Summary Description: Trying a Linux distro located fully on a USB, Porteus

Tags: software; Linux Porteus; USB operating system

Why I did this: I recently learned about Linux distros that be held on small USB sticks so that you can boot them from most computers (through the BIOS boot menus), and I wanted to try them out. They are small sized packages (like half a gig, so they can fit on even the really cheap small USBs), and they have the ability to save things to their USB storage.

(summary pic of system)

Design Walkthrough:

Parts: some computer, USB stick, Linux distro Porteus

I found quite a few different Linux distros that could do this, but Porteus seemed to be well renowned and worked right away (I also had Puppy Linux but it wasn’t working for me, but I suspect it was because of the USB stick).

(pics of system)

Lessons Learned:

Why would I ever use this? I’m not sure yet. It works like user profiles on a server network, but as a desktop profile. Maybe if I had some servers or programs setup on the Porteus system that I wanted to run and it could be from any computer, but I’m not sure yet the scenario need for that. It’s very neat though.

From what I read online, it could be used as a working OS for dead/bricked OS / computers so as to check or reformat the hard drives; maybe this is the solution for Linux computers, because I know that Windows has OS recovery tools on USB sticks that probably work in the same way (albeit they aren’t functional desktops, but just recovery tools).

References:

Porteus info page: http://www.porteus.org/info/features.html

Forum discussing Porteus uses: https://forum.porteus.org/viewtopic.php?f=48&p=97478