Slackware 13.37 but comes with a newer kernel 2.6.39.4 that takes care of a local root exploit where a local user could gain root privileges by modifying process memory. Various packages have also been updated. You can get a fuller picture here or just follow the link to their release announcement. An even newer 3.2.11 kernel is available from their repositories, and 3.2.5 is the default on their live CD image which seems to be following Slackware Current, the development branch. New releases of SMS will also be based on Current until a new stable Slackware is out. The team seems to release every two to three months so admins in need are sure to always get a fresh image if they have any new hardware.

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