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There are no upcoming events

Illuminating Linux Podcasts

by Dan Petersen

Before starting with the survey, let's deal with a couple of terms that are fundamental to this article. First, the word podcast. In simple terms, a podcast is rich media, such as audio or video, distributed via RSS. Podcast derives from the words broadcast and iPod. Podcasting lets you automatically receive the latest show of your chosen programme as soon as it is available.

Podcasts are shows, similar to radio or TV shows, that are produced by professionals or amateurs and made available on the internet to stream and/or download. They have entered into a more mature phase; a few of the podcasts featured in this article are coming up to their tenth anniversary.

Linux has some really fine blogs and news sites offering a great library of information to tap into. Podcasts have some advantages (and disadvantages) over these resources. Portability is a key advantage of podcasts. You can be driving across states, or walking down the street, and keep up to date with the latest Linux scene.

This article offers a survey of Linux podcasts, and podcasts that have close links to Linux. Whilst the survey does not offer exhaustive treatment, it offers an opinion on 20 different podcasts.

Ubuntu UK Podcast

The Ubuntu Podcast covers all the latest news and issues facing Ubuntu Linux users and Free Software lovers in general. The show aims to appeal to a Linux beginner as well as the oldest coder.

Ubuntu UK Podcast is broadcast on a fortnightly basis. The shows examine what has been in the news, and the latest happenings in the Ubuntu community. There are interviews, chats about projects, details of forthcoming events and conferences. Examples of recent interviewees include Daniel Foré (founder and lead designer of elementary), Sean Tilley (from Diaspora), Rick Spencer (VP of Ubuntu Engineering at Canonical), and Ivanka Majic (Creative Strategic Lead on the Canonical Design Team).

The hosts of the show are Laura Cowen, Alan Pope, Mark Johnson and Tony Whimore. Laura works part time for

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6 Music Servers
6 Collection Managers
7 Calculator Apps
8 Geometry Apps
Free Console Apps
14 Multimedia
Programming
8 Compilers
9 IDEs

9 Debuggers
7 Revision Control Apps

IBM and is studying for a PhD. Alan is an engineering manager at Canonical working on Ubuntu, Mark is a web developer, and Tony is a photographer with a geeky passion. Their different backgrounds and specialisms help to bring a really well-rounded podcast to home.

The interlude music is catchy, the podcast is exceptionally easy to listen to, it is extremely engaging, and the hosts are great fun. Ubuntu UK Podcast is one of those podcasts that you have to listen all the way through for every show. Essential listening, professionally produced, and not just for Ubuntu users. Our favourite Linux podcast by a whisker.

The podcasts are released under a Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 3.0 license.

- Website: **podcast.ubuntu-uk.org**
- Length: 30 minutes
- Audio format: Ogg Vorbis, MP3
- First Show: 11 March 2008

10/10

FLOSS Weekly

FLOSS Weekly is a weekly netcast about free, libre and open source software. It brings the viewer/listener "... the movers, the shakers, the big projects, the little projects, the projects you might be using every day, the projects you might not have heard of".

Whilst FLOSS Weekly is more open source-centric and less Linux-centric, it offers fascinating insights into software that runs on Linux, by way of interviews with developers. A whole episode is devoted to a specific open source application and offers an in-depth examination. The vast majority of recent shows focus on web-based software. Recent netcasts have looked at web2project, Weblate, Apache Cloudstack, Dart, CakePHP, and Zotonic. The way the interviews are conducted with open source developers is particularly interesting and comes across in an engaging way, keeping chit-chat to an absolute minimum. Viewers and listeners really gain a powerful insight into the software being discussed with the probing questions asked by the hosts.

The netcast is presented by Randal Schwartz and a rotating panel of co-hosts. Randal is more of an open license proponent, rather than a GPL guy; on the basis that selecting the GPL automatically excludes some users. He is co-author of some popular books about Perl including Programming Perl, Learning Perl and

Intermediate Perl, and he is a respected writer on the Perl Journal, Web Techniques, and UNIX Review. His credibility in the Perl scene adds real credibility to the podcast.

This netcast is available as an audio stream, and in video in both Standard Definition and High Definition formats.

FLOSS Weekly is part of the TWiT Netcast Network.

- Website: **twit.tv/show/floss-weekly**
- Length: Typically about an hour
- Audio format: 64kbps
- Video formats: SD (640x368), SD (864x480), HD (1280x720)
- First Edition: 7 April 2006

9/10

The Linux Action Show

The Linux Action Show is a weekly video tech podcast which covers the best in the open source and Linux world. Find out the latest news, gadgets, howtos, reviews each week. There are also guest interviews.

The show is produced by Jupiter Broadcasting, and is currently up to Season 27. The shows are hosted by Chris Fisher and Matt Hartley; the presenters were Chris Fisher and Bryan Lunduke until 2012. The show is streamed live.

I particular like the way the hosts make use of running the Chromium browser in the background to illustrate the item being discussed. It really helps to illuminate the discussion. The show is extremely entertaining and fun, but at the same time highly informative, and lives up to its name.

- Website: **www.jupiterbroadcasting.com/tag/linux-action-show**
- Length: About an hour
- Audio format: Ogg Vorbis, MP3 (80 kbps)
- Video format: SD (432p) and HD
- First Edition: 2009

9/10

Vote

What do you find MOST attractive about Open Source software?

- ○ Amount of customization
- ○ Security
- ○ Freedom provided
- ○ Speed of development
- ○ Quality
- ○ Multiple versions
- ○ Cost
- ○ Potential to contribute
- ○ Ability to modify code

Vote | Results

4716 votes | 2 comments

Going Linux

Going Linux is a podcast billed as providing practical information for Linux users regardless of their level of experience using the operating system. Going Linux was started primarily at users contemplating switching from Windows to Linux, to demonstrate that the transition is not a chasm.

Going Linux seeks to fill the ground between Linux tech heavy podcasts, and podcasts that only evangelise Linux. It has a good mix of the latest Linux news, software reviews, combined with technical information. If you are considering switching to Linux, or you want to use Linux more to get things done, there is some great material here, presented in a winsome, engaging and laid-back way.

The podcast is released under a Creative Commons Attribution 3.0 License.

- Website: **goinglinux.com**
- Length: Approximately 35-50 minutes
- Audio format: Ogg Vorbis and MP3
- First Edition: 20 January 2007

8/10

Hacker Public Radio

Hacker Public Radio (HPR) is an Internet Radio show (podcast) that releases shows every weekday Monday through Friday. Besides the frequency of the podcast, another distinguishing feature of HPR is that it is a community-produced podcast. There have been more than 1200 shows produced.

Many of the HPR shows focus on open source projects, but there are some episodes that are dedicated to Linux. The topics covered range from a general geeky conversation, to living in Emacs, to just trying to survive in modern society. The only requirement is that the episode is interesting to fellow hackers. The diverse range of presenters helps keep the show fresh. There are tutorials, reviews, interviews; a good mix.

- Website: **hackerpublicradio.org**
- Length: No restrictions, they last as long as the community presenter wants
- Audio format: Ogg Vorbis, MP3 and Speex
- First Edition: 31 December 2007

8/10

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