

Seafile 4

Fed up with being spied on by GCHQ, the CIA and Google, **Ben Everard** is now looking for a server to run his own cloud storage.

Cloud storage is a wonderful idea. However, it comes at a price – when you upload your data to someone else's server, you lose control of it. As soon as it leaves your machine, it's not really your data any more. There is a solution to this – run your own cloud storage.

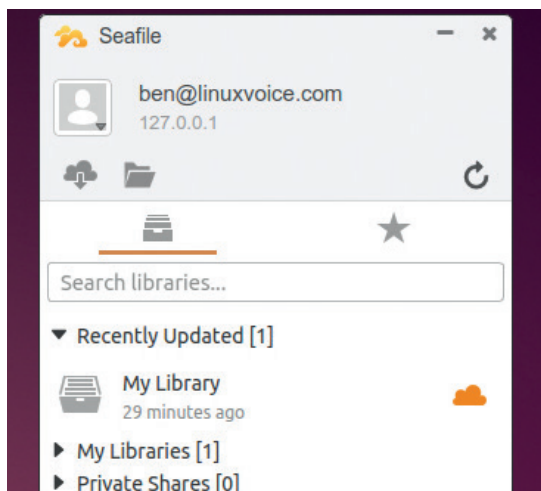
Seafile is an open source cloud storage platform. It comes in three parts: the client, the server and *Seahub*. *Seahub* is the web interface that enables you to manage users, and upload and download files without the client software installed. The client software synchronises directories on your computer with libraries stored on the server, and the server software provides all the functionality to make the client and *Seahub* work.

Running your own cloud storage can be more secure, especially as most cloud storage providers have been shown to share data with government spies. To help keep everything safe, *Seafile* provides the option to encrypt your data on the client side. This means that it's secured before it leaves your machine, so even someone with complete server access wouldn't be able to decrypt it. This is especially useful if you're using a *Seafile* server someone else is running.

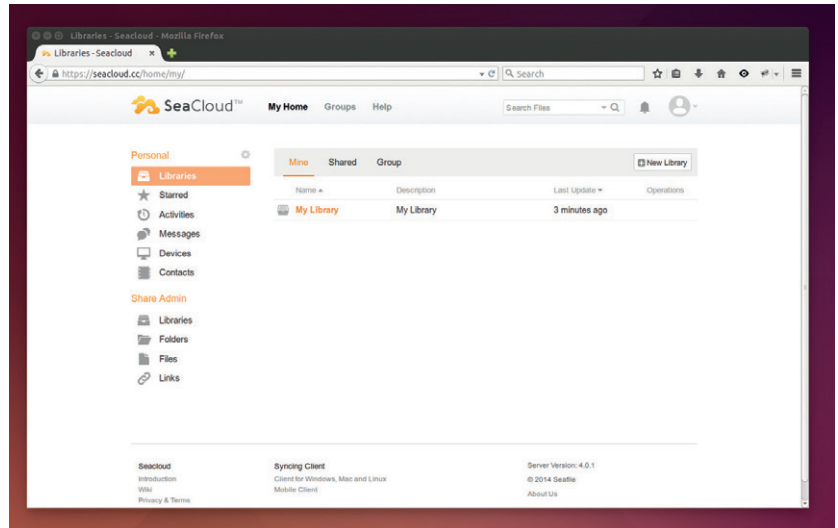
Ease of use

The client software is easy to use, and works well. You can add accounts from more than one server, and it will sync the required libraries with your machine.

The server provides all the features you would expect from cloud storage. You can share files and libraries with other users, with groups of users, and with the public (via an HTML link) easily. It keeps a history, so you can always undo any changes. There's also messaging between users, but this feels a bit like



The Qt app looks good, but doesn't fit in with our desktop



an afterthought, and we can't see any advantages of this is over email (every login is an email address).

The *Seahub* web interface provides you with full access to your libraries without needing to install any client software. It also enables you to preview and edit some filetypes, although these are quite limited, especially editing, which is only text, markdown, and seaf formats. The latter of these is a rich text format developed specifically for *Seafile*, so isn't widely supported by other software.

There are client packages for Ubuntu and spinoffs on the *Seafile* website. For other distros, you'll need to check your package manager, or install from source (<https://github.com/haiwen/seafile-client>).

Installing the server just requires you to download and unzip a tarball, then run a shell script that configures the environment. By default, *Seahub* runs on the *Gunicorn* server, so if you're already using port 80 for a web server, you'll need run it on a different port (it defaults to 8000). It is possible to run it using *Apache* or *Nginx*, though the setup is a bit more involved. The documentation covers everything you need to know: <http://manual.seafile.com>.

Seafile should run on just about any box including cheap VPSes. There's even a version designed specifically for the Raspberry Pi. Provided you just want file-syncing and cloud storage, *Seafile* is easy to install and run, and gives you all you need. 📺

If you don't want to run your own server, you can get an account on www.seafile.cc. Free accounts come with 1GB, but this can be increased to 100GB for a \$10 monthly fee.

DATA

Web
www.seafile.com
Developer
 Haiwen
Price
 Free under Apache
 licence or from €12 per
 user

LINUX VOICE VERDICT

Seafile is excellent for cloud storage, but its messaging and editing capabilities are weak.

