Ubuntu for windows converts.

Introduction

This Webpage/printout is intended for new users of the Linux Operating system (More specifically Ubuntu Linux). It is a guide to help those users who are used to running windows programs, and would like to continue to work and play on their computers without any loss of functionality.

This guide will cover the basics of how a (former) windows user can get the same things done in linux that they did in windows. It is NOT a guide to using linux, or a comparison of windows and linux. This guide will simply try to help you (the windows user) do what your used to without having to use a dedicated windows machine, in most cases you wont even need a copy of windows at all.

This guide is meant only as an introduction, to give you an idea of what you can do. It is up to you to do further research on whatever solutions you feel are right for you. When possible I have included links to relevent webpages. When in doubt USE GOOGLE! (http://google.com)

Alternatives to windows only software

Many of the common tasks you are used to doing on windows only applications are availble from other open source applications on linux. For example many users are familure with Microsoft Word and the other microsoft office programs, and while this program is not available for Linux, The free OpenOffice program has much of the same features and funtionality as Microsofts office products, including support for files in the microsoft .doc format.

Many user are used to one specific program and are not aware of the alternatives. To help you find alternatives the website OS-ALT (http://osalt.com) can be a very useful resource. This site allows you to enter the name of the windows program you are currently used to, and offers a list of suggested alternatives along with breif descriptions.

WINE

http://www.winehq.org

What is wine: Wine is a translation layer (a program loader) capable of running Windows applications on Linux and other UNIX compatible operating systems such as Mac OS-X. Windows programs running in Wine act as native programs would, running without the performance or memory usage penalties of an emulator, with a similar look and feel to other applications on your desktop.

Installing wine: Wine can be installed using the Add/Remove item under the ubuntu Applications menu. Ubuntu includes the stable version of wine in its repositories. This version was released October 2008. The wine project releases new development (testing) versions of wine about once every 2 weeks. These versions may or may not include support for new programs, features or bug fixes. We recommend using the latest version of wine to get the best support for all your programs.

Instructions for installing the latest version of wine can be found online at:
http://winehq.org/download/deb

Setting up: Wine comes mostly configured any ready to use. But its best to run through the wine configuration too (winecfg) first before running any other windows related programs. The configuration tool allows you to change settings for sound, video, virtual drives, and the level desktop integration. By default wine will come with most of these

things already set to good defaults. Some things you will want to specifically check into are the 'Audio' tab, which will automatically configure audio for you, and the 'Drives' tab, which has an autodetect button and is useful to setup links to CD-Rom drives and other locations for wine to easily integrate with.

Wine Application Database: You can check to see if a specific game or program will work on wine by visiting the wine application database . If the program has already been tested by someone it should contain a page with information on how well the game runs and any notes or instructions for getting the game running properly on Linux.
http://appdb.winehq.org/

Installing windows programs:
Once wine is installed and configured running windows programs is as simple as double clicking on the installation or program icon just like you would on windows itself. Most windows programs will create desktop shortcuts once they are installed, and other programs can be access under the wine entry that's in your ubuntu applications menu.

Wine Package Managers:

Wine-Doors is a type package manger for wine that helps assist users in installing some more common windows applications under wine. More information on wine-doors (and installation instructions) can be found at:
http://wddb.wine-doors.org

Play On Linux is a piece of sofware which allows you to easily install and use numerous games and softwares designed to run with Microsoft's Windows. Few games are compatible with GNU/Linux at the moment and it certainly is a factor preventing the migration to this system. PlayOnLinux brings an accessible and efficient solution to this problem, cost-free and rescpetful of the free softwares.
http://www.playonlinux.com/

Crossover Linux/Crossover Games (Recommended): The commercial version of wine. Includes an easy to use interface for installation of more common programs such as Microsoft Office, Adobe Photoshop, and various games. Also includes a few other features that aren't in the standard version of wine. Purchasing this version helps support the people who develop wine.
http://www.codeweavers.com/

Virtual Machines

A virtual machine is a full system emulator that allows you to install other operating systems inside of your current one. Essentially it is a computer running inside your computer. The good thing about virtual machines is that they allow you to run an entire operating system, and thus will work with nearly 100% of the software that normally runs on that operating system. The down side is that you will require a licensed copy of windows in order to install it. Virtual Machines also require more system resources to be dedicated to them then simply running a single program in wine. For FreeGeek adopters this means you machine will likely require a memory upgrade in order to run a virtual machine at a usable level.
Some good virtual machines you can try out are:
VMWare Workstation (Commercial software) http://www.vmware.com/products/ws/
VirtualBox (available in ubuntu add/remove programs) http://www.virtualbox.org/

Windows to Linux users FAQ

Question:
How do I open the new type of microsoft office documents or .docx files in Linux?
Solution:
1)http://docx-converter.com/ will convert docx files to whatever format you like (probably open office)
2)Open Office Version 3 and better can open docx files. You can use open office to convert the files to standard .doc which is readable in all versions of microsoft office, and open office.

Question:
How can I send a document to someone who uses windows but doesnt have open office.
Solution:
Open Office supports saving files in microsoft word format. Simply choose "Save As" under the file menu and select "Microsoft Word 97/2000/XP". Of couse you really should encourage your friends to switch to open office if possible.

Question:
Website or Video requires Windows media player.
Solutions:
1) Most windows video and audio formats are supported by linux multimedia applications such as totem (movie player) and VLC. Most distributions have a package called win32codecs (or similar) which installs all the windows codecs for the native linux players. For getting videos embedded in websites to play, you will need to install a mozilla plugin of your preffered media player, which should also be available from your distros package manager.
2)Windows Media player along with internet explorer (see above) is installable using wine. This method works for the VERY few media files that will only work in windows media player.

Question:
A Website or video requires Real Player
Solution:
Real player has a native linux version.

Question:
Using a critical application that only supports windows.
Solutions:
1) Using wine you can run many windows only applications, such as photoshop, autocad, and many others (including microsoft office). (see wine section)
2)Many linux applications support interfacing with windows only software, such as microsoft exchange. (see osalt for more information)

Question:
I want to play (the LATEST) games!
Solution:
You may be under the impression that linux just doesnt support games, and new games take time to port (or work in wine). This is a common misconception. Most games which are ported to linux are ported either during intital development or very shortly after (2-3 months) (examples: Doom3, Quake4, Prey). More often games are windows only, however many of the latest games actually do RUN on linux using wine. Examples include: Fallout 3, Elder Scroll's IV, Red Alert 3, World Of WarCraft, The Sims 3, Team Fortress 2, Bioshock, and many many others.

Question:
None of these solutions solve my problem.

Solution:
If your issue is not listed or the above solution(s) do not work, or are not adequate for your needs please feel free to contact me (evilgold@freegeek.org) so i can try to help you find out a better solution. Please be as descriptive as possible.