Hello, I’d like to take this time to talk to you about my favorite operating system, Linux. Linux is and will always be a Free and Open source operating system which is licensed under the GNU’s General Public License. Because its open source you, or anyone else for that matter, can look at the programming code used to make the operating system work. It also means you are allowed to make changes and upgrades to the code yourself, but because it is under the GNU’s GPL any modified code must be freely shared with the public. This is a huge benefit for everyone in the Linux community, from end users to programmers. This means the programming code is looked at by hundreds or thousands of people all pointing out errors and making corrections with the goal of perfecting the operating system. And the end users get a free, secure, and up to date operating system. Because it is so community driven the operating system is pushed in the direction that the community wants not just what some company wants.

Linux is such a good operating system that google and steam (the PC gaming company) use it to run their servers. It is the base of the Android and Chromebook operating systems. And the NSA even created a version of Linux known as Security Enhanced Linux. There are fewer viruses created to attack Linux system. This is in part because Linux is more secure and has fewer flaws than the Windows operating systems.

Linux is infinitely customizable. I don’t mean that you can just change the desktop picture or theme of the computer, although it can do that as well. But you can change the whole graphical user interface to one of many freely available, each having its own unique feel and features. You can even install multiple GUI’s and switch between them if you wanted to. You also get access to millions of free computer programs for almost anything you can imagine. Since Linux is so customizable there are lots of different versions known as distributions or distros. Some of these are specialized for things like crime scene investigation, audio and video editing, or to turn an old computer into a decent server. And of course there is the desktop version which is what most Linux users install on their home computers. Linux also comes in almost every language currently being used. And for those who are not sure they want to install it on their PC, can run a full version of Linux from a CD, DVD, or USB drive. This means you can make sure it works and try out many different distros before committing to Linux and it on the hard drive.

Because there is a small learning curve, the Linux community is very helpful. Web forums like LinuxQuestions.org and ubuntuforums.org are quick to answer any questions that others have. And because Linux works on more hardware than any other operating system it can be installed on older computers that no longer run Windows with any efficiency. So If you are interested in Linux and have an old computer that goes unused, it would be a great way to jump into the Linux world.

And if anyone is looking for a recommendation, I usually install a Ubuntu based distro because of how simple it is to install and maintain.