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I’ve never really liked Linux. Not for any reason that the OS itself can be blamed for, no, I disliked Linux because of how snobby some of the user base was. They’d act like Windows 10 is a crime against god, with all of the “spyware” it installs that can be removed by running a single program, or the fact that it asks you to register a Microsoft account, conveniently forgetting that Apple has been doing the same thing for years with Macs. Granted, I don’t like that stuff either, but they act like Linux is God’s gift to computing, and that only ignorant fools would even consider using Windows because Windows is owned by a company who wants to make money and not a property of the masses. They seem to seriously believe it’s better than Windows, when it just isn’t, at least by default. In fact, for almost all applications, Linux is by far the lesser operating system when compared to Windows.

Let’s start with a big one: Games. A lot of people are buying big beefy computers to play games competitively, and that means that Linux better be able to compete with Windows when it comes to gaming, lest their OS be left behind by the most powerful computers, the ones they desperately want to support. Linux doesn’t keep up. For starters, Microsoft has had their own graphics API, DirectX, for several years now, constantly updating the features to include more and more intensive things, like better reflection mapping, faster loading times with DirectMemory, and even the highly-coveted raytracing, meanwhile Linux has been stuck with the decades-old OpenGL since the dawn of 3D acceleration in the late 90s. This means that if developers want to really take advantage of the high-detail graphics that consumers will drop $60 for, they’re gonna have to use DirectX. Recently, Vulkan has come out to alleviate the gap, but it’s too little too late. The gaming industry has moved away from Linux, and it shows. I have never seen a PC Gamer with *just* Linux installed, usually it’s running alongside some sort of Windows install, which they use exclusively to game.

This brings me to my next point: applications. Unlike gaming, which represents a small yet powerful group of machines, the vast majority of people buying computers today will be using things like word processors, spreadsheets, slideshows, and maybe even image and video rendering. These programs are massive in the productivity scene, and any OS that’s worth its price better manage to provide executives with performance enhancers that make even athletes jealous. Windows, like usual, handles this like a champ. Microsoft Office is one of the most trusted office suites in the world, and has become the standard for office work the world over. Windows also has the support of Adobe and their line of products, including Illustrator for editing vector graphics, Adobe Premiere, a professional video editor, and Adobe Photoshop, a program so revered for its graphics editing prowess that it has achieved the status of being both a noun and a verb, alla Google. Meanwhile, Linux has to resort to workarounds and alternatives. They don’t have Microsoft Office, so instead they package OpenOffice instead, hoping the fact that Windows doesn’t come with Office will convince a consumer that Linux is a better offer. They don’t have Photoshop, either, so they offer GIMP as a substitute, seeing as it has to beat out the standard MS-Paint, a test which it passes with flying colors. While these programs are fine alternatives, nothing beats the real thing. In the same way someone can tell the difference between the original Dr. Pepper and the Walmart brand Dr. Thunder, you can always feel the difference between things like Photoshop and Gimp, no matter what they do to change it. Maybe a setting isn’t in the right spot, or a hotkey isn’t the same, or a feature missing in a context menu, but you’ll feel it like a rock in your shoe each time you try to flip a layer or apply an effect and it just isn’t there.

This leads me to my final point about Linux: it’s specialties, or rather the lack thereof. Allow me to put it like this: As a Windows User, if I wanted to install OpenOffice, I could, via downloading an installer program, unzipping an archive, or compiling the source code on my own computer. If I wanted to install GIMP, I could do that as well. I use Firefox, the default browser for Linux, as my main browser constantly. By the simple fact that nothing in Linux is closed source, I could theoretically compile each and every Linux program so that it would work on a Windows installation. Meanwhile, Linux cannot do the same. I can’t play Counter-Strike: GO on a Linux install without having to install separate programs like WINE to translate the DirectX API calls to Vulkan, massively lowering performance. I can’t use photoshop on Linux, I have to settle for an alternative. For anything Linux does, Windows does too, and probably does it way better than Linux.

Now, none of this is to say that Linux serves no purpose, or that it should be completely canned in favor of Billy G’s new scheme to wring more cash out of you. Linux benefits immensely from being open source in that, with a little tinkering, Linux can work on almost any architecture it wants to. Windows only supports the ancient x86 and x64 architectures, and has only recently begun expanding into ARM-based computing, though there is still much room for improvement in that regard (only Windows Store apps work on ARM computers, stability is worse, etc.). Meanwhile, there are Linux Distros for a PS3, a computer the size of a credit card, and everything in between. The real power of Linux in its ability to bring a GUI-like interface to basically anything that has a processor, some RAM, and a monitor. Trying to say that Linux is bad because Windows is the better GUI is like saying a Lamborghini is better than a dump truck because a sports car is way faster. A dump truck serves a vital role in transportation, just as Linux serves a vital purpose in keeping the random assortment of parts that make up a server functional. The issue arises when someone tries to bring their 1985 International F2574 6x4 T/A to the race track, which is something that a lot of people seem to miss.