Vol. 13 No. 9

May 2001
$2.50

MUUGlines

The Manitoba UNIX User Group Newsletter

May 8, 2001: Cable Modems

This month Ron Dallmeier of Videon will be talking about cable modems, cable modem standards, and the Videon high-speed Internet infrastructure.

Please note our meeting location: IBM Canada's offices in the TD Centre, at the corner of Portage and Main. We gather in the lobby on the main floor – please try to be there by about 7:15 PM. Steve Moffat will then take us up to the meeting room just before the meeting starts at 7:30. Don't be late, or you may not get in.

Parking is available either in the parkade behind the TD building, off Albert Street, or in the ground level lot just north of the TD building. Entrance to the lot is from Albert Street, behind the parkade. Either way, parking is a $1.25 flat rate for the evening. You purchase your ticket from a dispenser, so make sure you've got exact change – a loonie and a quarter, or 5 quarters.

We Have What You Want

As RedHat 7.1 has been recently released, we will be selling copies of the 2-CD set at our meeting. Members can purchase them for the nominal fee of $5. Yes, $5 for both CDs! We have more copies of the Ximian GNOME 1.2 distribution (Feb 2001 Special LUG edition), Ximian t-shirts, and Ximian 'beanie baby'-style monkeys complete with little Ximian t-shirts!

We have boxed sets of OpenLinux eDesktop 2.4 and the Linux Technology Preview Developer Release (featuring the 2.4 kernel) from Caldera Systems, *and* both the highly sought-after GNUPro Dev Kit for Linux (IDE for C and C++ with visual debugger) and the Code Fusion C, C++ and Java Linux IDE from Cygnus.

OpenLinux eDesktop 2.4 comes as a boxed set with a 500-page User Guide, a boot diskette and four CDs: Binaries, Commercial Packages and Source Code, plus the OMNIS Studio Rapid Application Development tools. Also in the box you'll find two "Powered by Caldera Systems" stickers for your computer AND a Caldera Systems bumper sticker! The Technology Preview box includes an Installation Guide, plus Installation Disk and a Source Code disk.

AIX 5L Released

IBM announced AIX 5L™, the next generation in UNIX® operating systems. Specifically tuned for Linux™ applications, AIX 5L provides the industry's premier environment for building and managing both UNIX and Linux applications, providing a substantial advantage over fully-closed, proprietary systems. AIX 5L boasts powerful new features, designed to enable customers to safely and rapidly grow their infrastructure with enhanced automated management tools and concurrent operation of 32- and 64-bit applications.

With this release, AIX gains APIs (application programming interface) and header files that allow popular Linux applications to run on AIX with a simple recompilation. Because the applications are running on AIX, customers are able to combine the flexibility of Linux with the advanced scalability, security, and systems management inherent in AIX.

Also available with AIX 5L is the AIX Toolbox for Linux Applications. The toolbox is a collection of over 200 open source tools and applications, which together provide the development environment of choice for many Linux developers.

Also with this release, AIX strengthens its leadership position in systems management with new tools to automate and simplify monitoring and control of complex systems. New tools built into AIX's sophisticated Workload Manager (WLM) include the addition of an API allowing external applications to modify system behavior. This important feature provides greater flexibility to customers in choosing their management environment. New accounting tools in WLM allow administrators to cost-effectively grow their infrastructure by tracking resource usage. Workload Manager is easily accessible via AIX's web-based system manager, which sports an intuitive, easy-to-use interface.

Great strides have been made in the area of automated systems management with the addition of Reliable Scalable Cluster Technology (RSCT). Harnessing the robust self-management capabilities available in IBM's powerful SP supercomputer systems, RSCT allows monitoring and control of system resources and events either automatically by the system or by an administrator.

AIX 5L operates on all IBM POWER-based UNIX systems including IBM eServer pSeries systems, such as the eServer p620 and eServer p660.

AIX 5L Feature Summary

- Linux affinity - Allows customers to realize a smooth technology transition between two of the industry's most open, standards-based operating environments, AIX and Linux.
- Increased scalability - JFS2 File system enables storage of large files of up to four Petabytes. Java™ 2 Technology edition provides a cooperative interface between AIX and Java for increased application scalability. AIX 5L offers support for systems with up to 32 processors and 256 GB memory.
- e-business performance - Virtual IP Addressing helps applications remain available if network connections are lost. IP multipath routing improves network reliability by providing multiple paths to a destination.
- System management - Automated system monitoring and new accounting tools allow customers to collect resource usage statistics to manage costs and control resources.
- Security - MIT's Kerberos V5 Authentication helps administrators simplify password authentication.
- Multi-platform support - In addition to supporting POWER-based systems, AIX's potent 64-bit kernel is designed to fully exploit the speed and processing power of Intel's Itanium architecture.

Planned general availability for AIX 5L Version 5.1 is May 4, 2001. The AIX Toolbox for Linux Applications is available at no cost with AIX on a separate CD or via download over the Web at http://www.ibm.com/servers/aix/products/aixos/linux/.

Red Hat 7.1 Is Here

Red Hat, Inc. announced on April 16 the availability of Red Hat Linux 7.1, the latest version of the world's most popular open source server operating environment. Red Hat Linux 7.1 includes the new 2.4 kernel with improved SMP support for superior performance on Intel multi-processor platforms. Red Hat Linux 7.1 also delivers new configuration tools that enable users to effortlessly set up and administer DNS, Web and print servers. This release features Red Hat Network connectivity, including software manager.

"Red Hat Linux is firmly embedded in today's computing infrastructure. The release of Red Hat Linux 7.1 and the first in a series of Red Hat Network subscription services makes it easy for organizations to quickly realize the benefits of open source computing," said Matthew Szulik, CEO of Red Hat, Inc. "The elements of Red Hat Linux 7.1 work together to deliver the most powerful, automated open source operating system for fast-growing enterprise and Internet infrastructure users."

According to IDC Research, Linux is the second fastest growing server operating system (from 1999-2000).

New Features and Benefits of Red Hat Linux 7.1:

- 2.4 Kernel positions Red Hat Linux as an enterprise class operating system. It provides significantly improved multiprocessor support and support for 4GB userland process, eliminates PCI bus limit, makes virtual memory effectively limitless, supports 64 GB of physical RAM, supports greater number of users and groups, includes revised scheduler to handle more processes, carries increased and improved device support, as well as an improved multi-threaded network stack.
- Red Hat Network Software Manager delivers Errata Alerts so users are automatically notified of new Errata and RPM updates that

provide notification of new RPM packages.
- Heightened Security delivers secure default settings that keep ports closed and Internet utilities inactive until needed. A new firewall screen enables user to turn on or off as many features as desired for totally customized security.
- Configuration tools make system administration easier than ever with BIND (DNS), Apache and Print tool.
- Installer enhancements improve the user experience by providing a graphical Kickstart configuration tool for unattended installation and a new install class for laptop users.
- Increased internationalization supports global user communities with a fully translated GNOME interface in Japanese, Spanish, French, German and Italian.
- Desktop Functionality includes updated GNOME & KDE, popular graphical environments where users can choose their preferred desktop, and Mozilla, a Web browser, email client and news reader that provides a complete open source Web and messaging client.
- XFree86 4.0.3 interface supports 2D and 3D graphics.
- USB support for “hot-pluggable” devices.
- New 200-page Customization Guide.
- TUX - world's fastest web server (holds SPECweb99™ benchmark records for 1, 2, 4 and 8 processor machines).

For a complete list of new features, visit: http://www.redhat.com/products/software/linux/rhl_new_features.html

Opera 5 Beta 8

Opera Software has unleashed Opera 5 for Linux, and it is now free, albeit in an advertising-laden mode. If you are longing for a faster, more efficient and simply better Internet experience, without having to pay, Opera 5 is the answer. While it is still a work in progress, it is up to “Beta 8”, so it is at least feature-complete.

Opera, long known as the browser for more savvy Internet users now enters the free Linux browser market with the its new sponsor-supported version. The new sponsor-supported version offers users a $39 value in return for having one single banner ad in the browser interface.

On installation, Opera defaults to the Sponsored mode. However, there is the option of switching to Paid/Registered mode, in which case all ad-related code will be completely uninstalled. The cost to do so remains at $39.

For a lengthy list (Opera Software calls it a “short list”) of new features and improvements, see http://www.opera.com/linux/new.html.

IBM Buys Informix

IBM and Informix® Corporation announced that they have entered into a definitive agreement for IBM to acquire the assets of Informix Software—Informix’s database business—in a cash transaction valued at $1 billion. The acquisition strengthens IBM in the fast-growing distributed database business, a key strategic priority for IBM. IBM’s distributed database revenues grew 36% year-to-year in the first quarter of 2001.

Informix Software is a leading provider of database management systems for data warehousing, business intelligence and transaction processing. With an installed base of more than 100,000 customers worldwide, Informix delivers high-performance database systems to customers in retail, financial services, government, healthcare, manufacturing, media and publishing, telecommunications and other businesses. Key Informix customers include Verizon, Deutsche Telekom, Sears and Sabre.

Once the acquisition is completed, IBM will:
- Integrate Informix database business operations and personnel into the existing IBM Software data management division led by General Manager Janet Perna.
- Market and sell Informix’s database products worldwide through an integrated IBM and Informix sales force.
- Maintain existing relationships with Informix customers and business partners, including support for and updating of current Informix products.

Informix customers will also benefit from IBM’s open platform strategy and broad array of alliances with leading application developers such as SAP, Siebel Systems, PeopleSoft, Retek and many others worldwide. IBM intends to integrate selected Informix technology into future versions of DB2 Universal Database, which will remain IBM's flagship database product.

Following the sale of the database business to IBM, Informix Corporation will be totally focused on its other independent operating business - Ascential Software. With annualized revenue in excess of $130 million, Ascential is a leading provider of information asset management solutions to the Global 2000. The company intends to apply the proceeds from the transaction to fund the growth of Ascential as well as to return a substantial portion of the proceeds to stockholders through a stock-reduction program, details of which are expected to be announced at or shortly after closing. Upon the closing of the transaction, Informix Corporation will be renamed Ascential Software.

In a separate release today, IBM and Ascential Software announced a global strategic alliance to jointly develop and market information asset management solutions based on Ascential's DataStage®, DataStage 390 and Media360™ products as well as IBM's DB2 and related product platforms. The acquisition is subject to Informix shareholder and regulatory approvals, and is expected to close in the third quarter of 2001.

You Want a MUUG Shirt

We are currently developing artwork for the Official MUUG T-shirts. If you would like to see what we have come up with, visit http://www.maximum-geek.com/muug-shirts/muug_shirts.html.

If you would like to comment on a design, or contribute a design of your own, send an e-mail to muug-shirts@home.com. The price is expected to be around $15. If you are interested in a shirt, e-mail us at the above address the address. We will take official orders once the design has been confirmed. A sample shirt design is shown at right. There are more designs on the website, but our space here is limited. If you are submitting a design, please ensure it doesn't infringe on anyone's copyrights. The last thing we want to do is deal with lawyers because of a few t-shirts! In some cases (BSD daemon?) the permission can be obtained just by asking.

Sending Us E-Mail?

Due to the amount of e-mail MUUG receives, we've set up an auto-reply to give you immediate feedback, and redirect some of the e-mail to the appropriate places. We will try to personally respond to your e-mail promptly, but please note that our group has a very small board of directors, consisting of a few very overworked volunteers. Please make sure you have used the right address, and are requesting information that is not found on our web site (www.muug.mb.ca).

For a full list and description of the addresses, see http://www.muug.mb.ca/pub/muuglines/pdf/muug0004.pdf.

We Like To Hear From You

So e-mail us with your comments on the newsletter, whether it's criticisms or commendations, or send in some interesting articles! Submit personal anecdotes, stories of your use of Unix, Linux, BSD or related operating systems to editor@muug.mb.ca. We really appreciate everything you send in!