4.14 IndLinux

Introduction

Indlinux.org is a group of people who passionately believe that the benefits of information technology must be widely and freely available to the Indian masses. We are a group of people who combine skills in written scripts, free/open source technologies and technology journalism to make this happen.

Today, almost all software and operating systems and websites in India are in the English language. Since English is a language spoken by less than 10 percent of India's population (generally considered to be the language of the affluent) language is a significant barrier for the other 90 percent of India.

This is creating a new class of people who live in what can be called as "Information Poverty" even as technology becomes cheaper and cheaper.

To destroy this barrier we need to create a national-level, collaborative effort to localise Linux to Indian languages.

What Are The Reasons That Make Indlinux Necessary?

- Indian linguistic groups have to wake up to the fact that their languages will become outdated if they do not become a part of the digital age.

- Since culture is embedded in language to a significant degree, the ability to compute in one's native language can give Indian culture a significant boost. We believe that technology, particularly, the Internet can be one of the finest means of recording, archiving and propagating Indian culture.

- India's annual per-capita income is $390 (Rs 17,355) while operating systems cost $40 (Rs 3,500). Word processing software etc. cost even more. Free/open source software are therefore extremely important in the Indian context.

Why LINUX?

There are several significant economic and cultural reasons for choosing Linux as a platform.

Free operating systems like Linux have several advantages for developing countries. Most software packages today are developed in the west and then sold in developing countries where the parameters of affordability are completely different. This problem does not arise with Linux because it is free.

There are cultural reasons that make Linux even more attractive. The existing user interface paradigm of files and folders evolved because computers were essentially designed for a western audience familiar with real-life files and folders. There is no reason to assume why the same paradigm should apply to a trader in Tamil Nadu or a farmer in Madhya Pradesh.
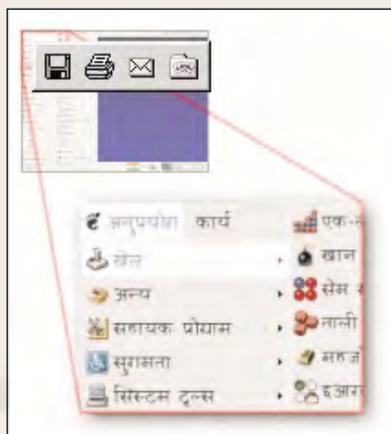
The openness of Linux allows local linguistic groups to customise user interfaces in ways that are far more culturally sensitive than any centrally controlled approach. Linguistic groups that may be considered too small a market by vendors can also take their destiny in their own hands by customising the Linux interface to their own needs. We therefore believe that Linux is a very attractive long-term solution to India's computing needs. We chose Linux over other free/open OSes because of the popularity of the platform with developers.

Indlinux Project:

The goal of this project is to create a Linux distribution that supports Indian Languages at all levels. This Indianisation project will strive to bring the benefits of Information Technology down to the Indian masses. We want to make technology accessible to the majority of India that does not speak English.
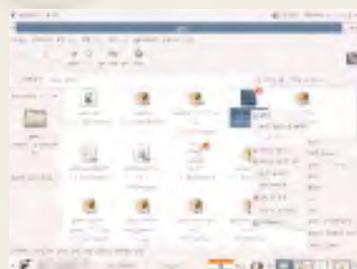
The task of localization has several pieces that need domain expertise. Some examples are I/O modules, development of fonts, kernel enablement, word translation etc. The project is looking for experts and volunteers to champion the cause of Indian language computing. You may volunteer and participate here.

The Indian Linux project is open source and completely free. It is licensed under the GNU General Public License.Here are the complete licensing terms and conditions.
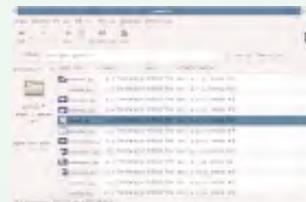

Hindi

IndLinux.org announces launch of Hindi interface for computers

IndLinux.org's Milan software enables Hindi users to use computers in their own language, a major leap forward in bringing the benefits of information technology to Indian masses

IndLinux.org announced the launch of IndLinux Milan v0.37, a Hindi interface to Gnome, the graphical user interface (GUI) of the GNU/Linux operating system. With IndLinux Milan v0.37 installed, those who can read and write Hindi can now use computers in their own language.

The organization said that this is a major step forward in bringing the benefits of information technology to the 400 million people who speak the Hindi language. Localization involves changing the menus and other elements of the graphic user interface from English to Hindi.
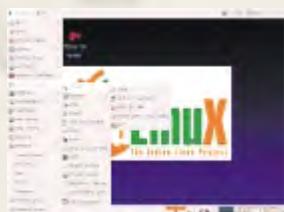

As the world becomes increasingly digitized, Indian Language audiences need to be brought into the mainstream of the digital revolution so that they can also reap the socio-economic benefits of information technology. The IndLinux Milan software is expected to plug a critical gap in the market, since popular operating systems and software are available only in English which is spoken by a mere five percent of India.

IndLinux Milan v0.37 works on Red Hat Linux v8.0 and the organization is working on porting it to other distributions of the GNU/Linux operating system. Advani said that they chose the name Milan (Hindi for "Union") because it signifies the inclusion of India's Hindi speaking masses into the mainstream of the digital age.

As the cost of computers fall, the biggest bottleneck to the widespread use of computers is the availability of Indian language software. By making the software available free of cost, Indlinux.org hopes that information technology will reach each and every part of India. IndLinux.org is a voluntary, non-profit effort that has been supported by Netcore Solutions Pvt. Ltd, a Mumbai-based technology company. After having localized GNU/Linux to Hindi, the organization hopes to localize the GUI to Marathi, Gujarati and other Indian languages.

Punjabi

Punlinux is Project to start the Localization of Open Source & GNU/Linux into Punjabi language punjabi.With this aim every member pay their sincere attention,time and try to culled the appropriate words that suitably convey proper meaning .It is way to deliver the real Power of OSS from one community to other(Punjabi) Community and aware our people among usage of computer in their work

OSS is world's most powerful, progressive commuity for software development. Although it is open source, but it is very secure and safe(Freedom protects Freedom). Linux is Power of High end machines, but to extract their capabilities and usages to general population need is to bring linux close to general people.First of all major hurdle to computer usages for normal person is huge cost of softwares,people can't afford expensive software to buy and those who use taken such pirated softwares which is both ethically and legally not correct.to This problem is totally eliminated by Punlinux since person get software at very cheaper rate almostly free of cost.Another problem is People show some hesitation to work on the English based system,since they are not proficient in English and have misconception that computer is only usefull for technical society. Now it is time for Software Industry to move close to them and make them understand that it is not for very High-Fi Magic Box, but you can also work with them in your mother-tounge doing localize softwares.

To bring the IT-Revolution, we must try to bring 65% people of India under consideration, who doesn't knows English.

Punjabi Language is spoken by more than 60 Million People in world from Punjab, Haryana, Himachal, Delhi, Utter Pardesh in India and outside India, England, America, Canada, German, Kenya, Italy,Pakistan are some countries where Punjabi is spoken freguently since many punjabi people are settled there.

So this process of localization will bring a easy and efficient way to learn and work on PC for rural community

India is developing nation having lot of potential for software industry,with the help of OSS people who want to hone their hands get most benefit since they get softwares in their own language and can learn a lot of. Because source code is available so there is more scope for enhancement and further development.Open Source Commuity is fast spreading community. By this process of Localization, it will bring more than 60 million people under single umbrella and also attract more and more people to join their hands and work together. This can helps software developers to work for OSS and also it help's to find developers who can share their experience and gain a lot of.

Bengali

Ankur - Supporting Bangla (Bengali) on GNU/Linux

Ankur is working toward supporting Bangla(Bengali) language on GNU/Linux operating system. However, most of our projects are focused on XFree86.org's XServer. Some of our projects are in fact platform independent and adds supports of other operating systems.

These are our primary goals:

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Translate popular and major XServer applications:

We are working on providing Bangla support for some major XServer applications such as office suites, database, development tools and

desktop environments like GNOME, KDE. Our intention is to help develop and maintain open source/free software targeted towards the Bangla speaking users.

Create awareness among Bangla speaking computer users

We are trying to create several articles and presentation materials to educate people about GNU/Linux and FLOSS movement.

Gujarati

Gujarati Team is slowly taking shape.

Status: Initial version of the locale, Opentype font, GNOME glossary translated.

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Kannada

Kannada localisation work is being done by Kannada group at Sourceforge.net

Status: Locale development, KDE & Gnome 2 translations.

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Malayalam

Malayalam team is actively working at Swatantra Malayalam Computing

Status: Malayalam Locale developed, Malayalam Renderer for Pango, Malayalam Opentype fonts developed, Gnome glossary translated to

IndLinux

Malayalam, Gnome 2.4 translations in fullswing, KDE translations also starting

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Marathi

Marathi team recently started. Activity is slowly picking up.

Status: GNOME glossary is being translated Mailing List

Fonts: Raghu(devanagari opentype)

Links: Unicode chart - used by Marathi

Oriya

Status: No visible activty yet.

Few basic stuff that are needed are

- Building Oriya locale

- Opentype fonts

- Translations

- Input methods, Keymap

Tamil

Tamil is actively working at Tamil linux site

Status: Tamil fully supported in Mandrake 9.0

GNOME & KDE translation

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Telugu

Telugu work has recently begun.

Status: Telugu Opentype fonts in development, Gnome glossary 85% translated, PO file translation will start soon.

Guide to using Telugu in Yudit

Another guide Yudit for telugu by Chandra Kanth Chereddi.

Fonts: Tikkana font

Links: Telugu Unicode chart

(Source Website/Courtesy : IndLinux
E-mail : indlinux-cvs@lists.sourceforge.net.
Website : www.indlinux.org)