


▶▶ **SUBSCRIBE TO eWEEK**

ADVERTISEMENT

My Account | Sign In | Not a member? Join now

Easy as **DELL** **FREE CD-Burner Upgrade with purchase of any new Dell Home System.** Some offers expire 1/21.

Home > Linux & Open Source > Analysis > **2004: The Year Linux Grows Up (or Blows Up)**

Linux & Open Source

2004: The Year Linux Grows Up (or Blows Up)

By Steven J. Vaughan-Nichols

November 26, 2003

eWEEK.com's Linux & Open-Source Center Editor Steven Vaughan-Nichols really likes what he sees for the server, corporate and retail desktop horizon for 2004. He boldly predicts that major vendors will start producing Linux PCs for the low-end retail market, and that your grandmother will love it.

2004 will be the year of Linux.

SCO may still be heading for the courts, but instead of charging forward, the anti-Linux company will be wobbling forward as the courts start knocking out its arguments. As a result, Linux will be free to grow more quickly than ever in businesses.

In fact, Linux will be growing so fast that Microsoft will have to abandon its attempts to sow fear, uncertainty and doubt (FUD) about it in the server market. Instead, Microsoft will have to start reworking their licensing agreements and not offer special deals for customers who are showing public interest in Linux. In particular, I think Server 2003 and major server applications like Exchange 2003 and SharePoint Portal Server will see price drops.

Why? I think Microsoft is pricing itself out of the market. The economy is getting better, it's not getting great. NT and W2K-based CIOs may want to upgrade, but not at Microsoft's prices. And, Microsoft's new wave of client to server lock-in deals aren't going to warm the hearts of IT buyers either. For example, to get the any substantive advantage from Office 2003 you need to buy pricey Office System backend programs like SharePoint Portal Server and Live Communication Server.

 For the latest server technology coverage, check out eWEEK.com's Server Center [here](#).

No, Linux is already attractive on the server. And the new generation of Linux 2.6-based servers from Novell/SuSE and Red Hat (by the summer of 2003) will be even more attractive with SCO receding from the picture and Microsoft pricing itself out of the market.

I also think that businesses like [Progeny Linux Systems Inc.](#), which specialize in integrating and customizing Linux to a particular company's needs will do well. Such companies will enable businesses that want Linux but don't have the in-house expertise to start using Linux without needing to replace their existing IT personnel.

I also expect Linux to finally make some real in-roads on the corporate desktop. Three companies will drive this. Sun and Novell/SuSE will provide desktop Linux systems, the [Java Desktop System \(JDS\)](#) and a SuSE desktop Linux giving a choice of a Ximian Gnome or KDE-based interface. In addition, both companies will be

RELATED LINKS

- ▶ SCO Moves
- ▶ No More Mr. Nice IBM
- ▶ Novell's New Linux Friends, Enemies and SCO
- ▶ Putting Novell's SuSE Purchase Into Perspective

TOPIC CENTERS

JUMP TO TOPIC CENTER:

LINUX & OPEN-SOURCE VIEW



Get The FUD

eWEEK.com's Linux & Open-Source Center Editor Steven Vaughan-Nichols thinks that Microsoft's new anti-Linux "Get the Facts" ad campaign would be better titled, "Get the FUD."

CAST YOUR VOTE

With a new Mozilla released, is the browser war back?

- I'm sticking with Internet Explorer
- I'm giving Mozilla a second chance
- The browser war?

VOTE

[Poll Archive >](#)

BREAKING NEWS

ADVERTISEMENT

Ziff Davis Channel Zone™

News & Resources for the IT Reseller. Featuring: ▶ [Reviews](#) ▶ [Selling](#) ▶ [Integration](#) ▶ [Support](#) ▶ [Resources](#) ... and more!



Get your free online trial of Microsoft Windows® Services for UNIX now.

[Try it free](#)

Get the perfect PC, customized for you. [Click here!](#)

Easy as **DELL**

eWEEK [Issue Index](#) | [Contact Us](#) | [About](#) | [Advertise](#) | [Magazine Customer Service](#)

ZIFF DAVIS MEDIA [Home](#) | [Contact Us](#) | [Advertise](#) | [Magazine Subscriptions](#) | [Newsletters](#) | [RSS Feeds](#) | [Tech Shop](#)
[White Papers](#) | [Tech Courses Online](#) | [Headlines for Your Site](#) | [Custom Utilities](#)

[1UP](#) | [Baseline](#) | [CIO Insight](#) | [Computer Gaming World](#) | [Electronic Gaming Monthly](#) | [eSeminars](#) | [eWEEK](#)
[ExtremeTech](#) | [GameNOW](#) | [Gaming Industry News](#) | [GMR](#) | [Microsoft Watch](#) | [Official US PlayStation Magazine](#)
[PC Magazine](#) | [Small Business Center](#) | [Ziff Davis Channel Zone](#)

Use of this site is governed by our [Terms of Use and Privacy Policy](#)

Copyright © 1996-2004 Ziff Davis Media Inc. All Rights Reserved. eWEEK and Spencer F. Katt are trademarks of Ziff Davis Publishing Holdings, Inc. Reproduction in whole or in part in any form or medium without express written permission of Ziff Davis Media Inc. is prohibited. For reprint information: [click here](#).