



April - July 2003

Linux Client - Coming Soon

Inside this issue

[Codeweaver's CrossOver](#)

[Remote License](#)

[Which Update?](#)

[Software Assurance](#)

[E-Mail Backup](#)

[Keyword Tags](#)

[More Chicago Humor](#)

[Focus on Solutions, Not Problems](#)

Published by
Roger Petersen of

Advanced Horizons

Elmhurst, IL 60126
630-941-9332

Fax: 630-941-9338

Email: Roger@AHInc.com

Visit our web sites at

www.AHInc.com

www.EZForYou.com

Copyright by
Advanced Horizons, Inc

Codeweaver's CrossOver Office

Hoping to break down one of the biggest barriers to acceptance of Linux on the desktop, **Codeweavers** unveiled software that allows corporate users to **run Microsoft Office and Lotus Notes without a Windows operating system.**

The product, called **CrossOver Office**, eliminates the need for a Windows operating systems license as well as a Windows emulator which, traditionally, have tended to weigh down the speed and performance of desktop applications.

Typically, Linux users who want to run popular Windows-based applications needed to install a Windows emulator as well as licensed copies of Windows and the application they want to run. **CrossOver Office allows users to go directly into Office applications or Notes, which helps speed deployment and eliminates the cost of an emulator.** This makes it simple to use Windows software on Linux and helps knock down a barrier to the growth of the Linux desktop.

This does not eliminate the need to have licensed copies of MS Office or Lotus Notes.

Codeweavers also plans to release in the future software that will allow other popular Windows-based application to run under Linux.

The first version of the software supports Office 97 and Office 2000, with

support for Office XP coming in the next few months. It was built using some of the technology from WINE (Wine Is Not an Emulator), the software technology that allows Windows applications to run under Linux.

It is a big task to accomplish this feat. Windows contains 15,000 function calls, each of which takes a day to write. If there is a DLL Microsoft has that WINE doesn't have, Codeweaver has to implement that DLL.

Testifying in federal court as part of the Department Of Justice case against Microsoft, Red Hat's CTO Michael Tiemann said one of the reasons Linux has been unable to loosen Microsoft's iron grip on the desktop software market is that Office is not available for the open-source operating system. He said that Microsoft has shown little interest in disclosing enough technical information about how Office works in order to ensure that clones of that program could work properly.

Whether the courts will force Microsoft to give up such technical details apparently does not matter to Codeweaver.

CrossOver Office is available immediately. We will be testing this product in the near future.

Remote License

Most of us never take the time to read the license agreements when installing software. With so many upgrades and applications who has the time to read these agreements? It seems it is getting to the point where



you have to have an on-staff attorney read the agreements before installation applications. Of course the real problem is that you usually need the application, so you have no choice but to agree.

Of interest is a major variance in the agreement for the retail version of Windows XP versus the pre-installed version.

Retail Version

In Windows XP's End-User License Agreement for the retail version, the agreement states, "*Except as otherwise permitted by the NetMeeting, Remote Assistance, and Remote Desktop features described below, you may not use the Product [XP] to permit any Device to use, access, display or run other executable software residing on the Workstation Computer, nor may you permit any Device to use, access, display, or run the Product or Product's user interface, unless the Device has a separate license for the Product.*"

What this means is Microsoft doesn't allow you to legally access a remote Windows XP machine using a 3rd party remote application unless you buy a separate copy of Windows XP for the second machine. You must use Microsoft's remote software tool.

Under this agreement, popular remote tools such as VNC (Virtual Network Computing) which is a free remote-access application and pcAnywhere, both of which are not from Microsoft, would not be legal to use.

Pre-Installed Version

In Windows XP Preinstalled version the license text has less-restrictive wording. "*For Microsoft and non-Microsoft products, you should consult the license agreement accompanying the applicable product or contact the applicable licensor to determine whether use of NetMeeting, Remote Assistance, or Remote*

Desktop is permitted without an additional license."

So I guess if you're concerned about this provision, you should always get the XP Preinstalled version and not purchase the Retail version.

Which Update?

Last January 2002, Bill Gates sent all employees his "Trustworthy Computing" e-mail, calling for the company's software to be made secure "right out of the box."

It seems from this e-mail that Gates is sincere in wanting to stop the headlines about how wide open Microsoft's products are to malicious hackers. Headlines stating that Passport had to be shut down for two days because people's credit cards could be acquired just by sending the victims a short e-mail message is not assuring for any of us users.

To Microsoft's credit, when security flaws are found, the company does strive to inform Windows users about free, corrective patches. But this creates its own headaches. Since Windows XP shipped in October 2001, Microsoft has posted many critical patches for the operating system.

According to the company's security bulletin service (see <http://www.microsoft.com/technet/security/current.asp>), 60 patches, more than one a week, were released for all Microsoft products in 2001 alone.

Keeping track of the changes can be a full-time job, and in some cases, applying a patch has caused other problems.

MBSA

The big problem is how do you determine what patches you are missing and which one's are safe to install?

Gates' e-mail has produced at least one tool to cope with the flood of patches. It's called MBSA (**Microsoft Baseline Security Analyzer**), available at <http://www.microsoft.com/technet/security/tools/Tools/mbsahome.asp>. This program, released on April 8, 2002 runs on Windows XP or 2000 and searches a network of XP, 2000, and NT 4.0 SP4 machines for missing patches, insecure configurations, and weak passwords. Won't help you for Windows 98.

Some glitches have arisen with MBSA. InfoWorld reported that MBSA gives erroneous warnings even after some hotfixes have been applied. (See "<http://www.infoworld.com/articles/hn/xml/02/04/17/020417hnmsb-sa.xml>".)

Alternatives to MBSA include commercial programs that not only discover missing patches but apply fixes remotely to the vulnerable machines.

Because determining what updates or patches should be installed is such a headache we are going to be doing more research on this topic. Hopefully, we will find a useful and accurate tool to recommend.

Software Assurance

As of July 2001, Microsoft changed the rules for upgrade licenses to their products. **Under the new rules, companies that plan to regularly upgrade their Microsoft software are supposed to pay an annual fee for "Software Assurance" in order to get a discounted fee for future upgrades.**

Even though this is old news, we feel it is important to relate this information now as many customers still are not aware of this new practice. Microsoft did not make big announcements of this change as they do when a new version is released.



NEC

SONY

Panasonic USA

OKI
People to People Technol

Compared to paying full price, the Software Assurance plan is supposed to save you money if you plan to upgrade more often than every three-and-a-half years for desktop products or four years for server products. The Software Assurance fee is equivalent to 29 percent of the license cost for desktop products and operating systems or 25 percent for server software.

Software Assurance is an add-on to the Open Volume Licensing Programs. **Those who don't opt for Software Assurance will pay the full price of a new license every time they upgrade a Microsoft product.**

For example, suppose your company has a volume license for Office XP at \$375 per copy. In the past, you could have gotten an upgrade from Office 97 for a fraction of that price because Microsoft allowed you to trade in the old license. Under the new plan you have to pay the full price. If you don't want to pay full price for the next upgrade, you need to pay \$109 per year for Software Assurance.

Total cost after one year: \$484.
After two years: \$593.

In addition there is no skipping of generations of software. You can't upgrade from Office 97 to Office XP without first licensing Office 2000.

Because of the many complaints from users, the company twice postponed the implementation deadline, and now argues that sales show customers ultimately quit grumbling and are writing checks. Microsoft says that in the quarter ended June 2001, it pulled in \$7.7 billion worth of payments toward future deliveries of software and services, an increase of nearly \$1.9 billion over the unearned revenue it reported in the same quarter of 2000.

There have been many Microsoft cus-

tomers refusing to buy into the new scheme. Some are migrating their systems to Linux. Microsoft's new policies have made the return on investment on the Linux migration a very compelling argument.

It appears that Microsoft's new pricing options wind up costing most customers more. Software Assurance is supposedly designed to save money for customers who upgrade Microsoft Office every two years. Most companies are closer to a four-year cycle and they will pay 68 percent to 107 percent more because of the elimination of upgrade discounts.

Email Backup

One of the easiest things to overlook is backing up your email and email contact list. If you are like me, I save the important email I receive or send. In addition, I have a large list of email contacts that would be very difficult and time-consuming to re-create.

Most users store their email and contact lists on their local workstation. The problem with this is your workstation doesn't normally get backed up. What happens if your disk drive fails? Bye, bye email information! The contact list can probably be re-created, but can you survive without having your email history?

Backup Methods

Two different methods can be implemented to make sure email is backed up properly.

The simplest method is to store your email and contact lists on your server instead of your local workstation. Your server should be backing up to tape every day. This works fine as long as you are not mobile.

If you normally use a notebook for your in-office machine, you would not

be able to use your email when you are remote. You would have to be connected to the server in order to use email. In this situation, a utility can be created on your notebook that would automatically copy your email and contact list to your server on a daily basis or whenever you connect to the company's network.

If you are not sure your email data is being backed up, call us to review your current status. Don't wait till something breaks and you lose the information!

Keyword Tags

What the heck are Keyword Tags? Keyword Tags are used to insert invisible text into a web page and can be one of the elements used by some search engines for ranking purposes.

Starting in 1996 the search engines Infoseek, AltaVista, Inktomi and Lycos used Keywords. This represented four out of the seven major crawlers at the time. Excite, WebCrawler and Northern Light did not use Keywords

Keyword Abuse

Because some web site developers would insert misleading words about their pages or use excessive repetition of words in hopes of tricking the ranking results, the use of Keywords has decreased since 1997. Lycos dropped support of the tag in 1998 and newer search engines such as Google and FAST never added support at all.

After Infoseek (Go.com) closed in 2000, the use of Keywords for ranking was only used by AltaVista and Inktomi. AltaVista dropped its support in July 2002. *"In the past we have indexed the meta keywords tag but have found that the high incidence of keyword repetition and spam made it an unreliable indication of site content and quality. We do continue to look at*



this issue, and may re-include them if the perceived quality improves over time," said Jon Glick, AltaVista's director of internet search.

Inktomi has no immediate plans to follow AltaVista: *"The meta keywords value is just one of many factors in our ranking equation, and we've never given too much weight to it. That said, we will continue to use it as long as our relevance modeling shows that it adds value,"* said Ken Norton, director of product marketing for Inktomi's web search division.

It now appears that the effort involved in trying to create Keywords is not worth it, based on the minor benefit it might bring. It is more important for site owners to concentrate on creating good Title and Description Tags for their pages. The Title Tag is a key page element that has consistently shown it can help with ranking in all search engines.

More Chicago Humor

First you must learn to pronounce the city name. It is Chi-ca-go, or Cha-ca-ga depending on if you live North or South of Roosevelt Rd.

If your road map is more than a few

weeks old, throw it out and buy a new one. If in Naperville and your map is one day old, then it is already obsolete.

There is no such thing as a dangerous high-speed chase in Chicago. We all drive like that.

The morning rush hour is from 6 to 10. The evening rush hour is from 3 to 7. Friday's rush hour starts Thursday morning.

If you actually stop at a yellow light, you will be rear ended, cussed out and possibly shot. When you are the first one on the starting line, count to five when the light turns green before going to avoid crashing with all the drivers running the red light in cross-traffic.

Construction on Northwest Tollway is a way of life and a permanent form of entertainment.

If someone actually has their turn signal on, it is probably a factory defect.

Car horns are actually "Road Rage" indicators.

All old ladies with blue hair in Mercedes have the right of way. Period.

The minimum acceptable speed on the Dan Ryan is 85. Anything less is considered downright sissy.

If it's 100 degrees, it's Taste of Chicago.

If it's 10 degrees and sleeting or snowing, it's opening day at Wrigley Field.

If it's rained 6 inches in the last hour, the Western open Golf Classic is in the second round.

Focus on Solutions, Not Problems

When NASA began the launch of astronauts into space, they found out that the pens wouldn't work at zero gravity (Ink won't flow down to the writing surface).

In order to solve this problem, they hired Andersen Consulting. It took them one decade and 12 million dollars. They developed a pen that worked at zero gravity, upside down, under water, on practically any surface including crystal and in a temperature range from below freezing to over 300 degrees C.

The Russians used a pencil.



322 Ferndale Avenue, Elmhurst, IL 60126

