10 Great Podcasts for Linux & Open Source Geeks

 Rebecca "Ruji" Chapnik   24th Dec 2012

Podcasts are usually the first media I consume when I wake up in the morning and the last media I consume before falling asleep. Sadly, some of my favorites have gone AWOL over the past few years, but I haven't stopped discovering new ones to listen to. I'm now going to tell you about the top Linux – and open-source-related podcasts making the rounds in my media player.

1. GNU World Order
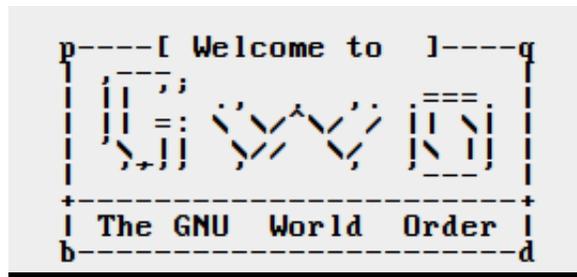
GNU World Order is the podcast formerly known as "The Bad Apples." Host Klaatu is of an unusual breed: Apple user gone Linux. One reason I love GNU World Order is that Klaatu is highly technical and thorough when discussing a topic or responding to listener feedback, and he often provides code in his show notes. It's not just another Linux podcast filled with half-relevant rants; though some such podcasts have gained huge followings, the ones like GNU World Order that get straight to the point and really drill into it are more my style.

Another reason I love it is the choice of topics. GNU World Order covers some considerably esoteric interests, such as the nitty-gritty of ePub creation and the Plan 9 operating system. If you're a long-time listener, you'll also note the recurring themes of KDE, Slackware, emacs, and

coffee.

Sample episode (8×04: Using emacs as a typewriter, bash tips, Calligra):

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2. Sourcetrunk
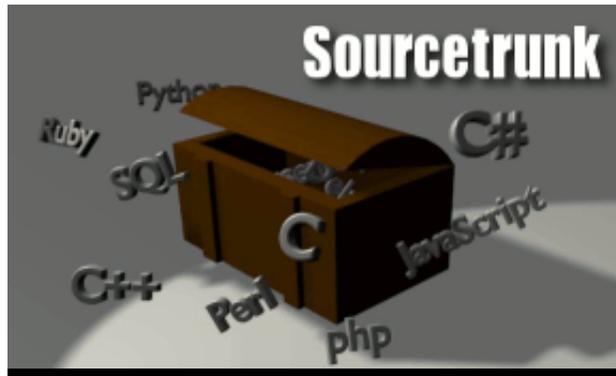
Sourcetrunk is dedicated to introducing you to the latest exciting open source software. Any download junkie with an open source bent ought to listen to it. The podcast producers always provide links to the software they discuss in each episode, along with plugs for various brands of beer. Recent episodes have covered [the gallery software Piwigo](#) (which I use and love), [the backup system Duplicity](#), and the [team collaboration tool Open Atrium](#).

Sample episode (087: MiniDLNA):

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3. Hacker Public Radio

Hacker Public Radio is a community-produced podcast run by Ken Fallon. Any member of the community can contribute an episode, the only requirement being that it is of interest to hackers. The variety in talent gives the show a nice breadth of subject matter, with episode topics ranging from programming in Python to ham radio to "How I got into Linux" stories.

A few years ago I contributed my own "How I got into Linux" story; it was a pleasure to work with Ken in getting it up and running. I highly recommend checking out Hacker Public Radio and contributing to it if you have a microphone and something to say – which, if you're a MakeTechEasier reader, you probably do.

Sample episode (1137: Open Street Maps):

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4. Linuxbasix

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Don't be fooled by the name; this is not just a podcast for n00bs. While the hosts of Linuxbasix don't assume too much about their listeners' skill levels – and they make sure to explain difficult concepts in their Newbie Corner section – they also cover intermediate to advanced topics such as KVM and reverse VNC connections.

Overall, Linuxbasix is friendly and informative at the same time, and it makes a great listen for any Linux user.

Sample episode (127: Create your Own Analytics Server, Tiny MAME Cabinet, Distrowatch Weekly, e17 Rocks and why should you care):

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5. Kernel Panic Oggcast

Kernel Panic episodes are unedited recordings of the Kernel Panic live show, which broadcasts on Saturdays at 10pm EST. Running time is on the long side, usually exceeding 110 minutes. The show offers a lively mix of news and discussion – most often related to Linux, occasionally not. Kernel Panic has featured prominent guests such as [Bruce from DistroWatch](#) and [Jeff from the Bodhi Linux project](#).

Sample episode (62: UEFI, Wikipedia books, Android apps on Windows, Open webOS, DSL hacking):

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6. The Linux Action Show

The Linux Action Show (LAS) from Jupiter Broadcasting lives up to its name: It's full of Linux action, sans fluff. LAS is not as high-tech as GNU World Order or Linuxbasix. It focuses more on news and reviews of software and distros than advanced tutorials. Some recent topics have included [Ubuntu on the Nexus 7](#) and [a comparison of Xfce distros](#). The episodes are available in video as well as audio formats.

Sample episode (s24e04: Lightworks Preview):

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7. The Command Line Podcast

The Command Line Podcast, hosted by hacker Thomas Gideon (a.k.a. "cmdln"), is a mix of news casts and feature casts about security, hacking, and the politics of freedom. Thomas Gideon accompanies his podcast with an excellent blog featuring security alerts along with Gideon's finely articulated thoughts on technology and public policy. If you're interested in topics like Creative Commons licensing and open culture, definitely check this one out.

Sample episode (2012-10-16: Interview with Cory Doctorow on Pirate Cinema):

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8. Surprisingly Free

Surprisingly Free is for all you copyright and net neutrality nerds. The official website describes it as "a weekly podcast featuring in-depth discussions with an eclectic mix of authors, academics, and entrepreneurs at the intersection of technology, policy, and economics." No, it won't show how to use your VPN server, but it will stimulate your intellectual bits. Surprisingly Free is full of relevant information for anyone concerned with open source and the openness of information in general.

Sample episode (2012-11-06: Chris Anderson on 3D Printing and the Maker Movement):

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9. Radio Berkman

Radio Berkman, brought to you by the Berkman Center for Internet and Society at Harvard University, is essential listening for those interested in technology activism. The episodes often discuss open source software, hardware, and movements. Listen now to hear an academic take on the core issues of openness in technology. Although the RSS feed only offers the show in MP3 format, you can visit the show page to access the episodes in OGG format.

Sample episode (209: Hacking Censorship [Drone Humanitarianism I]):

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[RSS (MP3)](#) | [RSS (video)](#) | [Homepage](#)

10. CBC Spark

Spark is owned by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) and hosted by Nora Young. The production style is more polished than that of the other podcasts I've described here, and its focus is not exclusively Linux and open source. While Young often discusses open source technologies (such as the free font OpenDyslexic, covered in the sample episode below), Spark will appeal to anyone with an insatiable curiosity about the present and future of technology.

Sample episode (194: Dyslexia, Documentia, Domains)

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Conclusion

I hope I've opened your ears to some podcasts you haven't heard before and maybe even inspired you to add a few feeds to your podcast client. Though my list is by no means comprehensive and has left out some more popular podcasts, you can check out [The Linux Link](#) for a fairly exhaustive list of Linux-related shows.

Readers, what are your favorite podcasts? Can you think of any others that would fit well in this

list? Looking forward to your comments!

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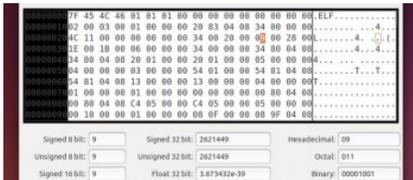
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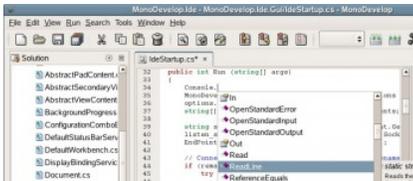
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7 comments

 ## Vince-0

What? No Linux Outlaws?

Dec 25, 2012 at 1:30 am

Rebecca "Ruji" Chapnik

Haha. I do listen to Linux Outlaws, but I wanted to focus on lesser-known podcasts for this article. Thanks for the comment. Linux Outlaws is a good one.

Dec 25, 2012 at 6:39 am

istok

LOL "the linux action show". One of them keeps saying "great" and "awesome" to everything the other one is saying, and the other one is speaking in a highly excitable manner about mundane things. And they're sponsored by a bunch of wankers. Never could listen to more than 10 minutes of that. And who did you say dear these other ones were..?

Dec 25, 2012 at 12:55 pm

klaatu

I approve of the first recommendation. But then again, I would, because I'm not just the president of the GNU World Order, I'm also a customer.

Dec 26, 2012 at 10:55 am

Rebecca "Ruji" Chapnik

Hi, Klaatu!

Dec 26, 2012 at 10:59 am

Anonymous

TuxRadar

Jan 1, 2013 at 1:43 pm

Seth

Have you heard of Everyday Linux from Element Opie Productions?

Jul 30, 2013 at 8:52 am

Comments are closed.