

/DEV/RANDOM/

Final thoughts, musings and reflections



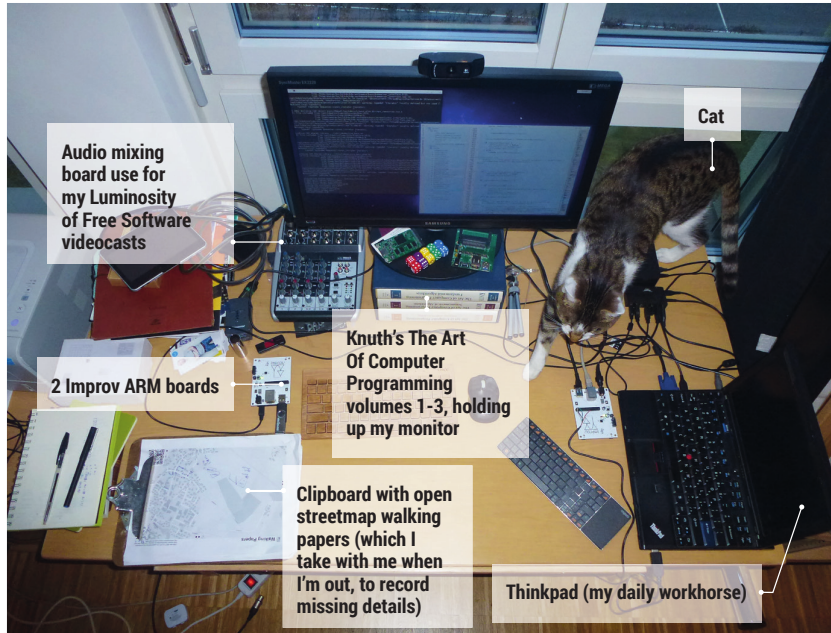
Nick Veitch was the original editor of *Linux Format*, a role he played until he got bored and went to work at Canonical instead. **Splitter!**

I have a box full of cables under my bed. To be specific, it is full of USB cables. Well, cables and associated adaptors, extensions, converters, powered hubs, unpowered hubs. And chances are if I am looking for a specific cable, I can untangle it from in there somewhere. The rest of the time, the cables sleep, like some Gorgon's nest of failure, a monument to failed ideals and shattered promises.

I understand that the 'U' in USB stands for 'Universal' in terms of the communication bus itself, not the myriad plug/socket combinations required to connect any one thing to any other. But really? I still need old A-B cables for my venerable LaserJet. One of my cameras uses a mini-B plug. I have a camera that uses some off-the-wall variation (I know, non-standard so I can't blame the USB guys for that), I have a music-playing device that I now can't use because the micro-B port on it has broken in some way, probably related to me trying to attach it to the wrong cable.

Is this what the future was meant to be? Are the dying hours of humanity to be spent drunkenly trying to connect your phone charging cable the wrong way up? But lo! The type-C connector approaches (www.usb.org/developers/USB-Futures.pdf). It brings with it, apart from another indistinguishable-when-drunk format change, some good stuff – for a start it doesn't care which way up it goes. And better than that, it makes a nice click when connected.

I don't really care if I have to get a bigger box, these are the things that should have formed part of the standard in the first place – hardware designers, please note that usable-after-a-double-Hendricks is a more precious feature than speed increases, and one for which we are happy to pay extra implementation £££.



My Linux setup **Aaron J Seigo**

The project leader of KDE Plasma welcomes us to his habitat.

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

A KDE Plasma, both Desktop and Active, on various devices (Intel and ARM; laptops, ARM project boards such as the Improv and tablets) on top of OpenSUSE and Mer OS.

Q What was the first Linux setup you ever used?

A Slackware. I found it on a CD in the back of a book while browsing in a bookshop. I was there to buy a book regarding the then-new Solaris, which cost CAD\$80... and it wasn't even that thick. I picked up the book titled *Slackware* and when I saw it claimed to have a full UNIX-like OS on the CD in the back I checked the price of the book and just about choked: it was half the price of the thin little Solaris book. I couldn't believe that I had a UNIX-ish system on a computer that cost a fraction of the price

of any "real" UNIX box. When I figured out it came with source code I fell off my chair with delight.

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

A Contact, for email and calendaring; any one of a number of web browsers as so much happens on the web these days; my development toolset including GCC, GDB, Kate and Konsole; dev environments like node.js and workhorse server software like PostgreSQL (of which I am a complete fanboi ;).

Q What do other people love but you can't get on with?

A Artistically devoid pop stars, religion, bitcoin, funnelling personal information through private interests who happily violate our trust and our rights, papayas and the proliferation of desktop environment projects in the last few years.