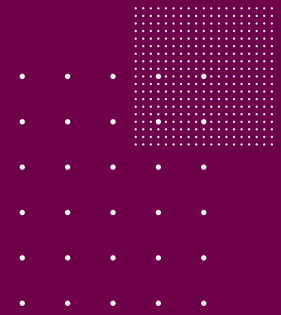


CANONICAL



WHITE PAPER

10 reasons to migrate to Ubuntu Desktop

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Executive summary

The latest release of the world's most popular proprietary desktop operating system (OS) has been a big hit in the press. It's faster, easier to use and prettier to look at than its predecessor. And for many IT managers, it's also the path of least resistance.

However, a number of key factors mean that upgrading to the latest proprietary software may not be the best move. There's the high licensing cost to consider across the OS, office productivity tools and anti-virus software. And there's also the fact that second, third and fourth generation workstations will groan under the weight, and many will need replacing.

There is another way forward. The latest version of Ubuntu Desktop Edition makes open-source software truly enterprise-ready. As well as giving information workers the rich functionality and constant availability they need, IT departments benefit from seamless installation, simple remote management, virus-free computing and 24x7 support options from Canonical, the company leading the Ubuntu project.

The computing world is extremely polarised when it comes to proprietary vs. open source, and a million industry voices tell a million different stories. Even so, there are still very real differences between the two philosophies and technologies. This white paper focuses on just a few of them, giving you 10 great reasons to migrate your desktops to Ubuntu Desktop Edition or install it alongside your existing OS.

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The top 10 reasons to migrate to Ubuntu

MASSIVE SAVINGS ON LICENSING AND HARDWARE

All large desktop environments need to be managed and supported effectively – tasks which account for a big chunk of every IT budget. However, proprietary systems push up costs even further with per-user licences for the OS, office applications and anti-virus software.

Because Ubuntu Desktop Edition, which includes OpenOffice.org and around 29,000 other applications can be downloaded for free, you can eliminate licensing costs once and for all. As a result, there's always more budget available for strategic IT infrastructure and projects that deliver direct benefits to your bottom line.

If this argument wasn't convincing enough, Ubuntu also delivers huge hardware savings over proprietary systems. As a much lighter, more compact OS, it gives you great performance on second, third and even fourth-generation workstations. That means you won't break the bank ripping and replacing existing hardware.

EXCELLENT SUPPORT FOR THIN-CLIENT COMPUTING

For many large organisations, it no longer makes economic sense to run individually licensed operating systems and applications on every desktop. One common way to overcome this challenge is to move key applications to the web and deploy smaller, cheaper, thin-client devices.

Ubuntu Desktop Edition offers tremendous benefits over proprietary software if you are taking this route. Proprietary systems bundle up all previous versions, making them extremely heavy and "bloated". What's more, they must be deployed in their entirety, which increases your hardware and replication costs exponentially.

By contrast, Ubuntu can be easily customised and pared down to meet your individual remote access requirements. This makes it lighter, more fit for purpose, easier to access online and capable of running on smaller, cheaper hardware. What's more, Ubuntu is immune to the millions of viruses that plague proprietary systems – ensuring watertight security for your remote servers and desktops.

Ubuntu Desktop Edition is saving the French National Police Force €2 million a year in licence fees alone. By repurposing 4,500 machines to act as local servers, it has also dramatically reduced its hardware expenditure.

ENTERPRISE-CLASS SUPPORT

Until recently, proprietary software companies have argued that their way is the safest way. Open-source skills are expensive, they say, and support often doesn't reflect today's 24x7 reliance on IT.

Today, though, the world has moved on. Canonical, the company behind the Ubuntu project, provides a comprehensive range of commercial services, such as the Ubuntu Advantage subscription service, which includes support, systems management, legal assurance and access to the Ubuntu Knowledge Base.

Customers can choose between different release versions of Ubuntu Desktop Edition, depending on their specific support needs. The long-term support (LTS) version, for example, is released every two years and fully supported for up to three – giving you free, in-life updates to ensure continual improvement and watertight security.

By keeping our services completely separate from Ubuntu software, Canonical remains true to core open-source principles of freedom and choice. While organisations that deliver other Linux variants insist you buy support for all your desktop machines, Canonical lets you decide exactly how many machines you want to cover.

When you adopt Ubuntu, you can choose 24x7 support from Canonical and engage us to train your key team members. In subsequent years, you'll be able to handle the vast majority of IT issues internally, reducing reliance on support from us and helping you get costs down to an absolute minimum.

If you require constant support for a large infrastructure, Canonical can provide a dedicated Premium Support Engineer (PSE). The PSE works as a virtual team member with your IT staff and will take all your support calls, work with you to understand your long-term goals, and represent your interests to Ubuntu and Canonical decision makers.

SIMPLIFIED DESKTOP MANAGEMENT

While many IT managers understand the cost and performance benefits of open-source software, they fear that introducing a new OS will increase manual administration. In reality, though, this needn't be the case. With new tools for remote desktop management, Ubuntu Desktop Edition delivers impressive time savings and dramatically increases administrator productivity.

Specifically, you can choose to engage the Ubuntu Advantage subscription service which includes Landscape, a unique systems management and monitoring tool from Canonical. This enables administrators to manage multiple Ubuntu machines through a simple graphical user interface; effectively monitor performance; and provision software packages more quickly. As a result, each administrator can manage more machines, helping you reduce your administrator costs and time overall.

“By making regular contact with the IT team, we can get to know a customer's IT environment intimately, and proactively advise on how to make the most of Ubuntu in the specific context of the organisation.”

Etienne Goyer
Premium Service Engineer,
Canonical

To meet the needs of diverse Ubuntu users, Canonical has developed two versions of Landscape. You can choose to host the service on your own servers for optimum system performance and watertight information security. Alternatively, if you need to get your systems management solution up and running straight away, you may want to choose the web-based version.

FLEXIBILITY TO MEET CHANGING BUSINESS NEEDS

It's difficult to customise proprietary operating systems. Because the code is "closed", you usually have to deploy the whole lot, which may be a lot more than you need. This has clear cost implications across licensing, hardware and replication.

Open-source operating systems such as Ubuntu Desktop Edition provide a completely different approach. You can start with the basic functionality you need and add to it to build your ideal, highly agile operating system from the ground up.

By implementing Ubuntu in this way, you can get far better performance from your older hardware or choose to deploy low-cost thin clients. What's more, you can quickly customise your operating system to support new functionality, including social networking or multi-media conferencing as the needs of the business change.

UNRIVALLED DESKTOP SECURITY

The vast majority of desktop machines run versions of the world's most popular proprietary operating system. With this huge target in view, hackers have created literally millions of viruses and malware applications capable of attacking the latest offering. To mitigate the clear risks to business continuity, IT managers install and update costly anti-virus software across their estates. Even so, many viruses continue to damage infrastructure for years before being detected.

Open-source operating systems in general, and Ubuntu Desktop Edition in particular, give you far greater system security – with no need for anti-virus software. This is because the millions of viruses and malware agents targeted at the proprietary binary image simply won't run on Ubuntu.

"We've been amazed by the stability and the reliability of the Ubuntu distribution. We don't have to spend time deploying lots of patches and worrying about security. And we don't have any trouble with viruses, which gives us real confidence in Ubuntu as a solid technology platform."

Martin Andel
Systems Administrator,
Skalica City Hall

VENDOR INDEPENDENCE, FREEDOM AND CHOICE

Maintaining profits of proprietary software companies depends on releasing new software – and forcing customers to upgrade. Messaging servers are a good example of a technology that has been given a facelift every few years, requiring customers to conduct costly infrastructure changes whether they like it or not.

All open-source systems, and Ubuntu Desktop Edition in particular, are ideal for organisations that want to stay independent and set their own timetables for implementing new technologies. Software updates are always free, and new versions can be downloaded at your convenience. Put simply, Ubuntu puts you back in control of your own desktop destiny.

SEAMLESS, LOW-RISK DEPLOYMENT

Many IT managers fear that moving to open-source systems will cause massive disruptions to normal working. In reality, however, there are many ways to benefit without ripping and replacing your existing OS.

Working with a trusted partner such as Canonical, you can immediately get a clear view of users who can migrate seamlessly to Ubuntu Desktop Edition. By starting small, you can minimise risk and gauge the likely cost and performance benefits of a wider Ubuntu rollout. You can also assess the additional time needed to manage two operating systems – which is typically minimal.

In rare cases where users need functionality that is not available in open-source software, you can run proprietary software and Ubuntu side by side for as long as you want. You can also choose to deploy Ubuntu within your proprietary operating system environment quickly and easily, providing a gradual and truly seamless transition to open source.

HIGHLY INTUITIVE INTERFACE

Most information workers have always worked on proprietary systems for years and they can adapt to the latest versions with ease. One key concern for IT managers is that migrating to an open-source alternative will create a significant and costly training need.

With Ubuntu Desktop Edition, this common worry is unfounded. The system can be configured easily to look exactly like familiar proprietary software. And many user controls work in a way that's very similar or even identical to what you're already using.

To minimise training requirements, many organisations choose to deploy open-source office applications and web browsers before migrating to Ubuntu. Once employees are familiar with the new tools, the OS can often be swapped over without them even noticing.

"The office applications in Ubuntu are familiar, intuitive and far better than Microsoft® Office when it comes to feature-richness, total cost of ownership and value for money."

MK Yadava
Managing Director,
AMTRON

TECHNOLOGY THAT DRIVES PRODUCTIVITY

Technology superiority is a massive driver for end-user productivity. Crudely speaking, employees can work better if their desktops boot up faster, process and store data quicker and never ever crash.

There are endless debates about whether proprietary systems or open-source systems provide greater performance and reliability. However, in a recent article from the guardian online, Ubuntu proved itself a worthy challenger to the latest proprietary offerings.

In the review itself (www.guardian.co.uk/technology/blog/2009/oct/27/ubuntu-koala-windows7-review), Ubuntu out-performs the world's leading desktop operating system in areas such as "Installation", "Software and apps" and "Cloud computing". In addition, Ubuntu was judged as equal to the proprietary system for "Speed" as well as support for "Hardware and drivers".

And the reviewer's last word? "I had tried Linux frequently as soon as I got broadband almost 10 years ago, but I always gave up after a few days until Ubuntu. It's a relatively easy to use, modern operating system that will only cost you the time to download it."

Conclusion

The benefits of Ubuntu Desktop Edition over closed-source competitors are extremely compelling. As well as the significant licensing and hardware savings on offer, the software is easy to deploy with no disruption to existing processes, and it can be adopted and managed with minimal training. When you add comprehensive service and support options into the mix, you end up with a truly enterprise-class desktop that competes head-to-head with the best commercial offerings.

With so many great reasons to deploy Ubuntu, why wouldn't you look into it?

More information on www.canonical.com and www.ubuntu.com

Contact us <https://pages.canonical.com/contact>

DISCLAIMER

The opinions expressed are those of Canonical. The paper is not an exhaustive technology comparison between the latest Ubuntu Desktop Edition and other commercial desktop operating systems.