

Winux OS X?

An article by Tim Steinbach

<http://nequissimus.com/>

January 2008

It is always the same discussion... "Windows is the best!" - "No, Linux is so much better!" - "You have no idea, Mac OS X is superior!" And all three of them are ridiculous...

I am a Mac owner myself and would not buy a PC in the near future because I am perfectly happy with what I have. But still, there are pros and cons to each of the three main operating systems found on modern computers. I have basically used each of them for a while and am currently stuck with Apple. But before that I was happy with Ubuntu and Gentoo. Before that I even used Windows 95, 98, Me, 2000 and XP.

Who claims to have an instable Windows XP, should think about what they have done to the system. Even in my virtual machine I have not had any serious problems. I believe, most of the time (more than 90%!) the user is the problem, not the system. Install a trial version of each application that sounds interesting and using illegal software as well as so called "OS tweaks" do not exactly improve the system's performance. Even some hardware that might not perfectly work with any of the systems... Why is it the hardware vendor's fault? Are you unable to do a simple search on the Internet? There are tons of reviews, opinions and whatsoever on the Internet. You would not buy a car without ever having read whether it tends to brake, would you? Or maybe I am too tall for the car but I bought it without trying to get in? Would that be the car manufacturer's fault?

In general, non-functioning hardware is a funny topic. It always seems to be the OS's fault (if you believe the average Internet troll).

The driver is slow or causes a slow system → Windows sucks No driver for Linux → Linux is for freaks who write their own drivers Mac OS X does not recognize the device correctly → You have to buy the over-expensive devices from the Apple Store.

OK, there are some things you cannot defend. Look at Windows Vista and its 700 MB of RAM only after booting. At least there is a glass effect on most of the windows... But Leopard's 16 GB of space it occupies right after a fresh installation is way too much. There might be tons of applications coming with it, but still... You get exactly what you need from Linux... in case you have the time to choose the right one from thousands of distributions...

But the real problem for Microsoft is simply that Windows is installed on 9 out of 10 desktop computers. There are too many people among those with Windows who simply have no idea about computers. I am not saying you have to be a computer expert to use one of those machines but sometimes thinking about what you are about to do might help. Do you really think porn websites and forums with all kinds of illegal software really want to help you with a virus their website has allegedly found on your computer? I really do not think Windows is the problem here. And just for your information: Downloading the latest game that was released in the USA just yesterday, cracking it without any question and not even having a virus scanner do its job (it really does slow down the computer and you want to play this game so badly) does not lead to good things most of the time. And even if you have the almighty Norton Antivirus running in the background (which was for download at the same website as the game, what a great place!) this does not mean you are safe!

Spyware, trojans, etc. might seem like a common problem to Windows users. But again, Windows trojans are so common simply because there are so many targets! It might be harder to get into a Mac system but I doubt it is secure. Same thing goes for Linux. Those systems are simply not worth the effort.

In addition, most people who do use Linux or OSX are computer experts (although the percentage among Mac users is dropping rapidly with its growing popularity). This is definitely not the case for Windows users. People who are unfamiliar with computer security and possible threats buy a computer from Best Buy and feel like the king of the world. And those computers come with Windows 99% of the time. Probably more.

If it was Windows being sold to only 10% of all customers and OSX to the other 90%, it is pretty safe to say that thousands of people would complain about OSX and computer specialists would be all over Windows.

I can only suggest buying whatever you want (or download Linux). But buy your software from an actual store, do not trust those Russian websites and emails that sell software for 80% off. And if you gather information about hardware BEFORE buying it, you can save a lot of time and nerves.

And do not forget: Keep talking about how bad Windows is! This is the most important thing to Linux and Mac users. They want to be special and superior! Even though surfing the web and chatting is no different on Ubuntu and OSX from what it is on Windows, if you have the latter, you are just not as cool.

Actually, this is what the stereotypical comments from some of the most powerful CEOs in the business are trying to tell you! "You are only cool if you use our product".

My opinion: You are cool if you thought about what might be best for you!