

NEWS FROM COMPUTER SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING

Written by the Beta Team of CSESoc
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BETA

Free as in speech and in we know you have
 no money.

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 Week 01 Session 1, 2013

FEATURED, REVIEW, OPINION

Ubuntu for Tablet - More Nay than Yay

Fellow CSE student Damon Stacey got his hands on a release of Ubuntu for Tablet, but it did not go well...

Canonical has been working on developing a usable version of the Ubuntu Desktop OS for smart phones, tablets, the desktop and TVs.

And now, as of February 25th, Canonical have announced, and released what they call a “developer preview” specifically for the Google Galaxy Nexus, Nexus 4, Nexus 7 and Nexus 10. And honestly, this does not warrant the “developer preview” label. Here is what I have gleaned about the ‘best features of the os’ after installing it on my Nexus 7.

Installation

I start here, because that’s where most will start from. Honestly, this was exceptionally easy. It only took me an hour or two, which was mostly just downloading the image and installer. It was really just a single command, assuming you have a full install of Ubuntu somewhere that has a USB port. The most complicated part is rooting your device,

and if you’ve ever done this on android you know this isn’t a difficult task.

However, my story for installation didn’t end here.



On boot the user is taken to the lock screen. You can’t tap anything on the screen, and swiping around the screen does nothing. You have 14 tweets (great, it’s somehow magically signed into somebody’s twitter account). It displays a correct battery level and that’s about it.

There is no hint as to what to do from here. I thought I had broken it during install at this point, and I reinstalled it

twice before finding out how to even start using the device

I’m clearly biased now. I’ve spent an hour flashing my device again and again because the UI is so unintuitive (or perhaps I’m not smart enough). Which brings me to our first ‘feature’.

Use of screen edges for navigation between apps is inexplicably unintuitive.

Swiping in from the right is different to swiping to the left: swiping to the right cycles through the apps, but there is no way of cycling back. Sometimes it’s possible to swipe up from the bottom and reach a settings menu. The fact that this is advertised as a feature seems inappropriate given that this settings menu only sometimes appears.

Swiping down from the top right brings up settings. However, this is dependant on where on the top right you swipe. The top left does nothing although it is labelled “search”.

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ANNOUNCEMENT

Welcome back!

This is it. Uni has started again. Time to shake off the cobwebs on any rusty interaction skills and share handshakes among familiar faces. Some people bemoan the loss of summer. Some welcome the change in pace. All I know is that Uni always promises a fun-filled (and emotional) roller coaster of a ride. As always, the Beta Team is here to entertain and spread the word of the bountiful happenings in the world around us.

Welcome back, all of you fellow CSE people. I am Wen Di, this year's hostess of the show. First, a hats off and a deep bow to the hard work of all my predecessors, those who have slogged away to maintain this newsletter since its origins in 2007. Here is a special mention of Ritwik Roy,

who headed the Beta Team last year and handed the reigns of production to me in excellent condition.

This year, we will aim to continue opening up the doors to the research that happens behind CSE walls. There are many opportunities for postgraduate and undergraduate students to explore here within their university, and it is our duty as a student newsletter to inform you about them. It is our hope that we can give dues where dues are owed in the world of postgraduates and the work they do.

We also want to be more dynamic as a newsletter and showcase the wonderful diversity that exists within the CSE faculty. It is not just a matter of

encouraging writing skills, but to let people know the thoughts of our students. In support of that, I would like to advertise our category titled "Opinion", in which anyone can submit any kind of article that contains their experiences or wonderment at everything, be it games, an activity or a banana.

There are many new faces in the Beta Team, as well as some that you've been reading from the past few years. Although different aesthetically, we all share the same excitement in taking on the new year, and may you enjoy everything that we bring to you in 2013!

CSESOC BETA HEAD

FEATURED, REVIEW, OPINION

Ubuntu for Tablet - More Nay than Yay (cont.)

Real Multitasking is not functional on the Nexus 7. Apparently it works on other devices, although from screenshots I've seen, it seems to work like Windows 8's split programs in metro; that is to say: not very nicely.

Secure Multi-User Setup similarly does not work. Canonical claims it functions on non-Nexus 7 devices, but I cannot verify whether it is secure or if you can actually have multiple users, or if it's like Android's multi user setup, which is painful to setup and use.

Voice controlled HUD does not appear to be a feature at all. Canonical gives no indication that it shouldn't work on the Nexus 7. I'd have to conclude that it probably hasn't been implemented. Maybe we'll see it in future releases...

Full Convergence is conspicuously absent

"Ubuntu uniquely supports a new category of convergence device - add a keyboard and mouse and your Ubuntu tablet becomes a full PC and thin client, with access to Windows apps over

standard protocols from Microsoft, Citrix, VMware and Wyse."

This seems rather misleading. I still haven't seen an app for this at all, let alone a functional one.

Apps are non-functional.

Well, I will admit that after setting up the WiFi (a painful process during which the menu is inclined to disappear from time to time), the browser is capable of loading web pages in desktop view, though it lacks the ability to zoom. This also means that some browser based apps (Amazon, eBay, Facebook and Twitter) are functional. But beyond that we are left with apps that have no functionality whatsoever.

- Gmail opens what looks like the browser but then redirects to the iTunes store to download the Gmail app and becomes completely unresponsive
- The calculator is an image of a calculator that doesn't even align with the screen.
- The music player app is also a picture, but it at least aligns with the

screen

- The penguin ski game picture doesn't align with the screen.
- I haven't seen the weather app update it is most likely also just a picture, though since I'm not familiar with the weather in LA it's possible that it's merely displaying accurate, though incredibly static, weather conditions

Should I go on?

Conclusion All in all, I would consider giving Canonical praise for what was probably a lot of work if the user interface didn't cause the screen to feel like it had a 500ms delay... and "swiping from the outside" was better thought through... and they had all the features they claim to have...and if I could browse the internet comfortably

For now, I think they were brave to release this at all. At best, I'd label it "early alpha", or better yet, "proof of concept".

DAMON STACEY

News in Brief

New Year, New Uni

UNSW has been chopped and changed for the new year. Gone are the ARC stores, replaced by various new shops on campus. Some shops to note are: WH Smith newsagents, Subway and Boost Juice near CLB, Moochi near the Whitehouse, and IGA in the newly built student apartments. The rumoured Max Brenner is still in hiding. Not that many of us could afford it.

Next Gen Wars

Sony have joined Nintendo in the next generation console wars by announcing

the PlayStation 4. The system will include a new x86 AMD processor, 8GB of RAM and a cloud-based system called GaiKai. Microsoft - can haz XBox 720 nao plz?

Hackity Hack Hack Hack

Microsoft has joined the likes of Apple, Facebook and Twitter to confirm that some of their systems were compromised through the same iPhone developer forum. The hackers compromised the forum without notifying the administrator, and then used that to launch drive-by attacks to anyone who visited. Microsoft reaffirmed that no personal data. In related (fictional)

news: Microsoft announces no new virus this week - world is shocked.

Bigger is Best

Samsung have recently announced the new Samsung Galaxy Note 8. Designed to directly compete with the Apple iPad Mini, the Galaxy Note will run with the latest Android version and will be able to receive calls. No news from the fashion industry on whether or not pants pockets will be getting resized however.

PATRICK CHUNG

OPINION

My O-Week Experience

Musings from a First Year

For many first year students like me, the end of high school heralded three months of partying, overseas travel and the odd part-time jobs. But the last Monday of February brought the dawn of the university experience and with it the O-Week festivities.

Older beings foretold of what was to come in O-Week. The everlasting mountains of free pens. The never ending chain of free sausages. And the opportunity to take home free packets mi-goreng. Others just sourced their events from Facebook. The Night of Fire and Ice attracted nearly 3,000 attendees, some of which weren't even from our university! There be plunderers in our midst!

My O-Week began at 9:30am on a lovely Monday morning. The smell of (burnt) pancakes drifted across the air, as people lined up eagerly with their serviettes to taste the work of ARC. For the CSE'ers, the next trip was to Sir John Clancy Auditorium - their welcoming awaited. But first there were stalls lined with free food craftily acquired by pretending to be interested in some random society. Endless queues snaked about. And lets not forget the volunteers from the Christian Bible Society.

In the Auditorium, bonds between engineers were brokered. Acquaintances began to tentatively form. The Dean gave

his PowerPoint presentation, seemingly prepared by his students, followed by an invitation to K17 to meet the infamous Brad Hall. Also known as the man who sends "regular amounts" of emails. And as the community of engineers contracted to that of Computing Geeks, more acquaintances were procured.

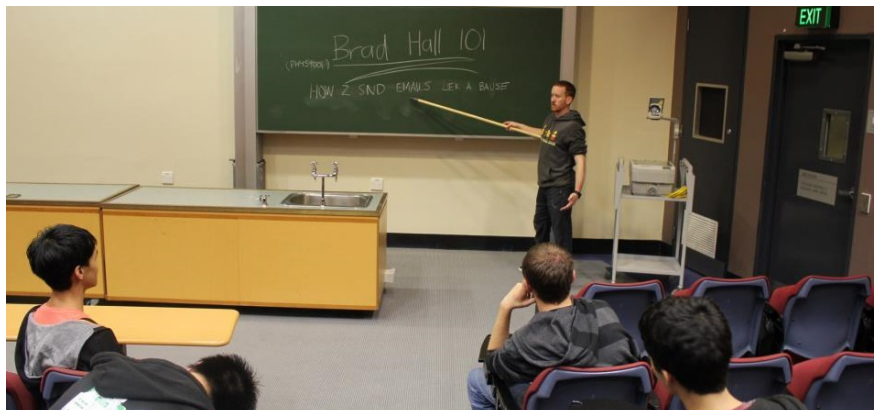
After lunch, the main walkway became a crowded maze. Memorable events include the Commbank Wheel of Fortune with an eternal line; the Pepsi van, where everyone "preferred" the Coke drink (but got a free Pepsi Next anyway); and catching up with people who we haven't seen from anywhere between three months to twelve years. Many found their legs tired and their skin sunburnt by the end of the long hot day. Air conditioned rooms are widely preferred over 30 degree days.

Rain fell from the heavens on Thursday and Friday, dwindling student numbers. But that did not deter those who came to the CSE Student Network Scavenger Hunt and Welcoming Party.

First years and their mentors mingled with each other. Many were required to pose, something unwillingly, in embarrassing (and sometimes, slightly questionable) photos. But all was not lost as pizza and beer rewarded their successes in the eternal rain.

So that was the Week of O, an eventful experience that would start to define our path to come. I look forward to seeing (and perhaps trolling) all of you. I hope this will be a good year!

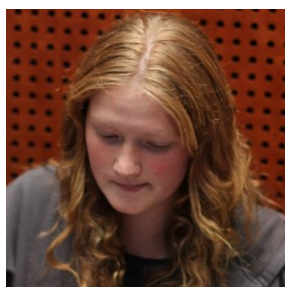
OLIVER TAN



CSE EVENTS & SOCIETIES

Case Files on CSESoc Exec

A new year brings new hopes and a new exec committee for CSESoc. Using our excellent investigative skills the Beta Team has dug out the details on each of our exec and are presenting them to you today.



Name: Beth Crane

Codename: Co-President:

Last Seen: Chilling in the Socs Office in between madly rushing around campus for class and work and the running of bbqs.

Frequent Hangouts: Socs Office, Physics Lawn, Seminar Room, and (devastatingly) upper campus (where most of her classes are this semester)

Other Comments: Beth has a bad tendency to shorten words (totes legit) and likes it when people sign up for camp. She also tends to end her sentences/paragraphs with a commentary. True story.

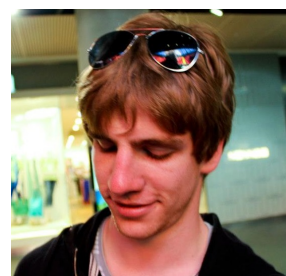
Name: Christopher Manouvrier

Codename: Co-President

Last Seen: Convincing sponsors to give us more money to fund our awesome society lifestyle, watching How I Met Your Mother while coding and working with Dev Head to get a stable release of Bark*

Frequent Hangouts: Soc's Office, Basement

Other Comments: This other Co-Pres knows how to work hard and play hard, and while most people does them separately he has a tendency to do both simultaneously.



Name: Luke Tsekouras

Codename: Treasurer

Last Seen: Rewriting the budget, giving money to people, rewriting the budget again

Frequent Hangouts: His pants

Other Comments: He is a pretty chill guy with a nose for money, although there have been suspicions that he is hoarding a treasure lode for some big CSESoc surprise investment.

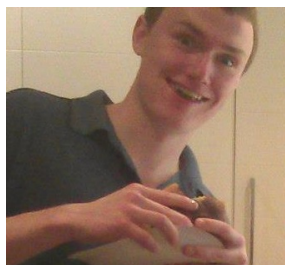
Name: Robert Newey

Codename: Secretary

Last Seen: Notetaking, sending out emails via socs announce, making sure that all the exec gave their individual updates so that he can then pass on the updates via socs announce

Frequent Hangouts: Soc's Office, Basement and all CSESoc BBQs

Other Comments: He once had bright blue hair.



Name: William Korteland

Codename: Arc Delegate

Last Seen: Obtaining money from Arc, sleeping after a late night out partying

Frequent Hangouts: Socs Office, CSESoc Events, anywhere with free food

Other Comments: Doesn't like cats.

Name: Wen Di Lim

Codename: Beta Head

Last Seen: Organising the next issue of Beta, zealously getting people to write for her and getting the printer to work.

Frequent Hangouts: K17 Basement; Level 1 Print room and wherever there are lots of people she can rope in to write articles

Other Comments: Her vision of a perfect world is where everyone writes articles for her and meets deadlines. You should all write for her. All of you.





Name: Evelyn Chensen

Codename: Social Co-Head

Last Seen: Buying food, asking Luke for more money to buy food and making sure everyone is happy and well fed

Frequent Hangouts: Basement

Other Comments: Evelyn welcomes any help with her social events, and if anyone wants more poker nights or cardboard nights, they should sign up to her social team

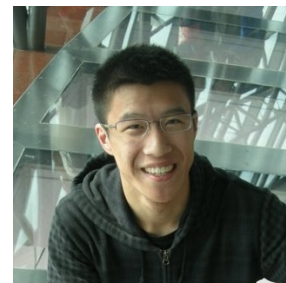
Name: Vincent Wong

Codename: Social Co-Head

Last Seen: Getting chased by Wen Di for an overdue beta article, haggling with the bus company for first year camp and writing up many versions of social event budgets

Frequent Hangouts: Wherever there are other Software Engineers nearby.

Other Comments: He is actually a commerce student hiding behind a CSE degree and tries very hard to blend into the crowd



Name: Caroline Cham

Last Seen: Publicity Head

Last Seen: Designing the camp T-shirt, trying to get posters to print properly, adding another thousand layers to yet another poster

Frequent Hangouts: Wherever her laptop is

Other Comments: She makes things look pretty!

Name: Pierre Estephan

Codename: Tech Head

Last Seen: At the BBQ. Can't get better than free BBQ! Seen trying to set up a totally cool beans workshop to intro students to the world of CSE!

Frequent Hangouts: Free society BBQs (physics lawn) , free Student Network BBQs, the socs office, and most of the time, the internet.

Other Comments: He really likes free BBQs. You should too. Also has big plans for tech events this year, and looks forward to seeing you all there!



Name: Matthew Moss

Codename: Dev Head

Last Seen: Working on Bark*, troubleshooting Bark*, actually obtaining regular amounts of sleep so he can work some more on Bark*.

Frequent Hangouts: Soc's Office, Basement

Other Comments: He wishes that he has more time on his hands so he can work on other cool projects, and has dreams of having lots of Dev Team minions.

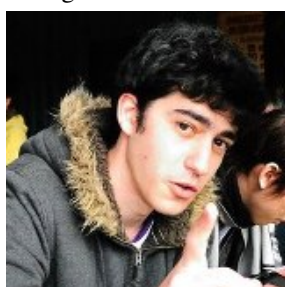
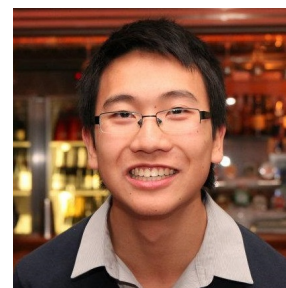
Name: Sam Li

Codename: High School Co-Head

Last Seen: Working in America for Microsoft and travelling around America with no indication of a return to the land down under at anytime

Frequent Hangouts: America and occasionally Soc's Office when he does decide to return.

Other Comments: Even though he's so far away, distance is no barrier for this awesome organiser of High School Events.



Name: Peter Camilleri

Codename: High School Co-Head

Last Seen: There have been many unconfirmed sightings of him around, but he tends to seemingly appear from thin air at some events

Frequent Hangouts: Where ever ninjas hang out

Other Comments: Nothing much has been heard from him other than rumours of the epic high school events that he will hold. Unseen and unfound, he is the ultimate ninja of them all.

ADVICE

Tips for first years article

We all know how exciting Uni is for first years and how the first few weeks of uni can make you a nervous wreck. To help ease that rough ride, we've talked to a bunch of students who have lived through the times.

Dan Padilha

Aerospace Engineering/Computer Science, 4th year student

What's the biggest thing you missed out on doing at uni?

Not getting involved in more practical societies like Sunswift. But there's always still time to get involved!

What are the best experiences you've had at CSE?

CSE Revue "f*ck-up" runs. Impromptu karaoke party at First year camp. When a team dragged in an entire street pole into a CSESoc Trivia scavenger hunt.

Do you have any advice for new CSE students?

Uni is not just about studying. It provides the best possible opportunity to meet a ton of people of the same age and interested in the same things as you. Going to events is by far the easiest way of meeting people. Join the CSE Student Network program to meet a bunch of older students and fellow first years. Go to the First Year Camp to be on a first name basis with up to 100 people. Go to the free weekly BBQs for delicious and just talk to people! You never know how interesting someone might be until you talk to them.

What's the best thing about CSESoc?

Helping to break down the stereotypical "anti-social nerd" vibe by providing social opportunities and a huge friendly community of CSE students.

How have you been involved in the CSE societies, and what was it like?

I have been Treasurer and Arc delegate for CSESoc. It gave me a great opportunity to become a leader, learn how to organise a huge society, make tons of friends, and have a load of fun.

Any computing tips?

Install Linux on your own machine and learn to use it at home. Buy a laptop and take it to your CSE classes so you can try things as the lecturer teaches them.

Amanda Watters

Computer Engineering, 2012 Graduated

What was the most memorable experience from first year?

Going to CSESoc First Year camp. It was exciting meeting so many people and friends that I would keep throughout my whole university life.

What's the best thing about CSE?

We are a community of people who love getting together and having fun. We also love learning new things and working together to get the most out of our studies.

How have you been involved in the CSE societies, and what was it like?

I have been a Mentor, Producer for CSE Revue, Volunteer on Open Day, and active CSESoc member. There are many ways to get involved in CSE and all were fun, rewarding experiences. I recommend you give them all a try!

Do you have any advice for new CSE students?

Talk to the people in your lectures and tutorials. The more people you talk to, the more likely you will find people whom you really click with. It will make uni more interesting and fun.

Have you worked in industry?

I did an internship at Microsoft and now work there full time. It was interesting seeing how the languages and techniques you learn at uni are used in the real world. I also now get to live in Seattle.

Samuel Li

Software Engineering and Commerce, 5th year student

What's the biggest thing you missed out on doing at uni?

My largest regret was really not getting involved in CSE societies earlier. Even just attending more of the amazing events.

How have you been involved in the CSE societies, and what was it like?

I've been involved with CSESoc for a few years. I have been Co-President and Social Head. They were both amazing experiences. I not only learnt a lot but also had the opportunity to give back to the CSE community to help make it a more enjoyable environment.

Do you have any advice for new CSE students?

The great thing about CSE is its relatively small and tight-knit community. Sign up to the mentor program, it's a fantastic way to meet fellow students and ones who have been down the same path as yourself. CSESoc organises a huge variety of events which are great for hanging out with your friends making new ones. By all means, get involved in stuff around the campus, but make sure you have great friendships within your school. Also, try to make new ones if you already have friends at this uni! Having a close group of friends in your classes makes uni so much enjoyable.

Have you worked in industry?

I've worked at a few large software companies. The most fascinating part was even though I was sometimes very far from home, there were students from UNSW or alumni from CSE. Being such a close community, it was easy to make new friends with similar pasts on the other side of the world.

Any computing tips?

gfriends - the ultimate CSE stalking tool. Run it by typing csesoc/bin/gfriends on one of the lab machines.

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ADVICE

Tips for first years article (cont.)

Omair Ali

Computer Science, 2nd year student

What was the most memorable experience from first year?

The most memorable experience I had during my first year in university was definitely CSE Camp! Being in the middle of nowhere with a bunch of other new kids, playing games, and getting to know each other was beyond any shadow of a doubt the single greatest experience during first year!

What's the best thing about CSE?

The people. They're very welcoming and accepting of people from all walks of life. There are also many awesome events!

How have you been involved in the CSE societies, and what was it like?

I have been a part of the social team for CSESoc. I definitely enjoyed helping out with the planning of events. I also helped out for the weekly barbeques. That was surprisingly fun; it didn't feel like work at all.

Do you have any advice for new CSE students?

Here's a list of things I wish I could have known before entering first year:

1. Listen to others. You might be good at what you do, but there are others who are better.
2. Start your work early. Assignments may seem straightforward at first but are usually more difficult when you start to do them. Start early so that you don't fall behind.
3. Be organized. Spending a couple of seconds now will save you minutes in the future.
4. Take notes. If you're listening to a lecture and don't write something down for future reference because you'll "remember it". You won't. Write it down.
5. . Ask questions. If you've made a honest attempt to solve a problem but can't, ask people for help. No normal person would think any less of you.
6. Getting poor grades is not the end of the world. Think about where you went wrong and how you can prevent the same scenario from happening again.

SAMUEL LI

ADVICE

CSE Projects and Extracurricular Activities

Two worthwhile activities to get involved in

The CSE faculty is a big place, and there's always a lot going on. If you're willing to work hard and challenge yourself, there's lots of chances for interesting projects outside of regular coursework.

RoboCup

The most well known of CSE's big projects is RoboCup. Since 1999, UNSW CSE has competed in RoboCup competitions around the world. Last year in the bipedal soccer competition (Standard Platform League) the team rUNSWift placed 3rd overall, and 2nd in the technical challenges. They were also runners-up in 2010. The Urban Search and Rescue team didn't compete in 2012, but from 2009 to 2011 won the Best-in-Class for Autonomy award. These results are very impressive. The RoboCup teams strive for high standards and are always looking for keen students to continue their success. The SPL team is comprised of undergraduate students while the Rescue

team currently has PhD students and research staff members. Students typically get involved in the teams, especially SPL, by undertaking their Honours thesis or a Special Project with the teams during their 3rd or 4th year.

ACM Programming Contest and ANZAC Programming Contest

The ACM Programming Contest is the premiere international programming competition. Competitors race against the clock and each other to solve a set of programming challenges. Regional, National and the main International contests are held each year. In 2011 and 2012, a CSE team made the world finals, an achievement in itself. For the weeks before the rounds occur you can find groups of students typing furiously, and then debating and comparing solutions around a whiteboard. If you're interested in competitive programming, or just want a taste of the excitement, it's something

you can get involved with.

The ANZAC programming contest is a local Australian and New Zealand contest giving more opportunity to compete.

MATTHEW MOSS



CSESOC EVENTS & SOCIETIES

Upcoming Events

CSESoc Weekly BBQ

Every Monday, 12:30pm - 1:30pm, *Physics Lawn*

FREE FOOD! Same time, same location, we will be there no matter rain or shine.

CSESoc Cardboard Night

Wednesday, 6th March, 6.30pm, *K17 Seminar Room*

\$3/5 (Arc/Non-Arc) for Pizza and Drinks

Semester is back and kicking things off with a night of Card & Board Games, and as always, food and drinks! Join us to have loads of fun and meet new people! Don't hesitate to bring any games you'd like to play on the night.

CSE Careers Fair

Wednesday, 13th March, 12.30pm - 4.30pm, *K17 Seminar Room*

Nine technology companies will showcase themselves. Each company will give a half hour talk about opportunities for graduates and internships. No is registration required.

<http://www.cse.unsw.edu.au/information/industry/careers-expo/careers-expo-S1-2013.html>

Sydney Startup Expo

Wednesday, 13th March, 6.00pm - 9.00pm, *Webster A Theatre*

The main focus of the Expo is to connect the Tech Startup community with our university students and staff, as well as to let Startup people liaise with other Startup people. Registration is required.

<http://www.cse.unsw.edu.au/information/industry/startupexpo/startupexpo4.html>

Installfest

Saturday, 16th March, 12.00pm - 4.00pm, *K17 Seminar Room*

Have you had trouble programming in your choice of OS? Would you like to install Linux, but are not sure how, have any questions, or are worried you might run into problems? Come along to the CSESoc Installfest, where lots of friendly CSE students will

help you install Linux on your computer. Bring your laptop and charger, and come at any time :)

CSE Revue Welcome BBQ

Thursday, 7th March, 12.30pm - 1.30pm, *The Globe Lawn*

Everybody likes free sausages! CSE Revue is holding a Welcome BBQ, with free sausages for members, and \$1 for everyone else. You can even sign up on the spot and get a free lunch! If you wanna know more about what Revue is, then come along and watch some videos of past revues while you eat!

CSE Revue Cast Intro

Thursday, 14th March, 4.00pm - 6.00pm, *K17 Seminar Room*

Curious about being on stage? CSE Revue's Cast Intro is the perfect place to start! Cast intro is designed like a crash course in being in Cast - there'll be some acting skills, a little bit of dancing, quite a few games and tonnes of fun!

Absolutely no experience is required, so if you're curious about revue, like to meet new people, and are generally awesome, this is the social event for you!

GameDev EGM + Kick Off Party

Friday, 8th March, 5:00pm, *The White House*

Our first event of the year!

We thought we'd kick off the year with a chance to get together, play games that have been worked over the holidays and welcome all the new members that have just signed up!

Our exec is keen to let everyone know the plans that we have for the the rest of the year, the events, our goals and new positions available for members. Our EGMs tend to be quick, but still include important information. We'll be choosing a new Secretary which requires your vote, so make it count! So bring along friends and people you want to work with in the coming year and well see you there!

CSESOC SOCIAL, TECH AND CSEREVUE HEADS

ANNOUNCEMENT

Beta is Recruiting

We really need people. Does it seem like Beta is missing something? That's because it is! Unfortunately, Beta has run into a bit of a dry spell where crosswords and puzzles are concerned. If you enjoy coming up with puzzles and crosswords,

Beta wants you!

Do you have something you want to say? Perhaps you would like to share your thoughts about the evolution of bananas. Maybe even spark a debate about whether

Google phones will win over an Iphone. If you nodded your head at any of the questions above, Beta wants you too!

Interested parties should contact the Beta head at csesoc.beta.head@cse.unsw.edu.au

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