(Approx. 385 words)

Geek Free

Linux as an Alternative Operating System

By Joe Callison, Author, GEEK FREE & FOR~GO (For Geeks Only) blogs; Convener, Senior Techies SIG

Seniors Computer Club of Greater Kansas City

https://kcsenior.net/

sencommember00 (at) gmail.com

Computer hobbyists looking for a free or low-cost alternative to Microsoft Windows or Apple macOS operating systems have turned to Linux for decades. Because of its reliability, modest hardware resource requirements, and low cost, it is now widely used for embedded operating systems for smart devices and a large percentage of computer servers powering companies and the internet. In recent years, organizations such as Ubuntu have made improvements in the distribution process more accessible to even those with modest computer skills by using bootable “live” CD or USB downloads that let you try it out without installing on the computer unless you choose to do so. Of course, the performance will be much faster when installed rather than running from the CD or USB files.

CAUTION: Choosing to install Linux on a computer will reformat and overwrite your existing files and operating system unless you do it properly to allow dual-booting Linux with your existing operating system! If you are unsure about the process, get help!

Great improvements in the available graphical user interfaces have made Linux very user-friendly for existing Windows and macOS users, with some user interfaces even mimicking much of the look and feel of those operating systems.

What is Linux?

https://www.linux.com/what-is-linux/

History of Linux

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History\_of\_Linux

Linux Distributions

https://distrowatch.com/

Some of the Best Distributions for Windows (or macOS) Users in 2021

https://www.fossmint.com/linux-distribution-for-windows-users/

Some of the Best Distributions for Beginners, Mainstream and Advanced Users in 2021

https://www.techradar.com/best/best-linux-distros

Linux is a great choice for those wanting to continue using an older desktop or laptop computer that does not have the resources to run the latest operating system version from Microsoft or do so satisfactorily or use it as a Linux computer to explore its capabilities.

One of the benefits of Linux is the huge availability of free quality software to try out. You may be familiar with some of the most popular ones that have also been available for Windows users, such as LibreOffice (Microsoft Office alternative), GIMP (photo editor), Audacity (music editor), VLC (media player), and many others.

SenCom’s membership in APCUG (https://apcug2.org/) gives you free access to workshops on Linux topics and the Penguin Platform blog for more resources for Linux users.