



PCLINUXOS

>digital magazine

Special
May 2009

PCLINUXOS 2009.1



Blackberry Storm Meets
PCLinuxOS 2009

Impressive Quality!!!

Update Notifier

PCLinuxOS Is Great!!!

and more....



www.pclinuxos.com/mag/



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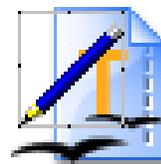


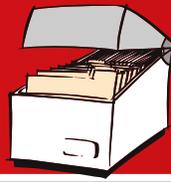
Hello there, this time around we are releasing this special issue to commemorate PCLinuxOS 2009. I have used it happily now for a while and despite a few bumps in the road when it was first released it is a grand system now. For this special issue we have a few testimonials, an article all about the PCLinuxOS Control Center, and one about syncing a blackberry with PCLinuxOS to round it all out. We hope that you enjoy this issue and anticipate the next issue to come.

Doug



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PCLinuxOS is Great!!!

Alessandro17

People who know me are aware that my favourite distros are openSUSE and Debian. Of late, I liked Vector as well, but at the end of the day they have only about 1,000 apps in their repos. If you pay extra you can get an extended 2 CD edition with KDE4 on it. However, I belong to the group of KDE users who hate KDE4. At its best it is not ready for prime time yet (IMO).

Recently, I downloaded and installed PCLinuxOS 2009.1.

I always thought PCLinuxOS to be a decent distribution, but not a lot better than others.

The latest release surprised me. I was astonished what a distro created by a small(ish) team can do. Texstar has always been a perfectionist; he didn't call his distro "stable" for years. I feel that he has achieved that perfection now.

At the moment I only own a notebook,

a Samsung NP-R700, and notebooks are notoriously finicky with "alternative" operating systems. Until the previous release season, I had trouble setting up a wireless connection on mine, and I still have a lot of trouble configuring X the way I want it especially after installing the NVIDIA driver. From this point of view, I found Vector to be better than others, but I gave up in the end because of the reasons explained above. With PCLinuxOS, everything worked out of the box. NVIDIA drivers were automatically installed and activated with one click. X was very easily configured the way I wanted. The proprietary NVIDIA drivers are not on par with the Windows ones - at least not for all hardware. Codecs are also installed or very easily available from Synaptic. What matters the most is everything actually works!

One night some of my Internet friends and I were waiting for a program on line. Most of those using Windows and WMP couldn't watch it, but I could, very well, with Mplayer!!!

I have 8,945 apps available from Synaptic. Although it is a lot less than Debian, the selections are what many PCLinuxOS users would want.

What else to say? I did find one problem though. Nothing is quite perfect. At first boot the system got stuck on "resetting X" (or something like that). After a couple of forced shutdowns (and not even REISUB worked) I solved the matter.

Another amazing feature is the extreme ease with which you can create a custom LiveCD/DVD. One click does it all for you!

You can expect every program vetted by the PCLinuxOS team to work out of the box and to work well!

Give PCLinuxOS a spin. You won't be disappointed.



Impressive Quality!

By exploder

I have been running PCLinuxOS 2009.1 for a couple of weeks now and I think I should post my thoughts about this release. Normally I am a Gnome user and have been for quite a few years. I originally took a look at the 2009.1 out of pure curiosity because I saw such a large number of downloads when 2009.1 was released. I look at lots of distributions but never leave them installed for very long. I installed PCLinuxOS and found something I had never seen before, quality! I did not see release notes telling me that some graphics cards would not work and other problems I could expect to see.

I checked for updates after I installed the system and right away I noticed a shiny new version of Gimp was among the updates! I thought, this is great! Normally I have to search for the updated packages I want and here is one I always want all ready to install! Wow, the benefits of a rolling release! I started looking closely at the default build of the system and the reasoning behind it. It seemed to me that the system was built to run on the most hardware humanly possible. Most distributions I look at seem to use packages that just have not reached the level of maturity where things will just work, so I was pleasantly surprised that PCLinuxOS was so well built.

I started looking at the problems people were having with the new release on the forum. There seemed to be some problems with upgrading from the earlier release but fixes seemed to be coming in pretty quickly to get things back on track. I noticed the word, "fixed" associated with the majority of these posts. I never saw the words "upstream issue" mentioned anywhere or that an issue would be addressed in the next release. I feel strongly that problems with a distribution are not "upstream issues", it is the developers of the distributions place to ensure that things work as they should. I see what I consider real development taking place with PCLinuxOS. Texstar takes the time to actually respond to problems that are found; you do not have to sit and wonder if someone has even looked at bugs that have been reported. All of these things I mentioned add up to high quality and very strong support!

Normally when I try out a distribution, I have to load several packages to get the functionality I need to do my daily tasks. This was not the case with PCLinuxOS. I only had to install one application to do my daily work and it was specific to what I do. Most people would have everything they need right from the start. The default packages already provide a very useful system. The remastering tool that comes stock with the system is the best tool I have seen in any distribution I have ever looked at! Remastering a Live/Install CD couldn't be any easier, so there is no excuse not to have a good

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backup with a default application like this. I made a Live/Install DVD of my system and tested this feature out right away. I customized a lot of the artwork and do not want to spend a lot of time doing things over if my 4 year old borks my system. The iso worked perfectly! The ability to easily remaster the operating system provides opportunity for me in computers I fix to sell. I am not getting very many hours where I work because of the economy and these used computers are helping to keep me from going broke! I can now provide a restore disk to people. This adds value to the finished product and people really like knowing that they can restore their system if the need should arise.

I have always wondered why Linux has never made it mainstream with computer manufacturers. The answer is simple - manufacturers are using the wrong distributions! The Dell Ubuntu machines miss the mark with first time Linux users. How can they expect to sell systems that have system sounds that do not work, DVD burning software that does not recognize a blank DVD, errors and warnings in the terminal for no apparent reason, issues with main stream graphics cards and a host of other bugs and quirks. New users do not want to spend their time fixing bugs that never should have been left in a final release! The IT Manager where I work said that he was looking at Linux but he thought that Ubuntu was more like a beta release than a final product. Long time Linux users tend to ignore problems that make a bad impression on first time

users. PCLinuxOS gives a good impression on Linux in general and really should serve as an example of things done right.

PCLinuxOS has opened my eyes to the fact that computers with Linux pre-installed can be successful. I am so confident in this that I ordered some parts online to build a new machine to sell to test the waters. I am tired of working on an assembly line, barely being able to pay my bills. I want to offer computers to people for an affordable price and I want them to enjoy their system and not have to spend more money for applications, doing virus scans, defragging, etc. PCLinuxOS is the only distribution I have looked at that could completely fulfill what I envision as success.

Almost forgot, I like that PCLinuxOS builds it's own packages and the one-repo-enabled-at-a-time way of installing updates really keeps the chance of breakage under control. The support in the forum is very good, too. I made some suggestions to help to improve PCLinuxOS. They were all cosmetic things that I thought would help to advance the distribution. The community was very nice about what I was suggesting. I felt compelled to make suggestions because the distribution is so close to perfect and ahead of many distributions in many ways. It is nice to know that suggestions can be made without having to wear a flame retardant suit!

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I have probably forgotten to mention some of the things I like, but the bottom line is that I see quality that I just don't see anywhere else. My thanks goes out to the Developers of PCLinuxOS!

Visit us at www.pclinuxos.com



Visit the PCLinuxOS forums for support.



Why I Want to Use PCLinuxOS

Coranth

I'm a Windows User, okay? Go on. Scoff. Sneer. It's okay. I know you all want to. The thing is... when it's all installed and working properly, Windows allows me to, well... do what I want to do. I don't need to know how to compile code, hack kernels, or modify arcane files named 'xorg.conf.' All I need to do is use Mozilla Firefox to get on the Internet, or load up VLC so I can listen to "Haunted" by the band Disturbed, and other such things. And, for all the time I've had it on my Notebook, Windows XP Professional--despite its age--is a stable, rock-solid O/S; I can prove that because I have only had ONE, yes only ONE Blue Screen Of Death. It was caused by a 'modified' nVidia Driver that I installed on my Notebook.

Standby didn't work properly with said driver, you see. This was easily resolved. Restart machine. Uninstall bad driver. Reboot. Replace with original driver. Reboot. I then later installed a new modified driver, 177.92 and it works fine. It's the driver I'm using on this machine now. Thus, as I said, Windows XP works when properly set up. And yet... I'm here. A user of Windows XP, on the forum for PCLinuxOS. Why, when I use Windows, would I be here? Well, let me tell you.

Windows XP Professional is a fine O/S, but there are just some things I loathe about it. The first thing I don't like is the user interface, Windows Explorer. It's... okay. I mean, it gets the job done, but... it's starting to look a little boring, you know, and I wish I could change it. Now, I know, I know... there are themes and such you can get for it, but if you really want to change it, you need something like StyleXP which is yet another program you must install before you can do what you want. There are also... alternative shells... to explorer, but the only decent one I've looked at is LiteStep, and that's far too complex for me. How I loathe 'step.rc'! Haven't they heard of graphical config managers before? Thus, I'm stuck with Explorer.

The second thing I hate about Windows XP is--get ready for this--Internet Explorer! Oh, GAWDS, I HATE IT! I HATE IT! I HATE IT! And you know what's ironic? I don't even USE it! Why would I... blech! Far too many security holes, and exploits in it, no matter how many they "fix" with that darn "Cumulative Security Update" they roll out every month! 'But Cor,' I hear you ask, 'why do you hate Internet Explorer when you don't use it?' The answer, my friends, is: IT'S THERE! It's there, sitting on my Toshiba, taking up space... and you know what? I can't remove the rotten filth; it's part of the operating system. I don't want it there, but I can't remove it, which is really strange. I mean, I should be able to remove it, just uninstall it like any other Windows App, right? It's the same

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with Windows Media Player 11: it's on here, but I don't use it and can't get rid of it. Isn't a computer you purchase supposed to be wholly yours? You know... you get the thing, and then you decide exactly what goes on it? I thought I would have full command of what does and doesn't get put onto my Notebook, but... I don't. Microsoft does. That's not right...

The third thing I hate about Windows XP is [censored] "Windows Genuine Advantage." Of course I have a [censored] genuine copy of Windows, you [heavily censored due to explosive cursing] fools! Why the [censored] do I need to keep on clicking "Validate" before I can get the latest version of DirectX, or some other component I need?! The fourth thing I despise about Windows is rebooting the system every time I install a [censored] driver! You guys don't need to do that; you just hotwire a new module into the kernel, or 'modprobe' it I think. You guys only really need to reboot when you do something major, like change or upgrade to a new version of the Linux Kernel.

The fifth thing I despise about Windows: Drivers. Drivers. Drivers. *knock knock* Hello, MS people!!!! Why don't you dimwits take a page from the open-source books and actually provide modules in the O/S for your hardware, eh?! Oh, yes, and let's not forget that since Windows is the most popular O/S, the crackers, malware writers, and virus makers are out

in force. I don't like AVG 8. It's protected me for many years, but I still don't like it. You PCLinuxOS guys get far fewer viruses than I do. For Linux, the viruses are a pittance... if they even can live at all in the system due to its nature. Those are the reasons why I want to use PCLinuxOS.

I've heard it said that you shouldn't use Linux unless you're prepared to learn it. Huh? Learn it? What... you mean, learn how to type cryptic commands into a terminal window? It's very strange, that... because when I booted into my copy of PCLinuxOS, I didn't need to open up a terminal for anything at all, except to type in "uname -r" to find the version of the kernel I was running. Sorry guys, I don't want to LEARN Linux, I just want to USE it. PCLinuxOS allowed me to do that, without touching a CLI at all. I'm not interested in kernel hacking and editing obscure text files such as /etc/fstab/ or whatever it is. I just want a rock-solid, stable-as-hell O/S which allows me to do what I want and gives me no grief. And guys... PCLinuxOS IS IT!

The PCLinuxOS 2007 LiveCD that Texstar and the rest of you created is a thing of incredible elegance and simplicity; it is 'radically simple' as you claim it to be. I was able to boot that CD, and get online within moments. I was able to use X-Chat--even though I hadn't even heard of the program, or used it before in my life--and even cranked up Amarok, the

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music player. It worked, even though my sound was distorted due to an incorrect driver. A small blemish on an otherwise perfect O/S. All I ask is that you incorporate the Linux Realtek High Definition Audio Drivers directly into the LiveCD after PCLOS 2009; that'll fix my sound pronto!

The KDE in PCLinuxOS looked and felt like Windows Explorer, with its 'Start' Button, and the Quick Launch-like panel beside it. Even the window I opened when I accessed my Lacie Drive was reminiscent of Explorer, and this made it SO EASY for me to adapt to and use. THIS is how Linux SHOULD BE. PCLinuxOS is Linux for everyone. The new user, the "geek" (I hate that word, I feel it's degrading) and even those who have basically no computer experience at all can use this utterly amazing operating system. Now... I'm sure there are a few things that I'll need to learn, eventually, like how to compile things from source, or how to properly use synaptic, or how to set up WINE so I can get my (Windows) games up and running. But... I will learn those things WHEN I NEED TO, and I know I can ask you guys for help or look up a HOWTO when I need it.

My computer is an appliance--something that I use--and I don't care how it works, only that it does. And PCLinuxOS allowed me to use my computer. As I moved about the O/S, I couldn't help thinking, 'Why am I still using Windows?' PCLinuxOS is a

truly amazing Linux Distro which should be #1 on DistroWatch. May it be coded for eternity and may it never die.



Get wallpapers and graphics from LinFX.com





PCLinuxOS Control Center

MeeMaw

I was thinking the other day about the PCLinuxOS Control Center (PCC) and how it is the “place to go” for all your major system configurations..... and it's been updated in PCLinuxOS 2009.1.

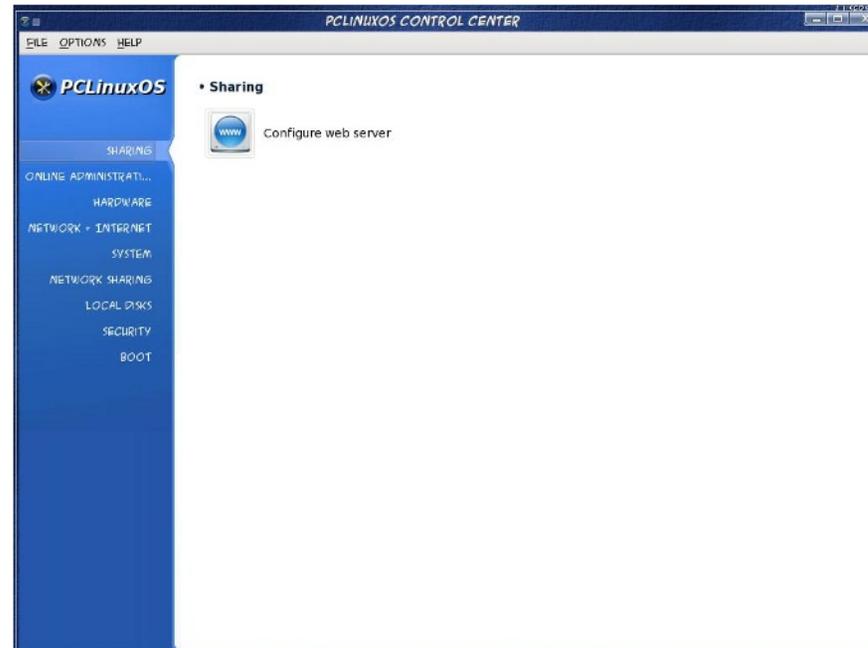
Perhaps there are those who need a tour of some of the things you can do with this configuration center. It is a centralized application for configuring and administering various system tools, making it easier for a user to do the many different chores that pertain to the maintenance and use of a Linux box. This will be a highlight of the PCC, and if you need a more in-depth explanation of any item, you should post in the forums so someone who's more knowledgeable can explain it more completely.

Users can access the PCC in a couple of ways. One is by clicking on the KDE Menu button on your panel, then go to

System > Configuration > Configure Your Computer. On many systems (unless it's been changed), the PCC icon is already on the panel. It is the icon that looks like a wrench and screwdriver crossed. It can also be invoked through the Run Command (Alt+F2) or a Konsole with the command `drakconf`. A user will be asked for your root password as any configuration done will change the system and can only be done by the root.

I have listed the items under each section & subsection, along with a short description for most of them.

Sharing



To share directories with other machines, you could install Samba. This is where you configure it.

Configure Samba



Manage Samba share

Configure web server - You have to have Samba installed to do all this... if you are setting up a web server, this is where you need to be.

Groupware

Configure mail - This is for a mail server.

Hardware



Many of these are self-explanatory - but this is where you go for hardware configuration. The GUI can also be launched from the Run Command or Konsole with `harddrake2`.

Manage Your Hardware

Browse & configure hardware – This will examine your system and show your hardware, and has a way to configure everything if need be. There are two sections on the window. The left shows the device tree of all the detected hardware categories. The right pane shows additional information of a selected device. In some cases, there would be buttons which will allow the configuration of the selected device and/or its module.

Sound Configuration - If you need to change any settings, or install a new sound card.

Configure Graphics

Configure 3D desktop effects - Turn on or off Compiz

Set up graphical server - You can configure your graphical display - the screen will ask for your graphics card, monitor and resolution - if for some reason you need to alter any of this, you can do it here. **BE CAREFUL!!!**



Configure Mouse & Keyboard

Set up keyboard layout - You can change your keyboard layout here

Set up pointer device (mouse, touchpad) - Mouse or touchpad settings here

Configure Printing & Scanning

Set up the printers (print job queues) - Your printer is detected and configured here. If you are sharing your printer between your home computers, there is a way to do it without Samba from within this section. See this post...
http://www.pclinuxos.com/index.php?option=com_smf&Itemid=58&topic=49333.0

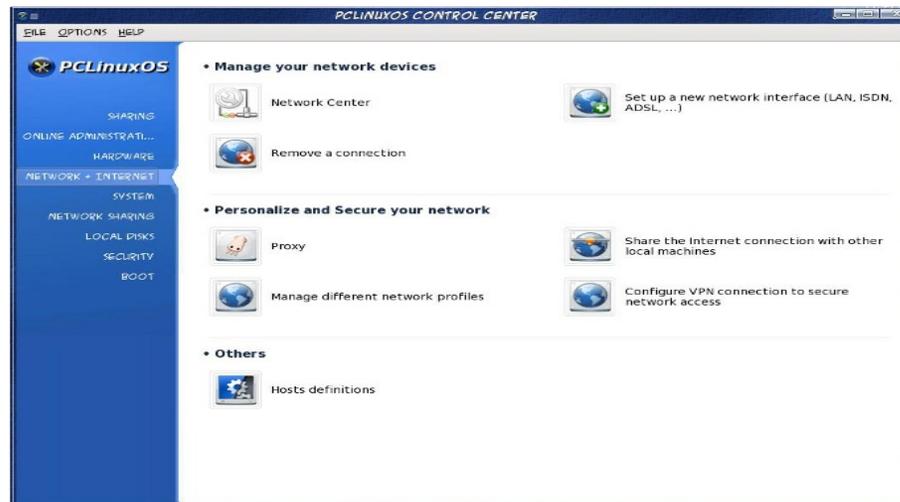
Set up scanner - Scanner configuration.

Others

Set up UPS for power monitoring (Uninterruptible Power Supply) - A UPS will help if your area experiences lots of power outages. It will have to be connected and on so it can be detected by the system.

Many times PCLinuxOS will detect your hardware on install or booting a live disk, and you will find that it doesn't need any configuration at all!!! (For example, my scanner and printer have always been detected and ready to use!)

Network & Internet





Manage your network devices

Network Center – This is where you configure your network connection, change settings, monitor your connection and even find out if there are other signals in your area.

Set up new interface – Use this if you are starting from scratch on your interfaces. Most of the time a hard-wired cable is already detected and ready to use, but if you get a wireless card and want to configure it, you start here. If your card can be turned on and off, verify that it is on. If it is a laptop card that needs to be inserted, make sure that is done as well because it won't get recognized unless it is in the machine and turned on.

Remove a connection - If something isn't working and you need to start from scratch, you can delete it here.... you should reboot before you start over.

Personalize and Secure Your Network

Proxy - If you want a proxy connection, configure it here.

Share connection with other local machines - You can configure your system to act as a gateway to the internet for other machines.

Manage different network profiles - If you have a laptop you use at home and at work, you can set up a "profile" for each so you can bring up the connection you need in each place.

Configure VPN connections - (from Wikipedia) "A virtual private network (VPN) is a computer network in which some of the links between nodes are carried by open connections or virtual circuits in some larger network (e.g., the Internet) as opposed to running across a single private network." Configure it here.

Others

Host definitions



System



Manage System Services

Authentication - Gives you 5 choices as follows;

1.LDAP:Tells your computer to use LDAP for some or all authentication. LDAP consolidates certain types of information within your organization.

2. Kerberos 5 : With Kerberos and LDAP for authentication in Active Directory Server

3.Windows Domain: Winbind allows the system to retrieve information and authenticate users in a Windows domain.

4.NIS: Allows you to run a group of computers in the same Network Information Service domain with a common password and group file.

5.Local file: Use local for all authentication and information user tell in local file. Stand-alone computers should choose Local File.

Manage system services by enabling or disabling them – A list of services that start on boot can be found here... if there is something you don't want or need to start, you can disable it here.

Manage, add & remove fonts, import Windows™ fonts – You should install new fonts to your system here.

Localization

Manage date & time - You can always right-click to clock on your desktop and configure it from there, but this feature is included here as well. No matter which way you configure it, you will need to make your date & time changes as root.

Manage localization for your system - If you are changing your language from English to something else (or back to English) you configure it here. Bear in mind



that a reboot is necessary to complete the change, and some of your applications may need to be configured separately.

Administration Tools

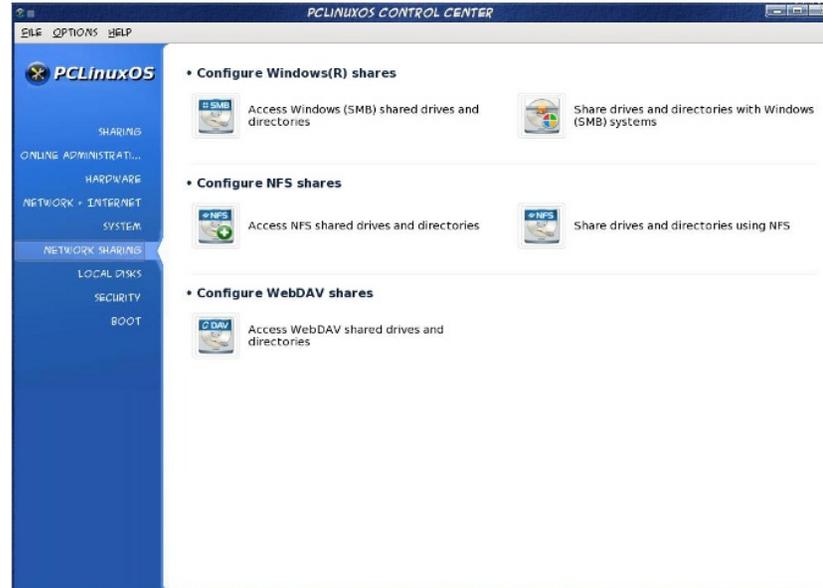
View & search system logs – The system logs can be viewed here (it's an alternative to typing dmesg in a console but every bit as useful.)

Open a Console as Administrator - You can open a console from here or from the main desktop menu.

Manage users on system – You can add a new user to or delete a user from the system here.

Backups - You can configure your data backups here. You can use a wizard to configure periodic backups, backup now, or restore if needed.

Network Sharing



Configure Windows ® Shares - Windows machines use the SMB protocol to share directories

Access Windows (SMB) shared drives and directories

Share drives and directories with Windows (SMB) systems

Configure NFS shares - Protocol used mostly for Unix/Linux machines for sharing

Access NFS shared drives and directories

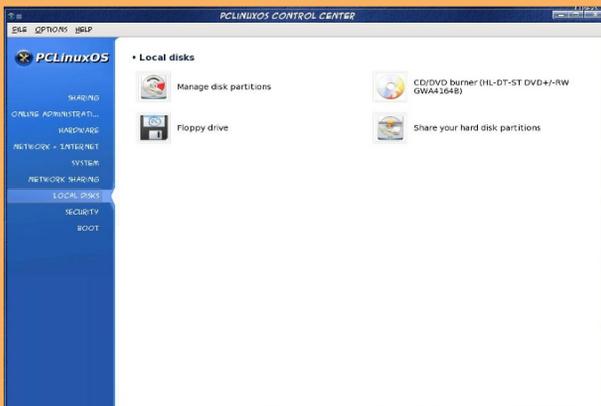
Share drives and directories using NFS



Configure WebDAV shares

Access WebDAV shared drives and directories - (from Mandriva's DrakXToolsGuide) "WebDAV (Web-based Distributed Authoring and Versioning) is an extension to the HTTP protocol which allows you to create, move, copy, and delete resources on a remote web server. In practice, mounting a remote WebDAV repository on your local machine allows you to modify a remote web server's files as if those files were local to the system."

Local Disks



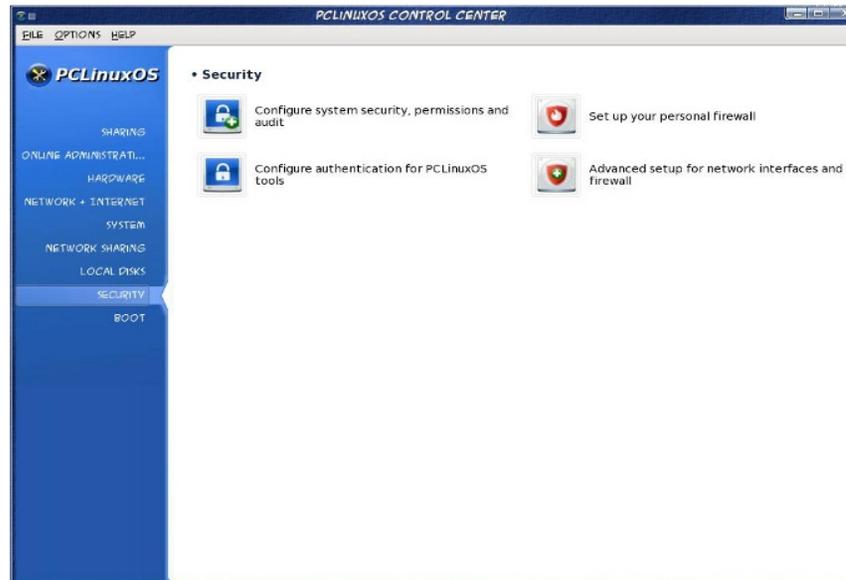
Manage disk partitions – If you want to change your partitions, you can do it here, but be aware that you should back up all your data first as changes to the partitions could cause loss.

CD/DVD burner - there may be a notation designating your drive configuration here – it had mine as (HL-DT-ST DVD+/-RW GW4164B)

Set where floppy drive is mounted

Share your hard disk partitions - If you have multiple users on your computer you can configure sharing partitions with some or all users.

Security



Set up system security level and audit - You can set up security on several levels - Poor, Standard, High, Higher and Paranoid - and set up periodic system checks, set up level of permissions on some configurations.

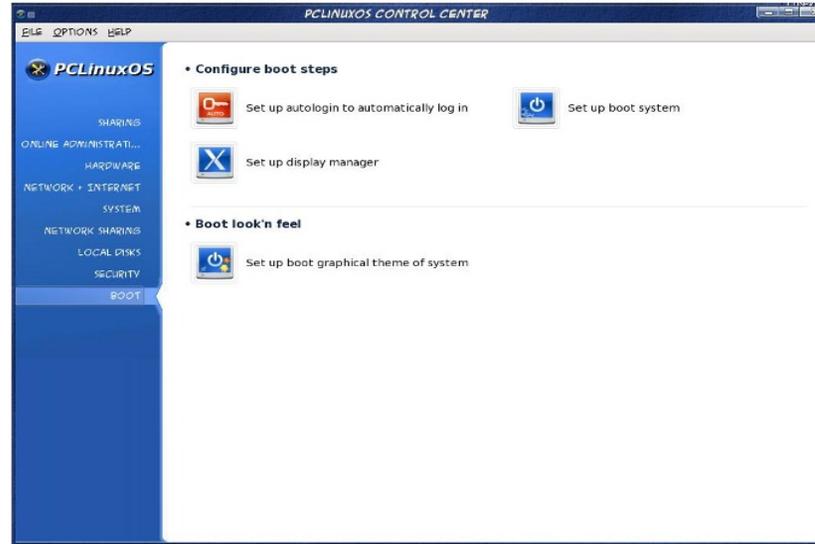


Fine tune permissions on system - This configures your file permissions... if you want to give someone else write-permission on a certain file/folder, you can change it here.

Set up your personal firewall - You can configure your firewall here. It is a matter of checking which services you will allow access to on your machine. You can access the internet but you are designating which services can be accessed from the internet. Unchecking "Everything" turns on the firewall; then only check those services you want to allow access. You shouldn't need to check anything unless this computer is hosting services. However, if you have your printer on one computer in your home and configured it to print from other computers in your home, "CUPS Server" needs to be checked.

Advanced set up for network interfaces and firewall -

Boot



Configure boot steps

Set up auto-login to automatically log in – auto-login is not as secure as having to login, because anyone can start your computer and do anything with it. However, some people like having their computer bring up the desktop upon boot, and this is where you configure it. In my case I have an old laptop in the living room for some quick, occasional web-browsing. My adult daughter occasionally comes in and looks something up as well. I have the laptop configured to auto-login. I keep important files on my desktop computer with the normal login screen, and don't share any files or drives with the laptop.



Set up boot system – This is where you can configure your boot loader (Grub or Lilo) – for those who have a multi-boot system, you can change the boot order here. This was useful to me when I had just started using Linux and was dual-booting with WindowsXP. I had it set up to start Windows, but not long after that, I went into this section and changed the default boot to PCLinuxOS (and removed WindowsXP completely not too long after that!)

Set up display manager

Boot look 'n feel

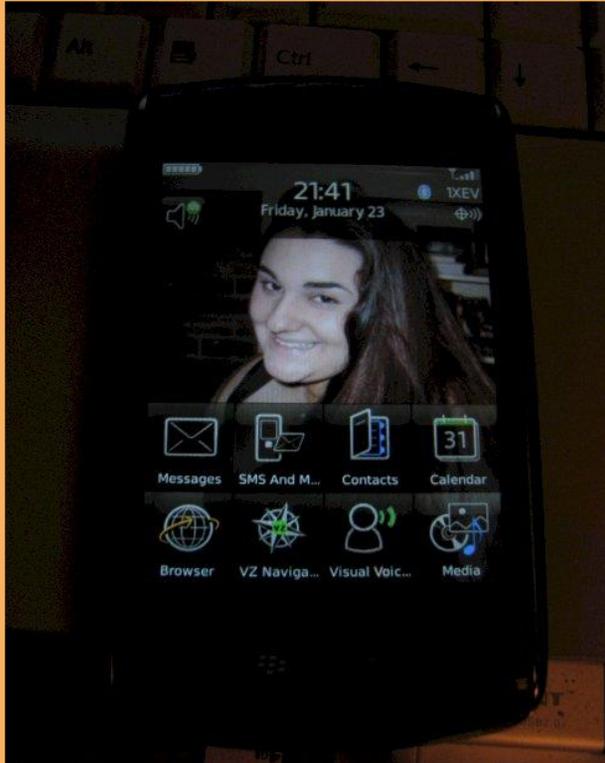
Select boot graphical theme of system - You can configure your boot menu to show a specific wallpaper.

As you can see, you can do almost anything to configure your system by using the PCC. Any questions or

problems with this program can be directed to the very capable people in the Forum.



PCLinuxOS Control Center



One of the newest and most popular new smart phone out on the market is RIM's Blackberry Storm. The Storm is the latest to compete head-to-head with Apple's popular iPhone, albeit targeting business customers. After all, it was the business community who formed the backbone of RIM's Blackberry sales and use.

Currently (in the United States), the Blackberry Storm is exclusive to the Verizon Wireless network.

Just taking a look at RIM's website, it's quickly obvious that there is software support for Blackberry devices ... but only for computers running Microsoft Windows or Apple's OS X. Currently, there is no support for Linux on RIM's website. (There is an evolving open source solution called Berry, but it's relatively new and is NOT in the PCLinuxOS repositories.) And the software that comes with the Storm is designed for computers running Microsoft Windows.

So you can imagine my dismay at not finding Linux software that would allow me full access to the capabilities of my new smart phone.

Since my wife, who uses Windows XP on her laptop, had easy access to her Blackberry Storm to load photos, music and movies, I had to find a way to do the same from within PCLinuxOS. It took me a couple of days to figure out how to get PCLinuxOS to see that my Blackberry Storm was attached and ready to receive files.

The first thing you need to do is change some default settings on the Blackberry Storm. Rotating the Storm to the landscape position, scroll down to the bottom of the categories, and highlight the "Options" selection, and click the screen. (Illustration on the right.)



Next, scroll down the list that's presented (Illustration below). Find the entry named "Memory." Highlight it, and click the screen.

Once in the memory sub-menu, you need to make sure that two options are activated. First, insure that "Mass Storage Support Mode" is turned on (arrow number one in the

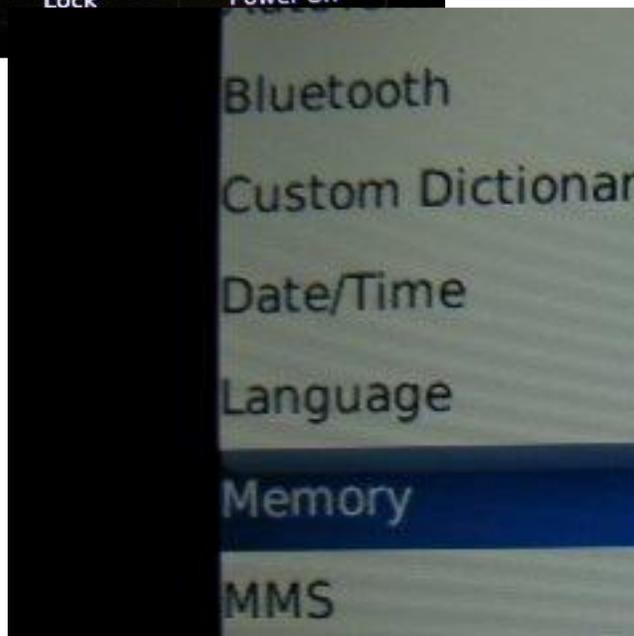


illustration below). Second, make sure that "Auto-Enable Mass Storage Mode When Connected" is set to "Yes" (arrow number two in the illustration below). Now, when you connect the Storm to your computer running PCLinuxOS, both the phone and it's 8 GB memory card will be seen by PCLinuxOS and you will be able to open each up in Konqueror.



Now, putting photos, music and movie files on your Blackberry Storm is as easy as copying the desired files to the open Konqueror window.



Formatting Movies for the Blackberry Storm



“Copy” for the audio section. This has worked well for me every time, but may not work properly if the sound of the video file is not in a format that the Blackberry Storm likes. If that is the case, I've also had good luck going with recording the audio as “AAC (FAAC).” Fourth, select “MP4” as the file container format, as this seems to be a requirement for the Blackberry Storm. Save your file, with a “.mp4” file extension. Once your re-encoding is complete, connect your Storm to your PCLinuxOS computer. Open the Konqueror windows and drag your newly encoded movie file to the “Videos” folder on the memory card. Your video should appear in your Blackberry Storm, under the “Media” selection from the home screen.

Your movie will appear in the list of videos. Select it and click the screen. If all went well, you should now be able to view your movie on the Blackberry Storm's screen.

The Blackberry Storm sports an excellent video display and probably the best sound quality of any current smart phone. This makes the Blackberry Storm excellent for wHowever, you must first “re-encode” the digital copies of your movies in order to be d

First, from the “Auto” menu, select the Ipod (mpeg4) setting, and accept all the defaults. Second, select “MPEG-4 ASP (Xvid4)” or “MPEG-4 ASP (lavc)” for the video type. I've not been able to get “MPEG-4 AVC (x264)” to work. Third, select

The following is excerpted from the Blackberry web site, and lists the supported formats for the Blackberry Storm.



Supported formats

File Format / Extension	Component	Codec	Notes	RTSP Streaming
MP4	Video	H.264	Baseline Profile, 480x360 pixels, up to 2 Mbps, 30 frames per second	Supported
M4A		MPEG4	Simple Profile Level 3, 480x360 pixels, up to 2 Mbps, 30 frames per second	Supported
3GP		H.263	Profile 0 and 3, Level 30	Supported
3GP2	Audio	AAC-LC, AAC+, eAAC+		Supported
		AMR-NB		Supported
		QCELP EVRC		
AVI	Video	MPEG4	Simple Profile Level 3, 480x360 pixels, up to 2 Mbps, 30 frames per second	Supported
	Audio	MP3		
ASF	Video	Windows® Media Video 9	WMV3, Simple Profile, 480x360 pixels, 30 frames per second	
WMV		Windows Media Audio 9		Supported
WMA	Audio	Windows Media 10 Standard/Professional		Supported
MP3		MP3		

Recommended video format for local playback

File Format / Extension	Component	Codec	Notes
MP4	Video	H.264	Baseline Profile, 480x360 frames per second
	Audio	AAC-LC	

There are also transcoding instructions on the Blackberry web site, but they do NOT work for the Blackberry Storm. They are for older Blackberry models.

I hope this has been helpful in getting better use of your Blackberry Storm with PCLinuxOS!

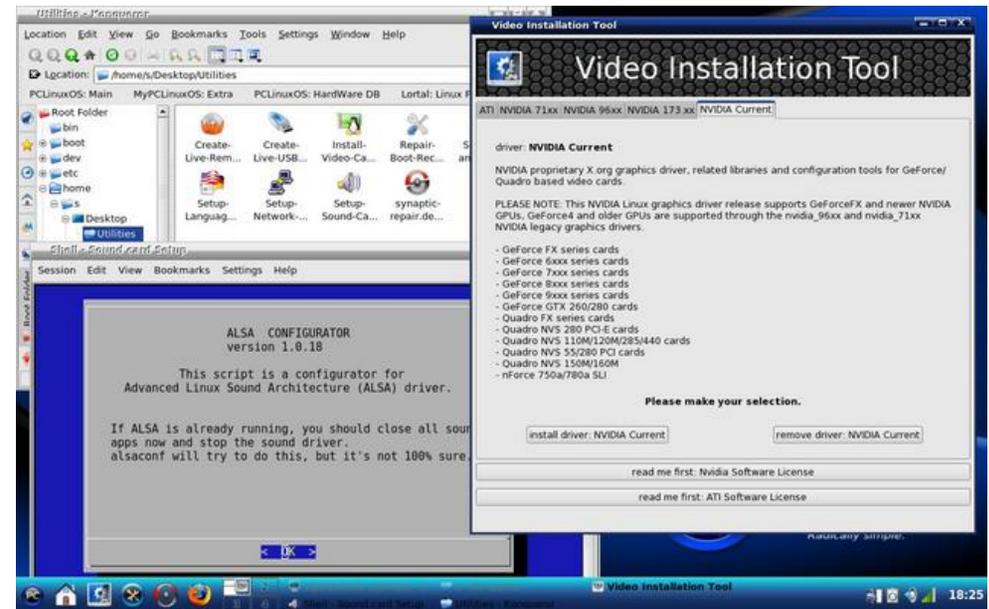
The sales person at the Verizon Wireless store did tip his hat a bit when I purchased my Blackberry Storm, informing me that an upgrade to the Blackberry Storm's system is in the pipeline that will allow unaltered and unfettered playback of DivX encoded AVI files. Once that occurs, converting videos will be even easier, and should mean that the Blackberry Storm should not only play DivX encoded AVI files, but also files properly encoded with Xvid.



I have yet to be successful syncing my Storm to save contact information or accessing the calendar. But, as with most things, I'm sure that these things will someday soon be possible as the open source community catches up with the hardware manufacturers who overlook us. But then again, it's nothing new for Linux to be left out of the loop, and this terrific open source community still finds a way to bring forth solutions.

Paul Arnote

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Check out the Utilities folder on your PCLinuxOS Desktop. You can setup your video, network, sound card, language and set the time.



Hard Work!!!!

Computer programming is just amazing to me. I took a class in college (back before some of you were born!!!!) and just barely passed it. I came to the conclusion that programming is something I don't need to try again.

However, I have had a chance to read some of the conversations between our packagers while they are trying to prepare a program we want. You can look too... it's here- http://www.pclinuxos.com/index.php?option=com_smf&Itemid=58&board=55.0

Many people have asked for an automatic update program like Ubuntu's Update Notifier. It is a neat package that Ubuntu has installed and running by default in their distros. Our members were split on this program – many of them don't want one that runs automatically. They want to choose the time to run Synaptic themselves, while others want to install it and have it run for them. Our programmers are working on that now.

It is true that there is an AutoUpgrade in the repositories. It was my understanding that the one they are working on will be an expanded and better version of the one that's there. I am

wrong, though, because AutoUpgrade doesn't do the same job. Update Notifier finds updates to your programs, then asks what you want to do with the information. AutoUpgrade does the upgrading.

In reading the conversation between the packagers, I have found that many concerns and problems surface that many of us take for granted.

Appearance: What will the icon look like? (and make sure it's light or dark enough for older, weaker eyes to see.) Will it be an icon you can associate with Synaptic, or will it look totally different? Will it be only an icon, or will there be a small window or pop-up with information? Will it be the same color as the rest of your panel (or transparent, if your panel is?) Will it put a new icon in your tray every time it runs until you have 3 or 4?

Function: How will it run? Will it work for a normal user, or will it show that no updates are available because Synaptic only runs in root? Can you get it to search correctly, and then ask for the root password when the updates are being downloaded and installed? Can you get it to exit the program if the user so desires, or will it keep searching? Will it run multiple times until the computer locks up? Will it run to a certain point and then just quit?

TESTIMONIALS



Interaction: What about your internet connection? Do you have to start it manually? If so, then what kind of message do you get from the program? (Help! I can't check for updates because your internet isn't on!!!)

Resources: What about the repositories? If they are syncing, what happens then? If you leave it on all the time, how often does it check? Will that slow down the repositories?

Dependencies: What about dependencies? It is basically a program script to automatically run another program or two. What files do all those programs need to run correctly? Everything depends on everything else, so they have to work together. If you tell it to exit, will it exit the whole series of processes or just itself?

Accessibility: So, when you get it working correctly, you need to have the icons and notification messages in several languages..... do you have translators?

Those are just a few of the items that the packagers discussed while they were writing the script – all the while testing each version on their own hardware to make sure it worked as desired. The most important part of it all, though, is the code itself. While they were able to use some of the code

from Ubuntu's program, they still had to make sure it worked in PCLOS, and writing it is the hardest part. Those of you who use the command line know that things must be typed exactly right, or they won't work.

This thread took about three weeks with several people testing and rewriting all the time. Since I wrote this, however, the program was added to the repositories and I have installed it..

I gave up trying to learn how to program a long time ago, and am very happy that there are those who enjoy it. We are fortunate that our programmers are some of the best. If this article has educated you at all, it will be to help you realize just how much goes into the programs our packagers provide for us. It's no small job!!!!

MeeMaw