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02/18/15

**Canonical: What's Behind the Bringers of Human-ness?**

Canonical is the tech and software company that is the driving force behind one of the more popular Linux distros (distributions), Ubuntu. As open-source software is becoming more mainstream it is important to understand how Canonical's business model can be successful, be innovative, and offer its services at such reasonable rates. Canonical is especially interesting in that, like Google, they have numerous avenues of interest from desktop, to mobile, to TV services, to server, and machine managing offering a scalable and intuitive service.

First up is Canonical's software which is all open-source and available for next to nothing. Their most well known package is the Linux based operating system, Ubuntu. The current distro is Ubuntu 14.10 Utopic Unicorn, which they released last October alongside Ubuntu Server 14.10, Canonical's answer to making servers easier to use and deploy. Both of these packages are offered with 9 months of free support after which the support is a paid service that Ubuntu offers but doesn't force upon its users (1). This in part with other services is where Canonical earns its keep, giving the people a free OS to play with and innovate while businesses use it as a cheaper alternative to Mac or Windows. A service offered called Landscape takes a great deal of work out of managing multiple machines even if the multiple is in the thousands (9). This allows users who's main focus isn't in machine management but rather to be able to quickly fix any issue without it hindering development. Canonical's reach exceeds it's humble desktop beginnings and has found itself in the mobile market as well. Partnering with the similarly minded tech company BQ, Canonical promotes the Aquarius E4.5, the first Ubuntu phone (2). Technically the Aquarius is comparable to the average smart phone as well as in price but the difference is in the intuitiveness of the OS (3). There is also a version of Ubuntu for tablets and smart TVs however these projects have yet to reach the same maturity as the desktop and smart phone platforms.

In the age of the “Internet of Things” security is an ever growing concern for people as well as corporations and the standard of security for Canonical and its products is as high as anywhere. Ubuntu scored the best in a security assessment done by the United Kingdom's government (4). Ubuntu is proving that safe software can come out of human cooperation and transparency. Another rendition of Ubuntu poised to bring about more secure computing is the Snappy Ubuntu Core. This particular flavor was built for cloud computing and just about anything else that can connect to the Internet. By completely separating the applications on the device, it gives the user a safe way of interacting with a wide range of devices without the fear of being vulnerable. Before each update the user's data is backed-up in case of a failure, in which case the system can reapply the previous state (5). Making application development and use easy and safe helps drive new innovative ways to use the technology.

Canonical is all about providing the best experience in everything they do including the deployment of new packages and services. This is made possible by the Certified Public Cloud Programme in which cloud services that join the program are given the tools to offer standardized and reliable cloud services to Ubuntu users (6). The importance of this reliable cloud service was made clear when patches and updates for the Bash vulnerability were pushed out as soon as possible, avoiding a great deal of anguish (7). That is impeccable devotion to prompt deployment and stringent security. One important aspect of having a successful deployment is listening to the people who use the product. Each year Canonical collects global input from CIOs, programmers, engineers, and users from other professions to adjust the goals of the company and give the people more of what they want (8). For a larger software company something like this is expected, with open-source software it's more of a validation of it's existence. The way people went about getting Ubuntu until recently, had entirely depended on the user downloading and installing the package, now in two years they've sold over 30 million machines pre-loaded with Ubuntu (10). Canonical is piggy-backing off already prominent tech companies to allow themselves to focus on what they're good at, software.

Ubuntu is growing ever more popular, with it Canonical's ability to positively influence the progress of computing. Progress is the sharing of ideas towards a common goal of knowledge and Canonical's goal is to get the tools to share those ideas in as many hands as possible. Their product truly is Ubuntu, which means human-ness.

1. <http://releases.ubuntu.com/14.10/>

2. <http://www.ubuntu.com/phone>

3. <http://www.bq.com/gb/products/aquaris-e4-5.html>

4. <http://insights.ubuntu.com/wp-content/uploads/UK-Gov-Report-Summary.pdf>

5. <http://developer.ubuntu.com/en/snappy/>

6. <http://resources.canonicalwebteam.com/wp-content/uploads/Ubuntu-Certified-Public-Cloud-Programme.pdf>

7. <https://insights.ubuntu.com/2014/10/24/rapid-ubuntu-image-deployment-getting-up-and-running-in-record-time/>

8. <https://insights.ubuntu.com/2015/01/29/ubuntu-server-and-cloud-survey-reveals-hybrid-cloud-sdn-and-iot-on-the-rise/>

9. <http://www.ubuntu.com/management/landscape-features>

10. <https://insights.ubuntu.com/2014/10/23/ubuntu-14-10-desktop-security-for-global-users/>