English−language GNU/Linux distributions on CD−ROM

(formerly: *The Linux distributions HOWTO*)

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Revision History

Revision v7.5	2002−03−15	Revised by: msw

This document is intended to show prospective users or administrators of a GNU/Linux system the range of choices open to them when deciding on a distribution for the first time. It also aims to help experienced users track the state of the GNU/Linux distributions market. It emphatically does *not* aim to be a complete list of all GNU/Linux distributions for all platforms and in all languages. The focus is on popular English−language distributions; specifically compiled for the Intel platform; available on CD−ROM; and easily accessible to the first−time user.

Remarks specific to the WikiWikiWeb version

Obviously, the state correspondence between the permanently volatile wiki version of the currently available English−language Linux CD−ROM distributions info, and the semi−static web−page version published by the LDP, will constantly vary. This is the wiki nature. The two should therefore be considered as entirely separate and distinct documents. This said however, it is intended that the wiki version be the more up−to−date, and form a pre−publication basis for regular updates of the LDP web−page version.

Remarks specific to the LDP Wikitext version

The situation is further complicated by the fact that there is yet another wikified version of the text available, in the LDP wikitext database. It is hoped that this version will eventually be editable by anyone who wishes to add their contribution to the common pool of information. Currently however, it is only editable by approved LDP editors.

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1. Introduction

1.1. Background

There is no one single authoritative master distribution of the GNU/Linux operating system software suites. Instead, there are many such distributions (over one hundred and sixty at the last count) available over the net via anonymous FTP; by mail order from various emporia; directly from the shelves of your local bookshop or computer store; as a boxed set or as loose CD−ROMs; as an insert in the back of a book; or as a cover disk on specialist magazines.

The purpose of this document is to provide short summaries of those English−language GNU/Linux CD−ROM distributions available as loose or as boxed CD−ROM sets (with or without manuals); and to provide pointers for the reader to find more information. Distributions in languages other than English also exist, but are outwith the scope of this document.

The information presented here is in no way complete; i.e. there are certainly more English−language distributions than all those listed in this document. By the nature of open source software, anyone who changes anything in their GNU/Linux installation and then makes that particular version available to others can be said to be in some way creating a `distribution'. A document such as this has to choose somewhere to draw the line between what is, and what is not, suitable for consideration as a distinct distribution in its own right. The editors have chosen `available on CD' as their simple criterion.

Note that this is by no means the authoritative definition of a distribution. There are numerous small distributions available on floppy disk that offer things the big distributions don't not the least of which is smallness itself. A good list of such distributions is to be found at: Tom's rescue and boot disk site; or the small distributions site.

The rationale behind producing this document in the first place given that there are very many similar texts to be found on the WWW at any one moment is to provide a distributable version of the same information, accessible by other than online means. (Not everyone who could use this information has access to a telephone line or to the web.)

If you are associated with a CD−ROM distribution we don't list, please see Section 5 near the end of this document for information on making a submission. It's easy to do and should take less than five minutes.

For a more complete list of distributions (albeit with perhaps slightly less information on each), see the Linux HQ distributions list; or the full distributions site.

Disclaimer: We make absolutely *no* guarantee as to the correctness of the information, prices, and ordering details given in this document. Check the date−last−modified field of each distribution to get an idea of its currency, then go to the vendor's web page for up−to−date information. Furthermore, unless otherwise stated, all GNU/Linux software comes with *ABSOLUTELY NO WARRANTY*.

The editor tries to stick to facts in most of this document, but inevitably has personal opinions on the state of the Linux market. You can read these under Section 1.5.

Personal disclaimer: I *[msw]* have no financial connection with any Linux vendor, nor have I accepted any remuneration or perquisites from any vendor. No free disks for review*; not even as much as a T−shirt. (But hey I'm always open to offers. XXL.)

(Since I first wrote this, S.u.S.E. has very kindly let me have a copy of 7.2 Professional for review. Thanks, guys. I'd already bought my own copy of 7.1, as it happens; but up−to−date versions are always appreciated.)*

1.2. New versions of this document

This document will be regularly posted to the newsgroup `comp.os.linux.answers` The document is also archived on a number of Linux FTP sites, including `metalab.unc.edu` in `pub/Linux/docs/HOWTO`.

You can also view the latest version of this document on the World Wide Web via the url http://www.startext.co.uk/msw/CD_Distributions_EN/index.html. (And of course, the wiki version is always available at: http://startext.demon.co.uk/admin/distwiki/)

Feel free to mail any questions or comments about this document to the current editor, Martin Wheeler (`msw@startext.co.uk`). Please do *not* send general Linux questions or requests for help in choosing a distribution (unless you're willing to hire me at my commercial consultancy rates); I don't have time to deal with them; and I try to put everything I know about choosing a suitable distribution into this document.

1.3. Recent changes

Wikiwikiweb and wikitext versions both brought online. (The wiki versions were started in September 2001 and March 2002 as an ongoing experiment in collaborative writing.)

− details of (some!!!) individual distributions brought up to date

− text markup upgraded from DocBook 3.0 to DocBook 4.1

− division of distributions into two lists

− increased number of distributions covered

− inclusion of inline images for company logos

− added scope for inclusion of reviewers' remarks

The editorship and maintenance of this document was taken over from Eric S. Raymond (`esr@thyrsus.com`) by Martin Wheeler in January 2001; and although much of the original text has been retained, all controversial statements and opinions should be considered solely those of the current editor(s).

1.4. Overview of the Linux market

In the beginning (say 1993), a GNU/Linux distribution was something you downloaded off the Internet onto floppies. Installation was a lengthy, laborious and error−prone process; repeated frustrations due to bad (magnetic−disk) media were common.

Then came cheap CD−ROM drives, and the cheap−to−produce CD−ROM a medium ideally suited for shipping large volumes of operating−system software at low cost. A whole mini−industry has now built up around commercial CD−ROM GNU/Linuxes; and because the vendors have the actual cash flow to fund support and marketing these days, they have come to dominate the Linux world. Debian is now the only significant non−commercial release; and despite the ease with which software may be downloaded from the internet these days, even it seems to be propagated to new users largely by the ubiquitous CD−ROM.

(In all fairness, it should be noted here that the rise in popularity of GNU/Linux systems over the past five years has been due in no small measure to the increased number of applications packages bundled with each distribution from circa 400 in 1995 to just under 4,000 in 2000. What used to be distributable on a single CD is now usually spread over four or six disks. Downloading a `full' distribution is no longer a real option for most users, whether experienced or novice.)

Most of the CD−ROM distributions (including Slackware, S.u.S.E. Debian and Red Hat) are still available for FTP from the home sites of their developers. But if you have a CD−ROM drive and a few euros to spare, you will have many more distributions and more support options to choose from (and you'll usually get some well−produced and useful paper documentation with it). For more on the details of installation, see the *Linux Installation HOWTO*, (http://www.linuxdoc.org/HOWTO/Installation−HOWTO/index.html).

Prices for CD−ROM distributions of Intel GNU/Linux software start at around 4 or 5 euros for a single disk, and can go all the way up to EUR 100 for a boxed set, with manuals. (And those extra euros can buy real value.) Many vendors also sell subscription deals that will lower your cost−per−CD for regular updates over the subscription period. Prices may be even higher when commercial packages (e.g. graphics or word−processing applications) are bundled in with the basic distribution.

Price correlates with features and quality pretty well (as one would expect in a very competitive market). I would personally recommend paying the few extra euros for a top−drawer original CD−ROM distribution; this will pay off in fewer installation and administration hassles down the road. (For example, installation of S.u.S.E. 7.0 from DVD now takes little over 20 mins on a fairly run−of−the−mill machine, with automatic detection of most network and video cards. Compare that with the one−and−a−half hours it took me to install my first copy of Linux−FT, which at the time I thought was a dream installation.)

Making good choices is also much simpler than it used to be. In 1995−96 the Linux market underwent a serious shakeout, with only a very few commercial distributions emerging as leaders, while the weaker ones disappeared or stagnated. (My own personal favourite at the time Linux−FT went down without trace. RIP Unifix welcome S.u.S.E.) The toll among general−purpose non−commercial distributions has been even fiercer. Essentially, only Debian (and derivatives) survive in this role.

As a result, the three−tier structure of primary distribution builders, value−added repackagers, and bottom−feeding CD shovellers that used to define the market has nearly collapsed. To be competitive in the third millennium, a Linux vendor (whether commercial or non−commercial) has to offer reasonable support and behave like a primary distribution builder, whether it really is one or not.

As long as you look for a recent freeze date though, it is pretty hard to get stuck with a duff distribution these days.

1.5. Personal opinions

Martin Wheeler

In this section, I present my own opinions, for what they're worth. However, there is no substitute for making your own evaluation, based on experience plus the data in this guide, of course. These opinions are intended more to show up any possible personal bias than as a guide to what anyone else should do.

In the beginning was Slackware usually to be found along with a few other goodies on the cover disks of the more enlightened magazines. But from the beginnings of the Linux (CD−ROM) industry circa 1993 until the autumn of 1995, Yggdrasil was top distribution it essentially founded the CD−ROM market in North America, then set the standard for everybody else. (In Europe of course, Slackware reigned.) The previous editor of this document, Eric Raymond, described how he used Yggdrasil, and recommended it over commercial System V versions for its "superior documentation, large collection of applications, and enlightened policy of sending free releases to open−source authors, then dedicating part of the price of each CD−ROM to financially supporting free software". Unfortunately, Yggdrasil hasn't issued a new release since 1995, and they've now been left well behind by the market.

Personally, after playing with Slackware for a while, I toyed with the idea of Yggdrasil, but instead moved on to a distribution which gave me what I wanted at the time my own personal webserver; an X interface; and enough development and SGML editing tools to keep me happy for years. (Plus a rather nice system which loaded and unloaded applications for me automatically, according to how much I used them.) Unfortunately, Linux−FT was not to endure; and in 1996 I finally settled on Debian as my ideal distribution, as I had come to want more, and was also a far more experienced user by then. There is an important point to be noted by first−time buyers here go for whatever distribution gives you what you most want at the time; then change with your needs. The financial costs incurred in doing this are negligible.

In previous versions of this document, Eric Raymond wrote: "I now run Red Hat Linux and am quite satisfied with it. They have successfully created a de−facto standard in distribution packaging with RPM (now also used by SuSE and Mandrake, among others). They've made most of the right moves at the right times and I consider them the current market leader."

This may still be true for North America; but in Europe Red Hat is rapidly falling into third place behind the very much more popular S.u.S.E. and Mandrake distributions; and the "standard" RPM application packaging is turning out to be not quite as standard as one might wish for as RPMs from one distribution do not necessarily always transfer to another.

Eric himself has now given up vanilla Red Hat and has written to tell me he's been running the KRUD version for the last year and is very happy with it. It just goes to show...

However, one of the major influences in decision−making for most newcomers to GNU/Linux is not so much the number of useful packages included with any distribution, but the perceived sexiness of the user interface it uses as its default. (All distributions will run all X desktop environments and window managers, given the right hardware resources but not all distributions are set to default on startup to the most attractive screen presentation for the novice user.) Be aware of this when evaluating different distributions it is surprising

how many potential new users interpret the sizzle as the steak.

But if you're ideologically wedded to using a non−commercial distribution, Debian seems to be the clear choice: the only one left with a serious support team behind it, and a rock−solid package management system, allowing trouble−free translation to and from other package management systems.

Certainly, in my own experience, Debian suits my personal needs best. Nevertheless, despite any efforts I might make to persuade them otherwise, my commercial clients invariably plump for S.u.S.E. or Mandrake as their choice of first distribution. (As ever, it's a case of horses for courses.)

These opinions should certainly not be interpreted as an unconditional endorsement; different Linux distributions are optimized for different needs, and yours may well be best served by some other distribution (especially if, unlike us, you're mainly a DOS user and are looking for a distribution tuned for dual−boot systems and being launched from DOS).

Furthermore, industry standing is volatile. By the time you read this, Debian, S.u.S.E. or Red Hat may well have fallen out of favour or fashion, and been displaced by hungrier newcomers offering more and better features. (And the obligatory sexier graphical interface of course.)

---

2. Best–known distributions

(listed in alphabetical order)

The handful of distributions listed here are those which are most widely known by the general public, or referred to most often by the specialist media, or those most commonly found in retail outlets in English–speaking countries. What exact sales percentage of the total GNU/Linux distributions market they represent is unknown but it is certainly extremely high. Between them, they account for almost all that the (generally uninformed) public knows about "Linux".

2.1. Caldera OpenLinux

Name:

Caldera OpenLinux

Distributor:

Caldera, Inc.
633 South 550 East
Provo
Utah 84606

```
E-mail: info@caldera.com
WWW: http://www.caldera.com/
FTP: ftp://ftp.caldera.com
Vox: (801)-377-7678
Fax: (801)-377-8752
```

Provider's description:

Caldera is shipping OpenLinux 1.2 in a three–tiered family of products: ***OpenLinux Lite,*** ***OpenLinux Base***, and ***OpenLinux Standard***.

OpenLinux Lite is a freely available evaluation of the OpenLinux product (it includes a 90–day evaluation of the Caldera integrated desktop the full licensed version of the desktop is included in the Base and Standard products). OpenLinux Lite can be downloaded from Caldera's ftp site, or obtained on CD for the cost of shipping. It is also designed for use by book and software publishers to provide a commercially stable Linux offering with their books and software products.

OpenLinux Base contains everything that is in Lite plus it is a complete, easy–to–install Linux

operating system, with integrated desktop, Internet client and server components, and Intranet connectivity. OpenLinux Base includes Netscape Navigator and full documentation.

OpenLinux Standard includes what is in Base plus more high−end, name brand, commercial software components (such as Netscape FastTrack Web Server, Netscape Navigator Gold Web browser and authoring tools, ADABAS D database, StarOffice productivity suite, Caldera OpenDOS, and NetWare client and administration tools).

All three tiers of the OpenLinux 1.2 release are currently available.

With Caldera OpenLinux, you can see a whole world of powerful new computing, even the power of a UNIX workstation on your PC! By using a Linux kernel, OpenLinux gives you speed and stability that compare to systems costing thousands of dollars. Open Linux also gives you:

- Real multi−tasking runs many text or graphical applications at once; no application can cause another to crash, unlike less robust systems.
- The Linux 2.0 kernel gives super−fast TCP/IP access to the Internet, plus loadable device drivers, for the most efficient use of your system resources.
- Easy−to−follow, quick installation with menu−based choices and auto−detection of your hardware make installation a snap on most systems. The Getting Started Guide (included) provides a step−by−step illustrated procedure, with troubleshooting tips.

No other Linux system includes a complete, integrated desktop interface with configuration tools and graphical editor. Its powerful drag−and−drop capabilities come pre−configured with thousands of icons and application settings. The Desktop provides a convenient place where you can store your favorite programs and data files for instant access. The Desktop gives you:

- Drag−and−drop launching of programs with data files.
- An integrated graphical text editor.
- Easy access to an array of powerful system configuration tools.
- A configurable icon bar, custom layouts, and preference settings.
- Powerful file management using drag−and−drop or graphical dialogs.

Internet access:

```
WWW: http://www.caldera.com/
FTP: ftp://ftp.caldera.com
```

Ordering:

By e−mail with PGP key, by phone, by fax, or by conventional mail. Full ordering details are at http://www.caldera.com/mpro/orinfo/orderinfo.html.

Support:

Caldera is one of the only Linux distributors to offer E−mail and telephone support. OpenLinux Base (E−mail only) and Standard (Telephone and E−mail) users are fully supported (Standard users receive 5 free incident calls during the first 30 days). There is no technical support for the Lite product.

OpenLinux Base and Standard ship with full licensed versions of the Caldera Desktop, which do not expire. OpenLinux Lite ships with a 90−day evaluation version of the Desktop.

Last freeze date:

Entry last modified:

21 January 2001

Reviewer's comments:

2.2. Debian GNU/Linux

Name:

Debian GNU/Linux

Distributor:

Software in the Public Interest, Inc.
PO Box 1326
Boston
Ma. 02117 USA

```
Net: info@debian.org
WWW: http://www.debian.org/
FTP: ftp://ftp.debian.org/debian
```

Provider's description:

Debian GNU/Linux is the result of a volunteer effort to create a high−quality non−commercial Linux distribution. Debian GNU/Linux 2.2 is a complete and fully−functional Unix−compatible operating system for the personal computer. It contains around 8000 packages, making it by far the largest free software distribution.

Debian GNU/Linux is available for the IBM PC architecture (386/486/Pentium), m68k, SPARC, Alpha, PowerPC, and ARM. Ports to MIPS, HP PA−RISC, IA64 and GNU/Hurd are under way and are likely to be released with the next distribution (Debian 3.0, codename "Woody"), undergoing extensive testing at this time.

Debian GNU/Linux is an easy−to−upgrade distribution that consists of freely redistributable software from a number of different sources and systems. Non−free packages may also obtained, making Debian a well−rounded system. It is noteworthy that the Debian Free Software Guidelines formed the basis of the Open Source definition. Debian proper consists only of free packages which are freely distributable and freely modifiable − Debian "main"; and some packages which, though in themselves free software, rely on non−free software − Debian "contrib".

The benefits of Debian GNU/Linux are its upgradability, well−defined dependencies between packages, and its open development. It is the only GNU/Linux distribution that is being developed co−operatively by many individuals over the Internet, in the same spirit as the Linux kernel and other open−source operating systems. More than 900 package maintainers are working on over 8000 packages and improving Debian GNU/Linux. A sophisticated bug tracking system allows users to easily report bugs and security concerns which are quickly dealt with by the Debian community. A command−line tool, 'apt−get', can be used to dynamically upgrade your system from the large Debian archive network.

Debian GNU/Linux is a very dynamic distribution, although it does prefer well−tested stability to having the very latest available. Major releases are generally made about every year, point releases and security fixes are released as appropriate, averaging one every few months. The current "stable" release is 2.2 release 5 − i.e. major release 2.2, but point release 5. The Debian archives are updated daily ; and upgrading discrete elements of the system is a common and supported operation. A recent change designed to speed the release process has been the creation of package pools. Debian now has three development streams: * "unstable" − changing daily; * "testing" − tracking unstable, but with a delay of a few days and significant further testing; and * "stable" − released as a major version, as above.

The move between each of the development streams also ensures a smooth update process when moving from "old stable −> testing −> new stable release.

For more information about Debian GNU/Linux, please visit our World Wide Web page at http://www.debian.org/. There is also a book, *Running Debian GNU/Linux*, from O'Reilly & Associates.

If you're interested in joining this project, you are invited to subscribe to either `debian−user@lists.debian.org`, or `debian−devel@lists.debian.org` by sending a mail to debian−user−request@lists.debian.org (or debian−devel−request respectively) with the word "help" in the subject line.

Internet access:

Debian GNU/Linux is available for download via anonymous FTP or HTTP; see http://www.debian.org/distrib/ftplist.

Ordering:

A number of vendors can provide CD−ROMs or snapshots.

Support:

Aside from self−serve support via mailing lists, IRC, or the online Bug Tracking System, there is also a number of consultants providing support.

Last freeze date:

10 January 2002 (2.2r5)

Entry last modified:

14 January 2002

Reviewer's comments:

What can I say? I use it every day; the wikiweb version is running on a Debian box; all my machines at home (except one) run Debian; I regularly use it for training Linux sysadmins. All in all, it's cooler than a penguin's backside in mid−winter. −− ***msw*** (mailto:msw@startext.co.uk)

2.3. Mandrake Linux

Name:

Mandrake Linux

Distributor:

MandrakeSoft
Daniel Morales − MandrakeSoft 818.834.9860
Caroline Carmagnol − Alizé Public Relations 650.323.1607
<mandrake@linux−mandrake.com>

Net: mandrake@linux−mandrake.com (orders)
WWW: http://www.linux−mandrake.com
Vox: 818.834.9860

Provider's description:

Mandrake is inspired by Red Hat(tm) Linux, with many improvements and pre−configured applications which make it easier to use for beginners, and faster for everyone.

Mandrake is available both in the ***GPL Edition*** and in the ***PowerPack Edition*** which includes 5 CDs and commercial applications. The GPL Edition CD (base system and applications) is freely available from the Internet as an iso image.

Mandrake 6.0 won two LinuxWorld Editors' Choice Awards and was a runner up at LinuxWorld Expo, San Jose, CA in August 1999:

1. Best Linux Product of the Year.

2. Best Distribution/Server.
3. finalist for Best Distribution/Client.

Mandrake 6.1 (Helios) features:

1. Linux−Kernel: 2.2.13 (pre4)
2. XFree86: 3.3.5
3. Glibc: 2.1.1
4. RPM: 3.0.3
5. Bash: 2.03
6. KDE: 1.1.2 (with Mandrake customization)
7. Gnome: built from 1.0.4−>1.0.14 versions (with Mandrake customization)
8. Enlightenment 0.16−dev5, Windowmaker 0.60, AfterStep 1.7.111, XFCE 3.0.2, IceWM 0.9.48

and many applications such as Apache, MySQL etc.

In Mandrake, packages have been compiled with CPU optimizations for pentium−class (intel, amd, cyrix, winchip...) and higher processors resulting in speed improvements up to 30%.

Internet access:

http://www.linux−mandrake.com/en/ftp.php3

Ordering:

Free download available from Internet. The Linux−Mandrake PowerPack price is typically between $45 and $50. Payment method depends on the distributor. Distributor lists available at: http://www.linux−mandrake.com/en/fsinglecd.php3.

Support:

The PowerPack is provided with 100 days of support by e−mail.

Several specialized mailing−lists and a USENET newsgroup (`alt.os.linux.mandrake`) are available for support between users.

Bynari Systems Group and LinuxCare also provide complete support for Mandrake.

Last freeze date:

Sep 17, 1999 for Mandrake 6.1 (Helios). Update frequency: about 4 months.

Entry last modified:

18 September 1999

Reviewer's comments:

2.4. Red Hat Linux

Name:

Red Hat Linux

Distributor:

Red Hat Software
3201 Yorktown Rd, Suite 123 DeKalb Center
Durham
NC 27713

```
Vox: (800) 546-7274 or (919) 572-6500
Fax: (919) 572-6726
Net: redhat@redhat.com
WWW: http://www.redhat.com/
FTP: ftp://ftp.redhat.com
```


Provider's description:

Red Hat 6.1 is based on the 2.2 kernel and is available for Intel, Sparc and Alpha platforms.

Four installation innovations make Red Hat the easiest Linux to install ever. Our graphical installation mode brings you straight up into X for most of the installation. Our boot disk creation script eases selection of the proper boot disk, and it saves your existing network configuration information and XF86Config so you don't have to configure TCP/IP or X! Our FTP install allows you to install simply by downloading 3 floppy disk images the rest is done automatically! And finally, the installation includes seamless support for PCMCIA devices install Red Hat on your laptop as easily as on your desktop machine!

After installing Red Hat Linux once, you will never need to reinstall Linux again! The new RPM packaging system is sophisticated enough to allow upgrading to new Red Hat releases without reinstalling your system – no partitioning, no backing up all your files, no headaches.

Internet access:

Ordering:

Available directly from Red Hat Software and most distributors of Linux related products. Please contact Red Hat Software for ordering details (on−line ordering is available through Red Hat's Web). Suggested retail price for the Standard version is $29.95; for the Professional (server) version $149.95; for the Deluxe version $79.95.

Support:

Last freeze date:

Unknown.

Entry last modified:

1 Nov 1999.

Reviewer's comments:

The big selling point of this distribution is RPM, the Red Hat Package Manager. This piece of software is a remarkable advance; it allows you to cleanly install and de−install applications and operating−system components, including the kernel and OS base itself. RPM is now used as well by essentially all other distributions except Debian. [esr]

2.5. Slackware Linux

Name:

Slackware Linux

Distributor:

Walnut Creek CDROM
4041 Pike Lane, Suite D
Concord
CA 94520

```
Net: info@cdrom.com (information),
     order@cdrom.com (orders),
     support@cdrom.com (support).
```

Provider's description:

Ftp.cdrom.com is the home of Slackware Linux. We are the publishers of the Official Slackware Linux CDROM. Our distribution is a 4−disc set with the current version being Slackware 96. The current disc is based on the 2.0.34 kernel.

Slackware Linux is a full−featured distribution of the Linux operating system designed for 386/486 computers with a 3.5" floppy and CD−ROM drive.

Internet access:

```
WWW:  http://www.cdrom.com/titles/os/slack96.htm
FTP:  ftp:ftp.cdrom.com/pub/linux/slackware
```

Ordering:

The cost of the CD−ROM set from Walnut Creek is $39.95.

Support:

Last freeze date:

July 1998 (3.5)

Entry last modified:

13 August 1998.

Reviewer's comments:

Unfortunately, Walnut Creek was sold to WindRiver? − who bought the site for the rights to FreeBSD and had no interest in Linux. This meant that Slackware was homeless for a while and is now found at ftp.slackware.com. The lack of commercial support has meant that Patrick Volkerding has had to scale back the project.

2.6. S.u.S.E. Linux

Name:

S.u.S.E. Linux

Distributor:

S.u.S.E., Inc.
458 Santa Clara Ave
Oakland
CA 94610 − USA

```
Net: info@suse.com
WWW: http://www.suse.com/
FTP: ftp://ftp.suse.com
Vox: +1-510-835-7873
Fax: +1-510-835-7875 fax
```

Provider's description:

S.u.S.E. Linux offers users of all levels, from novice to expert, quick and easy entry into the world of Linux and Unix. Resources such as a menu−driven installation from CD−ROM, a modular boot diskette, 400−page reference book and S.u.S.E.'s own system administration tool YaST, allow one to quickly get Linux installed and running, and to keep it running smoothly.

Furthermore, S.u.S.E. offers a series of supported X servers, which support the newest graphics cards. These servers are created in co−operation with the XFree86 (tm) development team. See the following url for more details: http://www.suse.de/XSuSE/.

New in S.u.S.E. Linux 5.3:

- Kernel 2.0.35
- KDE 1.0
- GIMP 1.0
- SaX (SuSE advanced XF86 configuration tool)

Quick overview of other features:

- The Linux OS, over 875 software packages, including complete sources and live file system on 4 CD−ROMs
- 400 page reference book
- Packages in RPM format; TGZ packages installable
- System V compatible boot concept, compliance with file system standard
- Installation and administration utility 'YaST' configures network, ISDN, e−mail, printer, X Window System
- S.u.S.E. X servers which support new graphics cards
- Administration of file systems, users, groups
- Automatic configuration of several window managers
- Online help system and documentation
- Demo mode, either directly from CD−ROM, or on DOS partition

Internet access:

Ordering:

You can download from ftp://ftp.suse.com/pub/SuSE−Linux. For the CD−ROM with support, order vphone, secure WWW order form, fax, or post. Price is $49.95, or $34.95 per edition by subscription. Use order code LSUE520 for the English version, LSUD520.

Also available: OSF Motif 2.1 for $129.95 (price for update to be determined; order code: LMEA210

Support:

60 days of free installation support are included with each purchase of S.u.S.E. Linux. See the web page for contact info and conditions.

Last freeze date:

Unknown.

Entry last modified:

13 Aug 1998 (5.3)

Reviewer's comments:

---

3. Other distributions

All these distributions are available on CD−ROM (some of the non−commercial ones only show up on network−archive snapshots). Most of these are available for free over the network (but the commercial ones won't support you if you buy this way). They are custom−assembled, rather than just being re−packagings of a pre−existing network release.

They are listed in alphabetical order.

3.1. KRUD − Kevin's Red Hat Uber Distribution

Name:

KRUD

Distributor:

tummy.com, ltd
200A North College Avenue
Fort Collins
CO 80524

```
Net: info@tummy.com
WWW: http://www.tummy.com/krud
FTP: ftp://ftp.tummy.com
Vox: (970)-494-0355
Fax: (408)-490-2728
```

Provider's description:

KRUD is a monthly updated distribution based on Red Hat. It includes all of the current Red Hat distribution with full errata, and is available by subscription or as a single CD. Also included are a variety of useful packages for Linux, including several security−related packages such as ssh and isinglass. These additions are hand−selected by the author of the Linux Security HOWTO. Requires standard RedHat−compatible hardware. Currently, KRUD is not for export because it contains crypto software.

Internet access:

Available on CD−ROM only because of export restrictions.

http://www.tummy.com/krud/

Ordering:

KRUD is available on CD. You can purchase a 12 month subscription for $65, a single issue for $7. Special rates available for subscription renewals. International shipping available.

https://www.tummy.com/krud/onlineorder.html (online)
http://www.tummy.com/krud/mailorder.htm (by mail) $7/US each $65/US 12 issue subscription (monthly update). Visa/Mastercard/Discover/Amex credit cards accepted. University and large business purchase orders. Postal money orders are also accepted.

Support:

tummy.com is a full service Linux consulting firm. KRUD support is available on an hourly or contract basis from tummy.com, Ltd. Rates start at $150/hour.

KRUD helps you keep up with the flood of errata and package upgrades by offering a monthly CD−ROM subscription delivered to you at a reasonable price.

Last freeze date:

KRUD is updated monthly. Most recent version is dated 2001−01−01.

Entry last modified:

2001−01−30

Reviewer's comments:

(coming shortly)

3.2. Linux by Libranet

Name:

Linux by Libranet

Distributor:

Libra Computer Systems Ltd.
1860 Langworthy Street
North Vancouver, BC
V7K 1N8

```
Net: sales@libranet.com (orders)
Net: support@libranet.com (support)
Net: faq@libranet.com (faq)
WWW: http://www.libranet.com/
```

Provider's description:

Based on the ***Debian*** distribution, it allows users to start with an already configured desktop complete with the most commonly used applications. The simple installation gets the system up and running easily. This is a major benefit to those new to Linux and a great time−saver for the experienced.

Internet access:

Ordering:

Available on CD for intel i386 and higher compatibles. Order via the web at http://www.libranet.com or fax/mail order. One year free support via email and fax.

Support:

The Linux by Libranet Desktop brings Debian, traditionally the choice of developers, to the desktop user.

Last freeze date:

Updated CD about every 4 months.

Entry last modified:

1 November 1999

Reviewer's comments:

3.3. LinuxGT

Name:

LinuxGT

Distributor:

All pointers to this distribution have been removed from this document pending valid addresses being provided by the distributors. Apologies to anyone who found themselves directed to a site dedicated to pornographic images in previous versions. **− *msw***

Provider's description:

Internet access:

Ordering:

Support:

Last freeze date:

Entry last modified:

15 March 2002

Reviewer's comments:

3.4. Linux Pro

Name:

Linux Pro

Linux Pro − "It's dead, Jim" (Star Trek, Dr. McCoy?, passim.) Web site still references Linux but only as a pointer to Ebiznet or some such. WGS were bought out by LinuxMall?, I think. Certainly not current. (amacater@galactic.demon.co.uk)

Distributor:

WorkGroup Solutions, Inc.
P.O. Box 460190
Aurora, CO 80046−0190

```
Vox: (303)-699-7470
Fax: (303)-699-2793
Net: info@wgs.com (orders)
FTP: ftp://ftp.wgs.com/pub2/wgs
```

Provider's description:

The charter of the WGS Linux Pro CD is different from all other distributions currently on the market. We are actively pursuing penetration into the commercial marketplace for Linux. Everything we do is aimed at increasing the size of the Linux community, and helping Linux to become THE one true operating system, not just an operating system.

WGS Linux Pro consists of our Main "Stable" Linux CD, for which we select what we consider to be the best Linux distribution available. Then we make bug fixes & minor enhancements. This CD often contains software older than the latest, under the theory that "the latest is not always the greatest". Together with this approach we provide technical support as well as support agreements. For this reason WGS Linux Pro is considered a primary Linux distribution. Optionally, and in addition to our primary CD, we supply supplemental CDs containing all the latest Linux software (including current archives of the tsx−11, metalab, and Red Hat sites). Virtually anything you will get with anyone's Linux product can be found on these supplemental CDs. We continually add more to these supplemental CDs as software becomes available. Even with all this, pricing on our product line is very favorable when correctly compared to other Linux distributions. Also optional (included with Linux Pro+) is a professionally produced and printed manual containing the Linux documentation project and more!

Current version is 4.0a; kernel is 1.2.13 with installable 2.0.x on the CD.

Internet access:

Look in http://www.wgs.com/ for a list of WGS products, and latest information on the CD−ROM.

Ordering:

WGS Linux Pro is available on CD from dealers and distributors worldwide, and soon from our FTP site.

You may call, fax, email, or mail us, to purchase, or request additional information. We will be happy to respond to any question you have. We accept American Express, Visa, Discover, and MasterCard, or purchase orders with approval of credit.

Support:

Complete information is available on our FTP site.

WGS publishes a free E−Mail newsletter on Linux and FlagShip to which you may subscribe by just emailing us your request.

In addition we carry Motif, FlagShip, A line of books, and other products to make your experience with Linux more complete and fulfilling. Check us out!

Last freeze date:

1 October 1996.

Entry last modified:

13 March 1997

Reviewer's comments:

They describe their current distribution as "Red Hat 3.03 plus".

3.5. Redmond Linux

Name:

Redmond Linux

Distributor:

Redmond Linux Corp.
PO BOX 2313
Redmond
WA 98073−2313

```
Net: info@redmondlinux.org
WWW: http://www.redmondlinux.org
FTP: ftp://ftp.xxx.com
Vox: (425)-869-2930
Fax: (425)-671-0504
```

Provider's description:

Redmond Linux, Personal Edition, is designed with your ease of use in mind. Redmond Linux loads preconfigured for Internet access, home or small office productivity, financial management, multimedia, entertainment, and more.

Internet access:

http://www.ibiblio.org/pub/linux/distributions/redmondlinux/redmond ftp://ftp.ibiblio.org/pub/linux/distributions/r

Ordering:

http://www.redmondlinux.org/purchase.ph

Support:

http://www.redmondlinux.org/support

Last freeze date:

Entry last modified:

January 12th 2002

Reviewer's comments:

3.6. Trans−Ameritech Linuxware

Name:

Linuxware

Trans−Ameritech Linuxware − "It's dead, Captain" (Star Trek). This is the one that references Linux on the web site along with Tarot cards, etc.

Distributor:

Trans−Ameritech
2342A Walsh Avenue
Santa Clara, CA 95051

```
Net: info@trans-am.com
WWW: http://www.trans-am.com
Vox: (408)-727-3883
Fax: (408)-727-3882
BBS: (408)-980-9840
```

Provider's description:

Trans−Ameritech had published 10 releases of Linux by early 1997. Traditionally, Trans−Ameritech has set new standards for combining ease of use and straightforward installation, even for a first−time user, with its line of LinuxWare CD−ROMs. This is a flexible, easy−to−install operating system geared toward those interested in learning Unix as well as technical people, students and home PC users.

- New Linux users will appreciate a Windows−based set up program from the CD.
- To minimize the possibility of hardware conflicts many extra kernels are provided for different configurations. They are usable for installation and normal operation.
- Many on−line documents are provided for quick reference, including the Linux Documentation Project files in source, dvi and ps formats.

Many applications are included:

- MS−Windows based X configuration program
- C/C++,Pascal and Ada compilers as well as converters fron Fortran
- TCP/IP networking, UUCP, SLIP, CSLIP, PPP
- Internet access with binaries and sources for FTP, Telnet, News and E−mail
- Multiple terminals and X−Windows environment
- Gnu and international versions of the ispell spell−checker
- The communications apps: term, minicom, Seyon (X−Windows based)
- Editors: elvis (vi clone), joe, jove, Emacs
- PostScript clone ghostscript
- Object oriented GNU Smalltalk and the Smalltalk interface to X
- TCL/Tk (Powerful scripting language with Motif−like X interface)
- Programs for electrical engineers and ham enthusiasts
- Interviews libraries,include files and doc Word−processor and idraw drawing program
- Typesetting: TeX, LaTeX, xdvi, dvips, Metafont, groff
- Andrew multimedia word processor with hyperlinks
- FAX send and receive on either class 1 or class 2 fax modems
- DOOM for game enthusiasts

All the sources are available on the CD−ROM. The often needed sources are uncompressed and can be used directly from the CD−ROM.

An uncompressed Linux filesystem is available for references and disk space conversaion. You can run programs directly from the CD−ROM! There is a large info directory for on−line reference and many manpages.

For hacker's reference, uncompressed FreeBSD and netBSD sources are provided.

Our distribution is targeted for Windows and DOS users who want an easy migration path upwards, rather than for UNIX experts.

Internet access:

Ordering:

Email orders are taken at order@trans−am.com

The price for our current release of LinuxWare 2.5 is $19.95

The price for a package order: LinuxWare 2.5,Supplement 5 and Supplement 4 (Ultimate LinuxWare Bundle) in one shipment is $30

If you order with a credit card (VISA, MC, AmEx, Discovery), please, indicate the card number, expiration date and your mailing address.

Shipping and handling in US: single CD−ROM or Ultimate LinuxWare Bundle is $5(first class US mail).

Overseas shipping is $8 for single CD−ROM , $12 for the bundle.

COD is available in the US only for $4.50. California residents, please add 7.75% sales tax.

Annual subscription (4 releases) is available for $80 plus S&H (note: there are 4 shipments in a subscription). Example: subscription in US is:$80+$5x4=$100. Subscription in Europe/Japan etc. $80 + $8x4 = $112.

Support:

If you have any further questions,please contact us through E−mail: info@trans−am.com or order@trans−am.com.

Last freeze date:

January 1997 (Supplement 5)

Entry last modified:

13 August 1998

Reviewer's comments:

3.7. Turbo Linux

Name:

Turbo Linux

Distributor:

TurboLinux, Inc.
2000 Sierra Point Parkway
Suite 401
Brisbane
CA 94005

```
Net: info@turbolinux.com (orders)
WWW: http://www.turbolinux.com/
FTP: ftp://ftp.turbolinux.com/
Vox: (650)-244-7777
Fax: 650-244-7766
```

Provider's description:

TurboLinux makes a suite of high−performance Linux products for the workstation and server markets. Our products are available from our Web site, at more than 3,000 retail stores in North

America and from our value−added reseller partners around the world. Our products:

Workstation 6.0

TurboLinux Workstation 6.0 is your high−performance choice for Linux on the desktop. The powerful office productivity suite StarOffice gives you full Microsoft Office compatibility and Netscape gets you quickly online for e−mail and Web surfing.

Server 6.0

TurboLinux Server 6.0, completely re−engineered as a secure, high−performance backend server for business workgroups in the enterprise, now includes robust e−commerce software for business−to−business transactions.

TurboCluster Server 4.0

Build affordable, scalable and available server clusters (25+ cluster nodes!) with TurboCluster Server 4.0, voted Best Web Solution by the editors of Linux Journal. TurboCluster Server, also named Corporate IT Best Product winner for enterprise−class customers at the IT 2000 Sydney computer show, integrates seamlessly into your existing IT environment to cluster Solaris and Windows NT server nodes as well as Linux..

enFuzion 6.0>

Turn your existing network into a supercomputer! Based on a simple but powerful concept called parametric execution, enFuzion turns your existing computer network into a high speed, fault tolerant, highly available supercomputer.

Internet access:

Ordering:

See http://www.turbolinux.com/products/ TurboLinux is also offered in retail stores and many online stores.

Support:

Last freeze date:

Workstation 6.0 – January 3. Server 6.0 – January 3. TurboCluster Server – October 4.

Estimated update frequency can vary from 2 weeks to 3 months depending on the product.

Entry last modified:

22 Mar 2000.

Reviewer's comments:

3.8. Xandros Linux

Name:

Xandros Linux

(See Corel Linux)

Distributor:

```
Net: info@xxx.com
WWW: http://www.xxx.com
FTP: ftp://ftp.xxx.com
Vox: (000)-000-1234
Fax: (000)-000-1234
```

Provider's description:

Internet access:

Ordering:

Support:

Last freeze date:

Entry last modified:

Reviewer's comments:

3.9. xxxxx Linux

Name:

xxxxx Linux

Distributor:

```
xxxxxxxxxxx
xxxxxxxxxxx
xxxxxxxxxxx
```

```
Net: info@xxx.com
WWW: http://www.xxx.com
FTP: ftp://ftp.xxx.com
Vox: (000)-000-1234
Fax: (000)-000-1234
```

Provider's description:

Internet access:

Ordering:

Support:

Last freeze date:

Entry last modified:

Reviewer's comments:

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4. Hall of Remembrance

In search of things past? A page for those of us with fond memories.

The distributions listed in this section are no longer maintained. They are included here for historical reasons, and for those who may be attempting to locate information about the distribution.

They are listed in alphabetical order.

4.1. Corel Linux

Name:

Corel Linux

(since relegating this distribution to the Hall of Remembrance , several rather angry e−mails have pointed out to me that it still survives, although apparently not under the same name. Sorry about that. − msw)

Distributor:

Xandros Corporation
600−1410 Blair Place
Ottawa
Ontario
CANADA K1J 9B9

```
Net: feedback@xandros.com
WWW: http://www.xandros.com
FTP: ftp://ftp.xxx.com
Vox: (613)-842-3494
Fax: (613)-842-3499
```

Provider's description:

Xandros is developing a customized Debian−based Linux distribution that is derived from version 3.0 of the award winning Corel LINUX OS. It will support both the KDE and Gnome desktop environments. In addition to the features that Linux users expect, Xandros will be distributing significant additions and enhancements. Furthermore, Xandros is creating a server and enterprise management solution that will significantly reduce the total cost of ownership of computing environments. The overall solution is complete "off the shelf", but Xandros Professional Services can customize and integrate the products as well as provide enhancements to legacy systems as needed. Finally, all Xandros offerings will be backed by world−class support.

Internet access:

http://www.xandros.com/downloads.html

Ordering:

Support:

Corel Linux is NOT supported by Xandros Corp.

Last freeze date:

Entry last modified:

Reviewer's comments:

An entry for the Xandros distribution should be added to the live HOWTO as soon as it is updated (early 2002?).

4.2. Linux−FT

Name:

Linux−FT

One of the earlier of the prepackaged distributions of Linux, it was sold in England by Lasermoon, who were also one of the early resellers of Slackware on CD−Rom. Much of the design of Linux−FT was based on a German original distribution by Unifix − occasionally, error messages had a disconcerting habit of coming up in the wrong language!

The distribution was started in 1995−96 and lasted for two or three years. Noteworthy features included a licensed copy of the Motif window manager; and an experimental live filing system whereby much of the system ran from CD and applications were cached if not used. The distribution was also one of the first to convert to ELF format for binaries. This was a very polished product in versions 1.0 − 1.2. There was a very long hiatus until version 2.0 was released and many of the promised features did not materialise in the final version released as 2.0.

Unifix did considerable work on establishing POSIX compliance for Linux−FT: Ian Nandhra of Lasermoon established a company to produce Linux tools running on a Microsoft Windows operating system (Insignix?) which was later purchased by Microsoft. There are rumours that the POSIX subsystem in Windows NT 4.0 is a modified Linux product stemming from this.

Distributor:

xxxxxxxxxxx
xxxxxxxxxxx
xxxxxxxxxxx

```
Net: info@xxx.com
WWW: http://www.xxx.com
FTP: ftp://ftp.xxx.com
Vox: (000)-000-1234
Fax: (000)-000-1234
```

Provider's description:

Internet access:

Ordering:

Support:

Last freeze date:

Entry last modified:

Reviewer's comments:

4.3. Softlanding Linux

Name:

Softlanding Linux

(Within 12 hours of publishing this wiki version, I received the following e−mail from the author of the CDServer−HOWTO)

"I ran across your "English−language GNU/Linux distributions on CD−ROM" and happened to be reading your personal opinions. This had me reminiscing about my first experience with Linux. Took me a while to remember the name of it, Softlanding Linux System (SLS) ... I did remember the kernel version was 0.97. I wondered what had happened to that distribution (that I incidentally had downloaded onto floppies in early '93).

"All the while, I thought I may have had a submission for your Hall of Remembrance . I entered "softlanding" into Google and found that the Softlanding distribution was actually an early version of what SUSE was based on! Even more to my surprise, I learned that Slackware was also initially based on SLS.

"All the while, I thought I may have had a submission for your Hall of Remembrance . I entered "softlanding" into Google and found that the Softlanding distribution was actually an early version of what SUSE was based on! Even more to my surprise, I learned that Slackware was also initially based on SLS.

"Anyway, thanks for the great reading and the history lesson :−).

"Here's a couple of the articles I had found... probably not pertinent to your distributions document, but fun to read none−the−less.

http://www.developer.ibm.com/library/articles/schenk2b.html
http://www.linuxuser.co.uk/articles/issue9/lu9−All_you_need_to_know_about−The_early_history_of_Linux_part_

"Best regards,

"Randy Tata Author: CDServer−HOWTO"

Distributor:

```
xxxxxxxxxxx
xxxxxxxxxxx
xxxxxxxxxxx


      Net: info@xxx.com
      WWW: http://www.xxx.com
      FTP: ftp://ftp.xxx.com
      Vox: (000)−000−1234
      Fax: (000)−000−1234
```

Provider's description:

Internet access:

Ordering:

Support:

Last freeze date:

Entry last modified:

Reviewer's comments:

4.4. Storm Linux

Name:

Storm Linux

Storm Linux was a Debian−derived distribution from a Canadian firm which aimed to produce an easier to use Debian. Unfortunately their venture did not prove profitable and, with reluctance, they were obliged to cease trading in late 2001.

Distributor:

xxxxxxxxxxx
xxxxxxxxxxx
xxxxxxxxxxx

Net: info@xxx.com
WWW: http://www.xxx.com
FTP: ftp://ftp.xxx.com
Vox: (000)−000−1234
Fax: (000)−000−1234

Provider's description:

Internet access:

Ordering:

Support:

Last freeze date:

Entry last modified:

Reviewer's comments:

---

5. Submissions for inclusion in this document

We encourage anyone and everyone who maintains a Linux distribution or mail order service, to submit information on their service to this document. It's easy and fun, and it's free advertising. This document is posted to many places and is archived (see the next section).

5.1. Types of submissions

We are interested in submissions for:

- ***Complete distributions*** of GNU/Linux software available ***on CD−ROM***. (We no longer carry FTP−only distributions, as this document is aimed primarily at new users for whom such a means of distribution is not appropriate.) By `complete distribution' we mean any set of software which can be used to build a complete GNU/Linux system from scratch.
- Layered products or ***individual software packages*** available only via ***mail order***. If your software package is available via anonymous FTP, chances are people can find it. Software products only available via mail−order include commercial things such as Motif, and any other commercial software ported to Linux.
- Any other ***Linux−specific*** goods available via ***mail orde***r, such as Linux−specific books and documentation, T−shirts, and assorted paraphernalia. Note: our interest in the latter categories is marginal this is a Linux Distributions HOWTO, not a catalogue of cutesy Linux junk. Whatever you're selling will have to be (a) very useful, (b) very original, or (c) very funny, to get listed here.

If the number of submissions for services and layered products is large, we'll create a separate document for these items.

5.2. How to submit

To submit an entry to this document, please send mail to msw@startext.co.uk with the following information. This format is not machine−parsable; any of the fields may be any length that you wish, but I'd like to keep each entry down to, say, 50 lines.

(Or, of course, you could always go to either of the wiki sites and enter your text directly!)

Name:

> *− name of service or distribution*

Distributor:

> *− name of company, person, etc. who distributes/maintains the service or distribution. Should include mail, e−mail, phone contact information, and (if possible) a WWW reference.*

Provider's description:

> *− description of the distribution or service that you provide. If this is a software distribution, please*

include information such as what software is included, versions, general overview of installation, requirements, and so on.

Internet access:

− where your service or distribution is available over the Internet; typically a WWW or FTP address.

Ordering:

− how to order your distribution or service, if applicable. Include prices, shipping information, methods of payment, etc.

Support:

− information on support terms and support contracts.

Last freeze date:

− last freeze date of the current version(s). Also, your estimated update frequency.

Entry last modified:

− date of submission of this entry.

Reviewer's comments:

− independent reviewer's comments.

5.3. Submission guidelines

Please keep your entry as short as possible. If you need to include extensive information, please make a reference to where one can FTP or mail to get more information on your distribution; these entries are only meant to be *pointers* to where one can find information on your service or distribution.

If you provide more than one service or distribution, please use *separate entries* for each.

We may edit your entries for conciseness and brevity if we find any irrelevant information, or if the entry is overly verbose. Otherwise the content should remain the same.

When making submissions to this document, you grant implicit permission for the LDP to use the entries in other materials, such as printed books, or further online documents. For example, information taken from this document may be included in a published Linux book. If you do ***not*** want us to include your entry in materials other than the current online document, please say so.

---

6. Administrivia

6.1. Terms of use

This document is copyright 2001 by Martin S. Wheeler. You may use, disseminate, and reproduce it freely, provided you:

- do not omit or alter this copyright notice.
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- clearly mark any condensed, or altered versions as such.

These restrictions are intended to protect potential readers from stale or mangled versions. If you think you have a good case for an exception, ask me.

6.2. Acknowledgements

This document was originated by ***Bill Riemers***. ***Matt Welsh*** maintained the second version. ***Erik Troan*** then maintained the document to release 3.0.

In January 1995, ***Eric Raymond***, while unaware of the existence of this document, began to develop a similar FAQ in the format of his not−quite−yet−discontinued *PC−clone UNIX Software Buyer's Guide*, which covered mainly System V UNIXes and BSD/OS. (This Buyer's Guide should still be available on Eric's site somewhere, if he has not yet turned it into a useful HOWTO.)

In March 1995, Eric approached Erik about cooperating on a merged version. In early April 1995, Erik went to work for Red Hat Software, and (wishing to avoid a conflict of interest) handed the document to Eric. Eric merged in a lot of new information and added several new fields to the distribution entries, taking the document through releases 4, 5 and 6.

In January 2001, ***Martin Wheeler*** took over editorship of the document, which with the enormous expansion in numbers of distributions available, had become extremely time−consuming to maintain, and which Eric had decided to abandon.

In September 2001, a wikified version of the HOWTO was created, which in January 2002 was made available to the general public on−line as an experiment in collaborative editing.

Accordingly, this document is the result of serial collaboration. The editorial `we' generally tags observations by all the maintainers; `I' is Martin (the current editor/maintainer) speaking.

We are delighted to acknowledge the contributions of all the Linux users and Internet hackers who have contributed information and feedback.

Martin Wheeler
Glastonbury
March 2002