

/DEV/RANDOM/

Final thoughts, musings and reflections



Nick Veitch was the original editor of *Linux Format*, a role he played until he got bored and went to work at Canonical instead. Splitter!

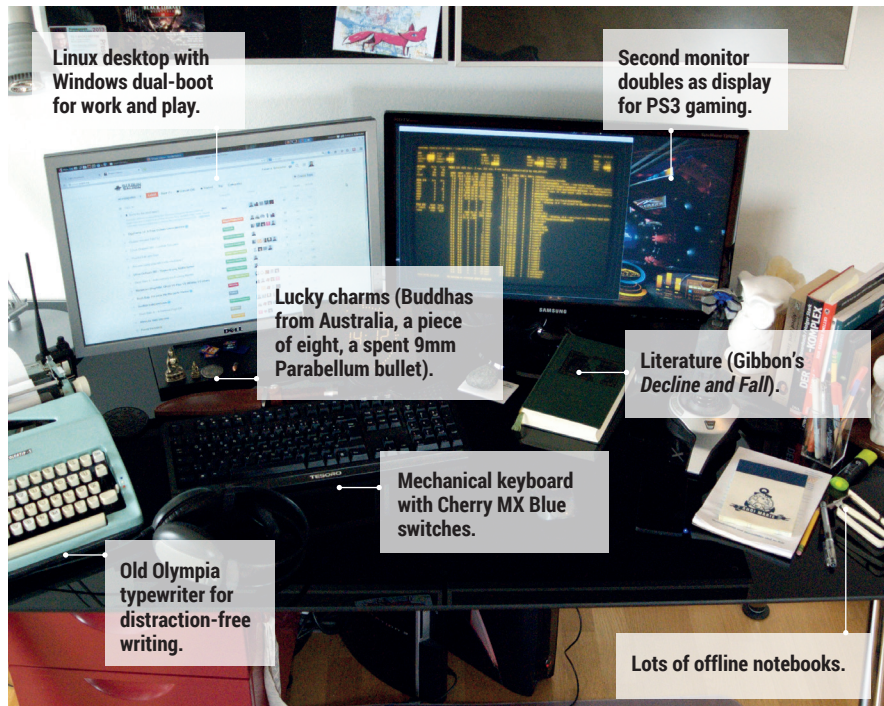
There has been another recent spate of “news” stories about delivery drones. Not to be confused with the ones that deliver indiscriminate scorching death from the skies, these would be the ones that deliver your books or whatever from Amazon. As the Hovis delivery boy must be approaching pensionable age, these seem like a very good idea indeed.

I am personally looking forward to the day when they become a reality. If they ever do. Because actually, to make them viable in all but the most unique delivery situations, there will be a number of interesting problems to solve. Leaving aside the accuracy of navigation (opens door to drone, tries to explain that T3c is two flights up, round the back, knock on the red door), there is the question of actually building a viable drone that can deliver a reasonable payload.

Yes, the spitting napalm death drones manage this, but they are rather expensive to operate. And if you wanted to deliver a book to the Taliban, your drone would also have to be quite pricey. I imagine the US military consider the cost of the drone and the fuel quite reasonable considering they are in the habit of delivering \$20k bombs, but I don't think the economics stretch to a \$4.99 DVD.

The military also don't care if you aren't at home (they don't leave explosive devices “in a safe place”), but I am looking forward to the ‘myXerxes’ delivery robot depositing my latest gadgets in the outside toilet and leaving a note to that effect, presumably on the roof.

Nevertheless, I'm sure the clever tax-dodgers of the world's online retail sector can rise to these challenges, which means each drone will be packed with all sorts of exciting/expensive/hard-to-source components. As for myself, I will be investing in a long pole and a very large net.



My Linux setup **Fabian A Scherschel**

Heise Security editor, OggCamper and Linux Outlaw.

Q What version of Linux are you using at the moment?

A I've been running Xubuntu (currently 14.04) for a while on my desktops and laptops. My servers run on Debian Wheezy. I also use Kali Linux a lot at work to poke around systems and network traffic. I prefer Xfce as a desktop; Gnome 3 works too.

Q What was the first Linux setup you ever used?

A Knoppix with KDE at university in 2004. I hated it so much, it turned me off Linux completely for a while. The first install I did myself was Ubuntu Dapper in 2006. I've spent several years on Fedora as well and used Arch Linux for a while.

Q What Free Software/open source can't you live without?

A The shell (mostly *Bash*). Whenever I am using Windows these days, it feels like someone has chopped my right hand off because their command line is so horrible – and yes, I do include *PowerShell* in that.

Q What do other people love but you can get on without?

A Gentoo. Compiling things just isn't for me. I suck at it, especially kernels. Also *Emacs* – I have no idea how people can use that thing.

Q Is there a piece of proprietary software that you wish was open source?

A *Sublime Text* [highly praised in LV002's text editors group test] I've written millions of words in it in the last few years. In fact, this very answer was composed in *Sublime*. ☞