



VOTE FOR THE BEST!

Nick Veitch introduces the awards where **YOU** choose the winners.

Forget 'reality', this is where your vote really does count. In the only awards of their type, it is in your power to reward those who have done the most for the Linux community. There are no secret panels of judges, no fixes, and as far as we are able to verify, no multiple voting shenanigans either.

That's what makes these awards so prestigious in the eyes of those who receive them – they are, from start to finish, decided by popular vote.

We have already run a nomination campaign on the website to determine the front runners in each category. Usually four or five candidates for each section have clearly had the

most nominations, and therefore they get onto the shortlist. In categories where the results are less clear, this year we have extended the shortlists to allow you to vote for the ones you really want, rather than exclude the close runners up. From last year's experience, it isn't always the case that the candidate with the most

nominations goes on to win the category after all.

This year you'll find there are a few new categories, and a few new people, organisations and projects to choose from. Enough of the chitchat though, it's time for you to consider your options. Without further ado, here are the categories...

Best Game

As with last year, this could have been any game for Linux, commercial or otherwise. The surprise here was that last year's winner, *Return to Castle Wolfenstein* was nominated so often we felt obliged to include it again. Although technically released in 2001, I suppose a lot of people may not actually have bought it until 2002.

Joining *RTCW* in this category is a game yet to be released! *Unreal Tournament 2003* has been doing the demo thing though, and is obviously being played by quite a few Linux gamers.

The bizarre but compulsive *Frozen Bubble* has put in a strong showing too. Were not sure what it is about different coloured bubbles that appeals so much to the community, but it certainly seems to be taking up a lot of your time.

Proving that you can't beat a classic, *Lbreakout2* gets the respect it deserves, and proving that Linux users are keen on alternative uses of technology, *Uplink* rounds off the nominations in this category.

- **RTCWolfenstein**
- **Unreal Tournament**
- **Frozen Bubble**
- **Lbreakout2**
- **Uplink**

Frozen Bubble



Unreal Tournament 2003



Hardware Support

Due to the diversity of nominations in this category, we had to extend the shortlist to an unprecedented eight contenders. Sun, for their Cobalt devices and the LX50, IBM for their work in general, supporting Linux on a variety of systems, and HP, mainly we suspect for their servers and printers, were some of the hardware vendors nominated here. Lexmark got a lot of mentions, mainly for printer support, and nVIDIA and Matrox were both cited for graphics drivers. Two big chip manufacturers also get in this category – AMD for their support of Linux on the Hammer, and Intel for Itanium, compilers and plenty more.

- **Sun,**
- **nVIDIA**
- **Matrox**
- **IBM**
- **HP**
- **Lexmark**
- **Intel**
- **AMD**

IBM s390



Sun LX50



Best development tool

As well as being able to use Linux, it's vital that we have good development tools – where will the software come from otherwise? There were some very interesting nominations here, but it's no surprise that the GCC compiler suite makes it here.

On the IDE side of things, *Anjuta*, *KDevelop* and *Kylix* all get mentions, the latter probably more for the new C++ functionality rather than anything else.

Emacs got too many nominations to ignore, and deservedly though unexpectedly making it to the list, *Autoconf*, without which managing the build process would be that much harder

- **Anjuta**
- **Autoconf**
- **Kylix**
- **Emacs**
- **GCC**
- **Kdevelop**

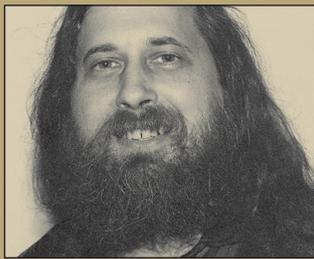
Best Advocacy

The best Linux advocacy award goes to the individual or organisation that has done the most to promote the Linux cause during the year. Usually these guys are selfless evangelists who travel the world or pop up on *Newsnight* at the drop of a hat to put forward the case for Free Software and the Linux way. It's no surprise that Luminaries such as Alan Cox the quixotic Stallman appear here. Bruce Perens managed to get himself in the news a few times too, first by threatening to violate the DMCA at a Linux convention, then by being made vice-president in charge of finding a new job when HP decided that, in fact, all publicity is not necessarily good publicity.

The only organisation on the list has done sterling work in the last year at promoting Linux, and Free Software. Alternately refusing to acknowledge its existence, then comparing it to communism, cancer, and alluding to it being unhealthy and "un-American" – these were just the opening shots in a concerted campaign to highlight the advantages of our favourite OS. The expert tactic of 'restructuring' their own licensing structure to make thousands pay more for MS products was the most often quoted reason for their nomination this time.

- **Microsoft**
- **Richard Stallman**
- **Bruce Perrens**
- **Alan Cox**

Richard Stallman



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Best Server Software

In spite of a very active year in this sector, there is little change in the shortlist for best server software. The only real change here is that *CUPS* has been displaced by *Qmail* (I'm not sure what the developers have done, I still think *CUPS* is great!).

As well as *Qmail*, *Postfix* also got quite a few nominations and gives MTAs a 40% share of the shortlist.

Samba fans have registered their opinion on software which for many is absolutely vital to their mixed network environment – its importance should not be ignored.

The final two on the shortlist are probably more obvious elements of a standard server. *MySQL* continues

to be, for many, the database back end of choice, still going from strength to strength since it was open sourced a mere couple of years ago.

Apache may have figured in the 'best advocacy' category, as it has switched many a website from proprietary to free software. The latest release has not been without its problems though. Although a lot faster and more robust in many ways, the take-up of the latest version hasn't exactly been rapid.

- Apache2
- MySQL
- Samba
- Postfix
- Qmail

Best Security Software

Your server is only as good as the security tools you use to keep crackers at bay. Security is always a popular topic in the magazine so it's no surprise we received lots of nominations in this category. What was a surprise was that there were some very clear leaders. Smoothwall walked this category last year, and thanks to new versions, appears here. But there is stiff competition in the form of *OpenSSH*, the secure shell server/client is very popular. Two intrusion detection schemes and the excellent *freeS/WAN* VPN system also feature.

- Smoothwall
- OpenSSH
- LIDS
- FreeS/WAN
- Snort

Smoothwall



Business Software

In the best Business Software category we are looking for the application that you'd be happy to bet your business on. It doesn't need to be flashy or be overloaded with features – it needs to do its job well and leave you to get on with yours.

Unsurprisingly, office suites feature highly here, including last year's winner, *OpenOffice.org* – which this year reached *version 1.0*, and continues to go from strength to strength – and *KOffice*, which has had a pretty quiet year, comparatively. GNOME was nominated for the office components and also its accessibility features (see *Linux Pro* this issue for more on that important topic).

Perhaps the most surprising entry was that of *CrossoverOffice*, which as you may know, essentially allows you to run Microsoft's *Office* suite on a Linux box. Is this a great step forward for Linux kind? Is it a great technology that ensures MS compatibility now, or a cop out? Your votes will decide!

- OpenOffice.org
- Evolution
- Crossover Office
- GNOME
- KOffice

Desktop Application

This is a pretty open category, and there are many types of applications that could fit in here. It might be an MP3/Ogg player, it might be a graphics package, and it could even have been an obscure file manager. But it wasn't.

Xine, *XMMS* and *MPlayer* all represent the multimedia brigade. There have been many advances in all of these during the last 12 months, and it's certainly gratifying to see that Linux users are no longer left out when it comes to playing all

sorts of sound and video formats.

An interesting entry this time was *fluxbox*. Perhaps not the desktop application that everyone would think of, but rather a desktop in itself. Based on *blackbox*, this new windowmanager has some great features and is gaining popularity rapidly.

But could it possibly top *The GIMP* – one of Linux's real killer apps? Although work on the main code has been rather sporadic in 2002, there are plenty of interesting side projects going in, including *Gimp-film*.

- Xine
- The GIMP
- XMMS
- MPlayer
- Fluxbox

GNOME



OpenOffice.org



Best ISP/host

Another tricky category to call. Many ISPs don't give any Linux support, some that do may not offer the best service. A variety of ISPs and hosting services were represented in your nominations so we have extended the shortlist to

encompass the most frequently mentioned. Since this is a new category there's no previous form to go on, so make your vote count!

- Telewest/Blueyonder
- Uklinux.net

- Speakeasy.net
- Pipex
- Demon
- Freeserve
- Positive Internet
- Rackspace

Best Internet Software

Mozilla



Once again this category is mostly a battle of Browsers. 2002 has definitely been a big year for *Mozilla*, in which we saw the release *1.0* version, and great strides being made in *1.1* and the *1.2beta* versions. But everyone else has been busy too. *Galeon* continues to develop apace, and has proven very popular among those who don't see why their browser should be as big as their kernel. *Opera* development on the Linux platform has kept pace with their other offerings and continues to be popular. New improvements like built-in Java are sure to increase its popularity further.

The default KDE browser, *Konqueror*, has also been updated more than a few times in the last 12 months. Its versatility as a file manager, browser, or both at the same time keeps it high on the list of apps people run.

But not all Internet software is about browsing. Instant messaging clients were also well represented by your nominations, but the clear leader was *GAIM*.

- GAIM
- Galeon
- Konqueror
- Mozilla
- Opera

Best Coffee

What, we asked you, would be your favourite caffeine-rich coffee beverage for those all-night coding sessions or mammoth network bugtesting episodes. Which cup of darkness keeps your eyes open and brain humming? Which purveyors of the wonderful bean should be rewarded for their prowess? There were, obviously, a huge range of potentials to draw on, but several lifted themselves from the pack.

The High St favourite Starbucks was the only retail chain to make it through into the final five, and was joined there by three big brands. Kenco proved to be the buzz for some, while CafeDirect's fair trading policies made an impression. Italy's favourite, Lavazza, may prove to be the Linux user's favourite too.

And just to be different, we received many, many nominations – too many to be ignored – for something that isn't coffee at all, but tea. PG Tips rounds off the five.

- Kenco
- Café Direct
- Starbucks
- Lavazza
- PG tips

Best Support Resource

Google



The clear leader by virtue of number of nominations in this category had to reluctantly be excluded. It's great that many of you wanted to nominate the *Linux Format* website, but it would be embarrassing to have to present the award to myself if we should win. I'm sure you can find a suitable alternative for your vote amongst this shortlist though, including as it does the venerable Linux Documentation Project, and the big three distro vendors, who all

received nominations for their own web-based support services.

A large number of people also wanted to nominate Google, whose Linux channel is ideal for tracking down that illusive documentation or newsgroup answer to a common or not so common problem.

- Google
- Linux Documentation Project
- Mandrake
- Red Hat
- SuSE

Enterprise Award

HP's RX series



We used to hear stories about Linux not being 'ready' for the Enterprise market. Not so much anymore, and the reason will, in no small part, be down to the winner of this category. Plenty of industry names to choose from, and all have been supporting and promoting Linux in the corporate space this year. IBM it seems, have their fingers in every pie going, and have continue to

promote services and Linux solutions on everything from their s390 down. HP often say that while the others talk about Linux, their the ones actually selling the hardware. Their new Itanium 2 powered servers might clinch it for them (or perhaps for Intel, who are also involved with not only promoting Linux, but using it themselves to design next gen chips).

Finally here, the newcomer is a collaborative effort on behalf of distro vendors SuSE, SCO and others to create a version of Linux that will be more attractive to corporate customers.

- IBM
- HP
- Intel
- Sun
- United Linux

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NOW IT'S UP TO YOU!

And there you have the contenders for the LXF Awards 2002. They all certainly deserve to be on the shortlist, but of course, only one of them can win. Well, actually we had a tie in one category last year, but I can't see that happening again...

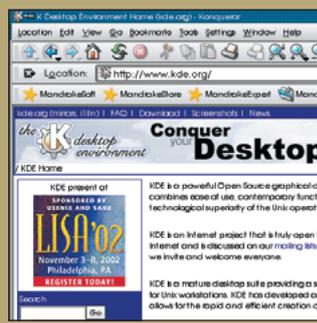
Anyway, the best part of it all is that your vote really does count – some of the incredibly close results last year just prove that. All it will take is a couple of minutes of your time to trundle over to:

www.linuxformat.co.uk/awards

and register your vote: you can only submit once, and as usual, we will be deploying as much technology as possible to ensure there are no multiple entries. So, what are you waiting for!

Free Software Project of the Year

KDE



Embedded Award

Trolltech's QTopia



While the embedded Linux

community might not be as visible as others, they carry out important work and, more importantly, enable the world to bring us cool devices. Trolltech for example, not only produce Qt, but also Qt embedded and the Qtopia development environment, helping people develop stuff like the Sharp Zaurus, which also gets a mention.

Montavista are a big name in embedded Linux, mainly for their distro, but also for work in all sorts of standards groups and organisations, helping to push the reliability of Linux in the embedded space even further.

Another distro that gets a mention here is uClinux, a reworking of the Linux kernel that removes dependency on an MMU – very useful for making use of all sorts of processors for embedded projects.

Finally for this category, the GNU Bayonne telephony project makes the shortlist. You may never have heard of it, but it is currently being tested in all sorts of phone network applications.

- Bayonne
- Montavista
- Sharp
- Trolltech
- uClinux

Best Distribution

SuSE



For some this is one of the most important categories. Certainly, the old 'which distro is best' argument fills up many bytes of data in our online forums. The question here should really be, which distro has improved the most in the last year?

SuSE and Red Hat have both upped the ante to 8.0 this year. While the SuSE leap was a more polished version of their previous offerings, Red Hat 8 seemed to go off in a totally new direction, with more focus on the desktop. But has the bold decisions taken to create an integrated desktop with the latest technologies paid off?

You can find out our opinion of Mandrake's latest revision elsewhere in the magazine.

And we mustn't forget Debian, which finally managed to release version 3 this year. Surely something that takes so long must be worth it in the end? We also see respect is due to the venerable Slackware and South American favourite, Libranet.

- Red Hat
- Mandrake
- SuSE
- Slackware
- Libranet
- Debian

As we said before, these are some of the most valued awards in the Linux community because they are all down to you. And they don't come any more prestigious than this. To carry off this category, the winner will have to have proved itself as quite simply a sublime piece of coding that the Linux world can't do without.

There are six nominees on the shortlist, all of which may be worthy of your adulation. First up, in alphabetical order, is Apache 2. The Apache group have indeed worked long hours bringing us this marvel. A new way of dealing with memory and processes promises even more efficient use of your server's CPU, and a new API for add-ons

promises to deliver even greater flexibility.

The GNOME project shipped version 2 this year and proved that, far from playing catch-up with KDE anymore, it has some great features of its own. KDE itself continued to grow, and the 3.0 release earlier this year offered some new features, mainly thanks to the transition to Qt3.

Mozilla, as we have already seen, has made a name for itself as a solid and reliable browser, and let's not forget that the journey to release has also spurred the development of some other great tools (e.g. Bugzilla).

OpenOffice.org has perhaps been even more successful than anyone could have imagined from the first

releases, culminating in sweeping the board when it came to our Ultimate Office software roundup.

Finally, and still to a certain extent controversially, we come to Wine – providing legacy compatibility for desktops that otherwise would not have switched to Windows. Thanks to the development of Wine and the code given back by the WineX project, it can now run countless Windows apps perfectly.

- Apache 2
- Gnome
- KDE
- Mozilla
- OpenOffice.org
- Wine