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Take No Prisoners (Venimus, Vidimus, Dolavimus)

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®Linux is a trademark of Linus Torvalds in several countries

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Warning!

To make a point, broad generalities are about to be spoken.....

Nit-picking will not be tolerated!

Overview of Presentation

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- A tale of courage
- What really makes Linux unique
- What can we do?
- Questions

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October Sky (a.k.a. Rocket Boys)

- Coalwood, West Virginia
- A dying coal mining town
- Six boys who taught themselves rocketry

"The future was somewhere else, not in Coalwood....
...I had to get ready for it" - Homer H. Hickham, Jr.

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Computer Science - 1968

Monolithic computers

- Cost millions of dollars
- Schedule time of 0200 hours
- Computers worth more than you were
- Computers were very "small"
  - 8-64 K bytes of memory
  - initially no disk storage, only drum and tape

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A New Style of Computing

- Mini-computer
  - Hundreds of Thousands of dollars
  - "Desktop" or "Departmental"
- User Groups Started
  - Free Software (well, freely distributable)

Computers started to become personable.

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Lots of new....

- Languages
- Programs
- Games
- Operating Systems

Power to the people

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Computers in the Elbow

Prices stayed the same (or dropped gradually), but...

- More memory, disk was added
- Computers got faster, bigger
- Programs got more complicated

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Enter the Microprocessor 1975

- Prices dropped for small computers (very small)
  - 4-8 K bytes of memory
  - tape storage only
- User groups sprung up
  - Free Software came about!

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Lots of new....

- Languages
- Programs
- Games
- Operating Systems

- Power to the people

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Price Adjustments in Computing....

- As computers become cheaper
  - more memory
  - more disk
  - more graphics
  - sound cards!!
- The elbow returns
  - 1-3K USD

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Programs Become More Sophisticated

- Graphics and windowing systems became more commonplace
- Programming used more and more of "standard" interfaces
- More and more was asked of "small" computers
- More and more was asked of programmers
- Non-programmers "started" using computers

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"Shrink-wrapped"Software

- Shrink-wrapped software started to appear
  - had to run on the platform out of box
  - power of software matched power of hardware
- One operating system became prevalent in microcomputer space

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One Operating System
One Company

- The operating system started to spread
  - compilers
  - databases
  - windowing systems
  - networking
  - mice
  - keyboards
- Influencing the production of:
  - modems
  - printers
  - computers in general

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Everything Centers on Redmond

After all, how many different:

- operating systems
- compilers
- computing languages
- office systems
- databases
- networking protocols
- etc.

do you need?

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Or Even How Many Programmers?

And why should they live any other place than Redmond?

Why should their

- teachers
- researchers
- supporters
- etc.

live any other place?

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Enter a New Operating System

- Only Operating System in major usage started outside the United States
- Only Operating System in major usage which runs across multiple (more than two) hardware platforms
- One of two operating systems growing in market share

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More Price Adjustments to Computing

- Free Hardware appears
  - buy Internet service, get a computer
  - "outmoded" computers given away
  - Communities worry about computers in landfill
- Hardware/Software price ratio shrinks to a (small) fraction

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The World Uses Computers.. ....or Do They?

- 200 Million Microsoft Systems
- 9 Million Commercial Unix systems
- 2 Million *BSD systems
- 2 Milllion "Proprietary" systems
- 15 Million Linux Systems
- 228 Million General Purpose systems - Total

5.6 ***Billion*** people in the world

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Fi, Fye, Fo, Fum...

- Software Piracy abounds in Asia
  - how far would you pedal for a quarter?
  - Which would you rather do:
    - feed your family
    - use Microsoft Word?
- Would your military trust an operating system developed by one company in America?
  - even if you got access to the source?
- Those cheap Chineese computers

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So Why is Linux Uniq? (Sorry about the spelling)

- The man who could not pay
- Debian’s system administrator
- The trademark nightmare
- The Linux Company
- The lack of control at Compaq
- The new entrepreneurs
- The untapped resources

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Whose Operating System is it?

- It is not THEIR operating system.....
- ....it is OUR operating system.
- If you don't like it.....
  - make it realtime
  - make it a supercomputer
  - make it embeddable
  - make it fit on a palm pilot

A sense of ownership

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So What Can I do to Help Linux?

Anything you want....

- Write code
  - write fancy demos
  - write plain demos
  - write example code
- Write documentation
- Review documentation
- Join a user group
- Start a user group
- Create presentations for a user group
- Start N.U.N.s (New User Nights)
  - Train two people to use Linux

Questions?

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Sometimes one dream is enough.....
.....to light up the whole sky
--- Homer H. Hickam, Jr.