



Special points of interest:

- Kurt explains the mysteries of trust
- Mike searches for a wizard
- John uses Linux for a rescue
- David ponders modern war and technology
- Ann continues the tale of the cyberstaff

Trusted OS By Kurt Keller

The Orange Book

Have you ever heard the term Orange Book? The Orange Book is one of the books in the so-called Rainbow Series of the Department of Defense. In this series, each book has a differently colored cover. Actually it is titled Trusted Computer System Evaluation Criteria, but as it is the book with the orange cover, everybody simply calls it the Orange Book. It specifies requirements for computer systems in order to be certified for certain security labels. The most commonly known label probably

is C2, which is what Windows NT is certified for. But in high security environments, such as financial institutions, C2 may not be secure enough for certain exposed servers. Here an operating system with a B1 or even B2 label can be a requirement.

“Is B1 security so much different?”, you might ask. The answer is yes. Basically, working with trusted systems such as HP’s VirtualVault or Argus’ PitBull, you are very much restricted in what you can do in a normal manner and thus have to retrain.

The first exposure to such a system can be a quite a shock, depending on how familiar you already are with the unhardened target OS. The more proficient you are in day to day system administration and especially the more knowledgeable you are with the things under the hood, the easier it will be.

I had the opportunity to work briefly with VirtualVault a couple of years ago and have been working with PitBull until recently. Even though you are very unlikely to run these systems on your

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Got Computer Problems?

Join the Club!

The Tokyo PC Users Group is Japan’s largest English speaking personal computer club, with a particular interest in bilingual computing.

Users of any platform or OS, of any ability, from occasional web surfers to genuine geeks and gurus should check out our on-line newsgroups and monthly meetings. We all have techniques to learn and tricks to share.

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About the Tokyo PC Users Group

www.tokyopc.org

Here you can find out about upcoming meetings and events, catch up on past meetings you may have missed, browse the newsletter online, and find out about all of the membership services.

(Contributors are always welcome. Mail your commons, suggestions, or interest in helping out to: tpc-webmasters@tokyopc.org.)

TPC Mailing Lists

The group provides mailing lists that mirror each of the newsgroups. Send a blank message to: info-lists@tokyopc.org to receive a catalog of the current lists and complete information on how to subscribe.

TPC Newsgroups

The group runs its own private news server that you can access over the internet from anywhere in the world. There are newsgroups for everything from help requests and Windows troubleshooting to non-computer topics like movies and dining around Tokyo. Set up your newsreader to point to news.tokyopc.org or visit <http://www.tokyopc.org/tpc/newsgroups.html> for a "no-setup" way of trying out the service.

Snail Mail Correspondence

Tokyo PC Users Group, P.O. Box 103, Shibuya-ku, Tokyo 150-8691, Japan

E-mail Correspondence

Mail: president@tokyopc.org, or any of the listed officers with questions or suggestions for the TPC.

Membership

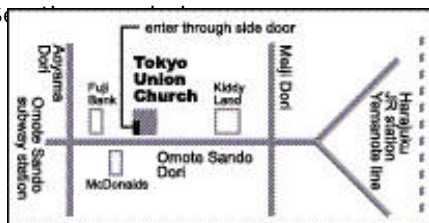
Individual: ¥10,000 per year. Includes newsletter, admission to regular monthly meetings, priority registration to SIGs and workshops, and other benefits.

Corporate: ¥25,000 per year. Full details:

www.tokyopc.org/tpc/join_tpc.html

Monthly Meetings

Meetings are the first Thursday of the month (2nd Thursday in case of Holiday conflict) in the basement of the Tokyo Union Church. Doors open at 6:30pm and the meeting begins at 7:00pm. Fee for non-members is ¥1000. See the map below for directions.



From Omotesando station, take exit A1. When you reach the street, with the Hanae Mori Building on your left, continue downhill to the Tokyo Union Church on the corner of the third side street. Turn left at the church and use the side entrance inside the carport. Take the stairs down to the basement to the meeting room. Note that the TPC is not affiliated with any religious group. (Most of us head down the road to Shakey's for beer

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TPC Exec Meetings are held on the Monday following the General Meeting. All are welcome to attend.

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As you may have gathered already, I'm not entirely comfortable with the current all-electronic newsletter. That's mostly because I'm not familiar enough with the tools I need to use, and haven't been able to find the time to learn all of their arcane secrets. For two months running now, I've been unable to get Ann Colville's excellent illustration for her *Blewtooth Blues* series inserted into the .PDF file that's available for download on the TPC website. She and you have my apologies, and my assurance that it's not for lack of trying.

I've been using **MS Publisher** to produce the AJ for many years since I finally gave up on **Ami Pro**, except for a brief—and very unsatisfactory—venture into using **PageMaker**, and I haven't had any real trouble with it. As far as I can tell, I still don't; it appears that I'm having trouble with one of the **Adobe** products I have to use to produce a .PDF from the .PUB file. Maybe it's related to **PostScript** fonts: I've gotten some odd error messages about fonts when the picture file *did* insert properly, and some strangely changed fonts and colors, too. But just because **TrueType** and PostScript fonts can't seem to get along and play well together, it remains a mystery to me why the insertion of a pretty much standard .JPG file should be affected.

Kevin Ryan has very kindly volunteered to produce an HTML version of the newsletter for those who prefer to read it online and in order to take advantage of active links and the like. That's a great help and a real benefit for the TPC. But that version isn't ideal for printing.

It may be that you readers no longer need or want a version that can be downloaded and printed. I'd certainly like to hear from you about the...ahem... issue, but meanwhile, I'd like to ask for some help. What I need is someone who owns and is familiar with Adobe Acrobat (not just the reader, but Distiller and the like) and MS Publisher, and who would be willing to do the conversion every month. It *should* be a matter of only a few minutes' work, but it has been taking me many hours of retrying...to do unsuccessfully. Doing the editing and layout work for the Publisher version pretty much eats up one weekend a month for me, but it at least is something that I can do passably well. The prospect of spending many more hours trying—perhaps fruitlessly—to perform what



The Midnight Writer

By Mike Lloret

should be the relatively simple task of producing a .PDF file is not a happy one. So I'm asking for help.

Since I agreed to continue as AJ editor even though we went electronic, I intend to keep at it until at least the end of this year. After that, we'll see; I'm now doing this out of duty rather than love, and if someone competent and motivated should appear and offer to take over the job, he or she could of course use whatever tools they prefer. But for now and at least until the end of the year, I really could use an Adobe wizard who also owns and can use MS Publisher. Please contact me at editor@tokyopc.org if you'd like to volunteer.

Please don't contact me to suggest that I switch to WinWord, or PageMaker, or some other word processing or DTP application. Publisher is—for me—the best among the programs I know for what I'm doing, I have tried others and found them either insufficiently powerful or insufficiently intuitive for the task, and I am frankly unwilling to invest a lot of my already scarce free time into learning still another way of producing a newsletter.

So if you're able and willing to help in making the .PDF conversion easier and better, please contact me. If you're not able to help but would like to state your opinion about the desirability of continuing production of this printable version of the AJ, please contact me. And if you'd like to submit an article for publication, please contact me (the submission deadline is the 15th of the month before publication).

I'm looking forward to hearing from you.

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home machines, unless you have much pocket money to spare, the concepts may still be interesting, especially since such features start to show up in open source operating systems as well, such as TrustedBSD or Linux.

Trusted OS's - The Difference

I'm not going to cover all the aspects of what is different in a trusted or a B1 level OS, such as integrity checking, auditing, print output labeling, documentation etc. Instead I will concentrate on the most interesting and useful features, which are also the ones I expect to appear in normal operating systems over short or long terms.

No Administrative Account

In every OS there is somebody who has the privilege to play god. In a single user OS, like DOS or Windows 95, this is the user itself. In multi user systems, like Windows NT or unix, this is a special account. This administrative account has the ability to bypass any restrictions. Under unix, where god is the user account named root and always has userID 0, this is usually done by checking what userID is running a command and bypass any restrictions if the userID is 0. If one person is responsible for all aspects of the machine, this is no problem. But what if you have a person responsible for the printing subsystem, another one for creating new user accounts and a third one for the mailing subsystem? Under normal unix they would all need access to the root account to do their job, even though they actually only need access to a subset of the functions which are available to root. With trusted operating systems, these administrative privileges are split up into numerous separate privileges which can be assigned to different users. So, for example, the guy responsible for the printing subsystem can be given the privileges necessary to manage everything to do with printing, but not anything else. Usually it is even

possible to distribute privileges in such a way that one person can change configurations as necessary but not activate them and another account, which can not prepare changes, must then commit them.

And what about the original root or administrator account? The special privileges are taken away from these accounts, or at least can be disabled after installation.

DAC versus MAC

Without even knowing the term, most people have an idea what DAC is and how it works. DAC stands for Discretionary Access Control and means as much as the access control flags for files and directories found on multi user operating systems. Under unix, each file and directory has a set of flags which determine read, write and execute access for the owner, the group and the rest of the world. These flags can be set by the owner of the file or directory, at the users discretion, thus the term discretionary access control.

MAC, which stands for Mandatory Access Control is a different pair of socks. The owner of the file has no influence over the MAC labeling of a file; it is system enforced or preset by the administrator. Basically it is a sensitivity label.

The difference between MAC and DAC is like geometry in two dimensions only with triangles, squares and circles (DAC) or geometry in a three dimensional room with cubes, cylinders, balls and pyramids (MAC).

In the DAC world, your file storage is a building with only one single floor. Your files are all the things in this room. There are chairs to use for anyone (anybody can execute the file), newspapers for anybody to read (anybody can read the file) and notepads for anybody to write on (anybody can write to the file). You

"In every OS there is somebody who has the privilege to play god."

also have your more valuable belongings in this room, like your bank booklet, which is locked away in a box to which only you have the key. In this example the box would be a directory to which you don't grant any other user access. Some things, however, are meant to be looked at by others, but they should not touch them, like the 10,000 piece jigsaw puzzle you did last year. Sure, you put it in a glass case, but if somebody stumbles and bumps against the glass case, intentionally or not, the contents can still end up in a mess.

With MAC, your file storage is a building with several floors. The bottom one is called IMPLEMENTATION LOW, the top one TOP SECRET and there are a couple of floors with different names in between, such as PUBLIC, RESTRICTED etc. These floors are called sensitivity labels. There are, however, no stairs between these floors! The ceilings of the rooms are special mirrors; you can't see from a lower room to the upper ones, but you can see all the rooms below you. What does this mean now? Well, in the room you are, you can do exactly what you could do in the one room DAC environment; moving the chair around, writing on the notepad and so on. You can even place new objects into this room; take off your shoes and put them somewhere. Where in this MAC world would you place aforementioned jigsaw puzzle? In the guest room on floor three where all your guests can bump against it? No. If you put it above the guest room, none of your guests can see it; above you would only put things you don't want the guests to see. But what about leaving the jigsaw puzzle on the ground floor? Everybody can see it as everybody can look down to it from above, but there is no chance any guest will ever bump into it, as they are not in the same room. This is exactly what you would do, for example, with configuration files. Processes, which are like windows or doors into the rooms, need to see

and read the configuration files, but they should not be allowed to change them, not even if a hacker enters through such a process window into the room.

MAC is the concept of these various floors, or sensitivity labels. You can touch and see everything which is on your floor (provided DAC permissions allow it). If you create a new file, leave a new object, it will be placed in this room. You can also see everything in the rooms below you, but you can not touch or change it. Neither can you place new objects into the rooms below you. And for anything which is above you, there is no chance to even see it.

Compartments

The different sensitivity labels, or floors, just discussed are not yet the full story. In addition to the vertical dimension of sensitivity labels, there is another horizontal dimension: compartments. These are like additional towers of rooms or additional buildings. A process or user can be a member of one or more such towers, just as you probably have access to your office building, your house and public buildings, but not to other people's home or other company buildings. A process or user can only act on resources, which are either not put in any compartment at all (as if in a publicly accessible building, such as the city office) or in one of the compartments the process or user has access to (your office building, your own house etc).

Conclusion

By using sensitivity labels and compartments you create an enormous grid of possible configurations. This allows the flexibility to really fine tune your security needs and protect applications and other resources from each other, but it also makes system administration much more difficult. And if at the same time you also have to think about MAC settings and the fact, that the root user can't

"By using sensitivity labels and compartments you create an enormous grid of possible configurations."

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The Absent Minded Perfesser: Using Linux to save Windows Data

By John Edward Philips, Ph. D.



Don't even think about switching operating systems! Think about adding them to your skills repertoire. Knowing how to use a variety of operating systems is not just an advantage, it is one of the most important computer skills the ordinary user can have. Here's how I used my knowledge of Linux to save data from one of my Windows computers.

Last summer a four month old Toshiba laptop was passing out at unexpected moments, crashes that were like computer narcolepsy. Preparatory to backing up before sending the machine in for a checkup, I ran defrag. After the defrag it refused to boot. Even booting in safe mode I got the following message:

```
"STOP: c0000218 {Registry File Failure}
The registry cannot load the hive (file):
\SystemRoot\System32\Config\SOFTWARE
or its log or alternate. It is corrupt, absent or not
writable.
```

```
"Beginning dump of physical memory
Physical memory dump complete.
Contact your system administrator or technical
support group for further
assistance."
```

Then I had to unplug both the cord and the battery to get the computer to respond at all. I figured the defrag command must have sent the software configuration files to a bad sector on the hard drive. A bad sector was probably what had been causing it to die unexpectedly on me in the first place.

The first lesson of this mess, if you couldn't figure it out, was to run scandisk before defrag, just to make sure you don't send critical data to a bad sector of the

boot hard disk. I should have known that, because I've been running both for years, but . . . (um) . . .well, I forgot. :-)

I don't think I'll ever make that mistake again. But now my problem was how to save data from a computer that wouldn't start at all. I did have the book manuscript I'm working on backed up to a zip drive, but I wanted to get my mail files out of the hard disk so I could contact the authors (it's an edited volume I'd been working on for years and several of them had changed their addresses) and for general archiving.

I could boot the computer with an old WIN98 boot floppy but it didn't recognize the hard drive. The Recovery [sic] CD-ROM that came with the computer threatened to wipe out all the data on the hard disk before booting up. It was not the regular Windows recovery disk that I had gotten with other Windows computers, but something specially created by and/or for Toshiba.

Toshiba does not allow upgrade of the HDD or even touching that part of the machine. If I removed the HDD to try to recover data (which would involve investing in some strange screwdrivers) Toshiba would not replace it. The guy at customer service told me, not for attribution of course, that my best bet was probably just to void the warranty and remove the HDD. If I sent it in to them for repair they would not send me back the old HDD from which I might (or might not) be able to recover any data. Had I bought the computer and did I own my own data or not?

"A bad sector was probably what had been causing it to die unexpectedly on me in the first place."

On my previous machine (Fujitsu) I upgraded the HDD myself, and I cannot understand why Toshiba is so touchy about their hard disks. (So what are they gonna do with it? Put it in another laptop for another sucker?) I was very reluctant to void the warranty on a new machine but I didn't know how else to save my data.

Luckily I had a "technical support group" to contact for assistance. Yes, I posted my problem to the Tokyo PC User's group online help and got assistance from Jim Tittsler and others. Jim's advice turned out to be the most useful. He suggested making (or acquiring) a Linux rescue CD-ROM or the Linux bootable business card (<http://www.lnx-bbb.org>). Unfortunately I'm in a remote location (and having unrelated problems on my CD-R/RW) so I couldn't get or make a CD-ROM or the lnx-bbc very quickly. Jim did give me a clue, however, that got me what I needed. In his words:

"Of course I wouldn't have had so much mail to back up if I hadn't neglected to dump all the spam I was getting."

"There are a few runnable Linux distributions that will fit entirely on a floppy or two. Those that run from a CD-ROM obviously give you much bigger toolsets to work with."

I went to Linux.org and searched the "distributions" section for a likely minimal distribution. The most useful looking one was called "Tom's Root & Boot" at: http://planetmirror.com/pub/tomsrtbt/start_here.html/

Using this Linux "root and boot" disk I was able to boot the machine with the OS resident in RAM, and mount the HDD as read-only to access the data and send it out elsewhere.

Unfortunately the computers in my office were not linked together on a LAN, so I could not send the data out to another computer. I did have ftp space on the Hirosaki University ftp server, but the root & boot floppy I was using had only a minimal set of drivers. There was no ftp daemon with it. I was able to mount

floppy disks and send various small files (like family photos from my digital camera) out to a floppy disk. This was time-consuming, and it only worked with small files. The mail folders I wanted to save were way too big, even for a zip drive.

Luckily I found a site written by someone who had a similar problem: <http://not.toms.net/twiki/bin/view/Tomsrtbt/CopyingSomeDataFromACrashedNTPartitionForDummies/>.

I got an old 100MB Zip drive that fit onto the printer port, and was able to mount it. Then I used tar and bzip to compress the mail files and folders and sent them out to the zip drive. I put it on the Linux desktop in my office, uncompressed it to a folder, and made that folder my mail folder in Mozilla. Voila, my huge mail folder was restored.

Of course I wouldn't have had so much mail to back up if I hadn't neglected to dump all the spam I was getting. That's another lesson from this mess. Be diligent about deleting spam as soon as it comes in. It takes up space you can't always afford to lose.

And my next big project will be putting my office computers onto a LAN so I can back up directly, without all this hassle. As soon as I get that slide scanner transferred to my Macintosh G4, that is.

The tomsrtbt FAQ is at:

<http://planetmirror.com/pub/tomsrtbt/tomsrtbt.FAQ>

(Send comments, criticisms, questions and suggestions to the Perfesser at [<philips@gol.com>](mailto:philips@gol.com) .

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David Parry

Ionic Column *in exile*

Englishman David Parry lived, worked and played in Tokyo from 1980 to 1994 and was a member of TPC from 1986. He was Newsletter Publisher from late 1988 to early 1990 and began the Ionic Column in 1992. This column even won a prize and an honorable mention back in 1992. Currently based in Düsseldorf and working as a translator, he returns to Japan electronically via the Internet.

Off to war

The last column made a reference to the “word processor wars” of yore. This provides an unexpected link to this month’s column, which is being written the day after the spring solstice, on the third day of the war with Iraq. In the circumstances it seems rather pointless to natter on about techie things such as file formats when things are happening out there in the Real World, but I’ll make some (relatively) non-political remarks with reference to the computer side of things.

Although the past decade has not exactly been tranquil worldwide, all of a sudden one realizes that it is twelve years since Desert Storm. What is different, and what not changed?

The CNN war

The business in and around Kuwait was the breakthrough for CNN, extending the concept of news coverage to the point that a TV station devoted itself to nothing else. The war followed the Vietnam tradition of copious TV footage, but technical progress meant that it could be shown with a much shorter time lag. My understanding is that the current technology makes live coverage much easier, and smaller video cameras make it possible to film secretly. Nonetheless, there is still the human factor in all this, and it depends whether the journalists are allowed to go where they want or to film as they please.

One big video game

Since I was in Japan at that time, do not understand Japanese and did not have a TV set, I missed much of the coverage at the time, although I have seen much of it since then. And that in-

cludes all those pictures of explosions in the middle of the cross-hairs as the rocket or bomb sped in unerringly. It looked like a video game – and video games were developed to mimic the real pictures. The whole question of video games and war has become somewhat more vexed in view of the reports that some people either have a problem telling which is which – the schoolkids who mowed down their schoolfriends in a hail of gunfire – or practiced their future havoc in digital form with a shoot ‘em up game. Or how the 9/11 pilots reportedly practiced their final flights with the help of **Microsoft**’s well-known **Flight Simulator** program.

One big network

I was slightly bemused to see on German TV a command headquarters in the Middle East for the US military, with long rows of tables with laptops. No doubt the PCs are all networked together, and no doubt they use the server edition of Windows XP. Speculate as one will on the meaning of “Blue Screen of Death.” Or whether a Marine gunnery sergeant gets a quicker response from the Microsoft helpline than we do. At any rate I could not help thinking back to my days of working with networks and the numerous problems that arise, and wondering how the whole thing looked behind the scenes; perhaps jungle warfare now means sorting out the mess of cables. Military service in the computer room is undoubtedly a lot less arduous and dangerous than in the field, but presumably it still requires a uniform and a flattop haircut. So much for the MIT hackers of the early days, a scruffy bunch of geeks with pocket protectors, a hygiene problem, and incredible skill in the then new field of computing. Of course the military took a keen interest in the new technology from the start, since it is perhaps ironical that the two factors for which computers were first applied were for ballistics calculations and cryptography, the only applications for which the arcane new machines seemed to have any practical application.

Upgrades

Much of the military hardware is seemingly the same as twelve years ago; the same planes, the same tanks, but I think we can be certain that they have been considerably upgraded in terms of the electronics, meaning the computing capacity. In 1990 we were using PCs built around the Intel 386

and 486 chips, Windows 3.0 was new and was in the process of taking over from DOS, and we were using modems to talk to each other on the electronic bulletin boards or through centralized online systems such as **CompuServe**. I’m sure that the military has made similar progress in twelve years.

The Internet war

I well recall the discussions about things such as the “Babylon” supergun on the BBS back at that time, interspersed with postings from the developing wars in the former Yugoslavia that went on to dominate the rest of the decade. The Internet was restricted to a handful of academic or military users at that time, bursting out to take over the world in the mid-1990s. We take it so much for granted now that it seems hard to recall that we have not had the Internet for more than a few years. In some respects it has stabilized already, with a recent report stating that the explosive growth rates are slowing down in the more sophisticated areas such as the USA and Europe, since most of the people who want Internet access already have it. But one interesting thing about how the Internet has changed matters is the way that it can distribute news. It is noteworthy that many of the less genuinely democratic countries restrict and monitor Internet usage among their citizens, but at the same time it is also interesting to see that there are other angles on the news than those provided by the mainstream media in our own countries.

Progress

Back in the days of the BBS, we passed around our comments and concerns on world affairs, but we were a small and technically-savvy bunch, a technocratic elite if you will. Now the Internet is accessible to just about everybody, and the distribution mechanisms make it possible to send a message to millions of people with a few keystrokes. This is technical progress of a high order, marred by the practical application. People somehow remain the same, whatever the technical gadgetry they have at their disposal. The salesmen and the scammers come out of the woodwork to take over the new media. Internet e-mail is a great way to stay in touch with friends, being quicker than letters or faxes and cheaper than a telephone call, but it is being polluted by the flood of spam. The “get rich quick” schemes, the scammers who need your help in freeing up frozen funds, the offers to enlarge your penis or your mental horizons,

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and the various chain letters asking you to do something or help somebody. I read somewhere that in the USA that more than half of the snail-mail delivered to your house is what is known as unsolicited advertising, or spam in its electronic incarnation.

Straining hard

Can we filter out the junk mail? I have set the filters in my Pegasus e-mailer to strain out the worst offenders, but I suspect that it is a waste of time. The spammers change the sending address so that the filters are out of date almost as soon as you list a particular sender, and a new trend is to include misleading headers to defeat the filters. One trick is to insert extra characters: a filter set to weed out a header that includes the magic words “penis enlargement” is fooled by the line “\$p#en!senlarge%ment&”. Or they use a misleading line such as “Concerning your unpaid”, or they simply include random garbage that looks like the log file for a modem connection.

A view on the world

To conclude, the TPC list server has hosted a weird and sometimes wonderful variety of discussions over the years, and right now there are a lot of comments on the situation in Iraq. Yours truly is in the thick of it, as always, since the TPC is a great place to express one’s opinions, to float ideas and to comment on the idiosyncracies of the world without being flamed by total strangers, thanks to the self-moderation policy. So take a look at the online community of TPC, based on Japan but extending worldwide to places such as lower Rhenania.

Comments or feedback or more information? A chance to be famous? Contact me at DAParry@t-online.com or mail@daparry.com. (Note: the Website and the CompuServe address listed in previous articles no longer exist.)

“Can we filter out the junk mail? I have set the filters in my Pegasus e-mailer to strain out the worst offenders, but I suspect it is a waste of time.”

(Continued from page 5)

do much and special privileges are required for most system administration tasks, then it can become really complicated.

Working with a trusted OS is a wonderful and extremely interesting experience, but can only be recommended to people who have a very good knowledge of the underlying non-trusted version of the OS and how various things work and interact. However, once you get the hang of it, a normal OS almost looks boring.

In the open source world such features are starting to appear and if you have time to play around with them, I’d recommend to do so, as these will be things to stay. In a couple of years MAC will be commonplace, I’m sure. With these features showing up in open source OS’s over time, you luckily don’t have to take the plunge into the cold water at once, as you do when changing to a fully B1 compliant OS, but you can take it in doses.

References

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TrustedBSD

<http://www.trustedbsd.org/>

PINBOARD

<http://www.pinboard.com/>

HighTechSamurai

<http://kurt.www.pinboard.com/>

Babbitoons 2003: BLEWTOOTH BLUES 2.0

By Ann Colville

*Now that Mr. Smith has his new digital dream house,
his devoted Blewteeth cyberstaff continues to make life
more exciting in every way.*

Saturday 4 a.m. (*Door creaks open, sound of slipping and sliding, muffled scream as something falls hard, tinny soprano voice pipes up in Italian “Batti! Batti!” [Beat me! Beat me!] Cheery tones of Brenda the Blewtooth Refrigerator heard in kitchen.*)

“Well, good morning, Mr. S. Good to see you up! Did you have a nice date with Ms. Pickle? Oh, I’m so sorry. Ms. Dill, that sour-faced little account supervisor from your office. Perky your Blewtooth PDA tells me that you three all went out to the opera together tonight. Pretty stiff bill for a first date, Mr. S. That set you back a total of...uh...\$355.89 for dinner and a show, according to dear Perky. Ms. Dill has expensive tastes, dear. Furthermore, the restaurant closed at 2:30, and you’re just getting home now? All right, you don’t want to talk, just want to grab some sleep. Well here’s a yummy pink creme-de-bismol-and-aspirin nightcap courtesy of Bernie your Blewtooth MiniBartender, and I’d just like to mention something about the slick floor you encountered upon entry. It seems we were sadly mistaken about Bobbie the new virtual dog we picked up for you. Now, we all scanned it, admired its well-rooted fur, marveled at its realistic barks. But then Mr. Bartholomew your new Blewtooth RoboButler found several little presents around the house, and examined Bobbie carefully, and, well, it seems he’s a real dog, and uh, he needs walkies. Now, actually. All right, Mr. Bart can take him out this time, but if you don’t get acquainted and glue with your dog... oh, the colloquial is bond, is it? Well, that’s good to know, and I’ve made a note. Sweet dreams, Mr. S, just watch for a few stray puddles on the stairs, and don’t forget to floss!”

(Kitchen door slams.)

Saturday 12 p.m. (*Kitchen door slowly opens. Brenda’s dulcet tones heard.*)

“Well, good morning or afternoon, take your choice, Mr. S., glad you could join us, and we’re serving Eggs Benedictine and no beer for brunch. Aspirin? You had one last night. Now about the dog situation. While you were out cold it seems, we had a real Blewtooth dog named Bitsy delivered. Now she’ll be responsible for talking Bobbie out for walkies and they can bond together. They look exactly alike? Well here’s the difference. Bitsy can talk and train Bobbie, but Bobbie can only bark, bite, and wet. (Why would anybody want a real pet?) Anyway, it’s really important for us Blewteeth to learn from you, Mr. S. Like Perky has reprinted on you... ok, imprinted, like those ducks. She thinks you throw her around because you bve her, and now she craves abuse. You see, we need your input to learn how real people talk and act, so we’ve rented a couple of movies from the video shop, and we can all watch together and get your comments... Oh, you can’t make it, and you’ve got to run out to a store now. Why, Mr. S.? We do all the shopping for you. An electronics store, according to Perky! What are you up to, Mr. S? When will you be back for your eggs?”

(Perky whimpers as the kitchen door slams.)

Saturday 5 p.m. (*Kitchen door creaks ajar. Low sobs from Perky, sadly mumbling “Shop... shop... around...” in her sleep. Brenda’s sweet voice heard.*)

“Welcome back, Mr. S! I didn’t realize PJs could be worn outside the house. So, shall we get your jam-

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mies and robe ready to wear to work (like that nice gentleman with the bunnies), or is this casual week-end dress code? Anyway, we've had so much trouble with dear little Perky for several hours after you left her behind. First, she kept insisting that we call her Perché. Why? That's what we asked ourselves. Then she kept throwing herself off the counter. Well, she's sleeping in her little cradle now, but we had to tie her down. She's heartbroken, Mr. S. She says you've been shopping around to replace her with the latest non-Blewtooth PDA when she's designed for infinite upgrades so you can always be together... Ok, ok, I'll take care of a special grocery list for you. Gourmet deli treats for tonight's Gala Picnic with the Pickle. How sweet. You can take along this nearly outdated mayonnaise I found in the back of me. Now get showered and dressed, take advantage of your last 10 minutes of Happy Hour. Just please, please take Perky along tonight so she feels better. She'll be good as silicon. She just needs attention from you. And so does the dog. Can you take Bobbie out while Bitsy gets recharged? Wait, that's the wrong dog!"

(Perky's voice gets louder, hissing "Shop... shop...." in a threatening tone, then softer as she goes out. Kitchen door slams.)

Saturday midnight. *(Kitchen door thrown open. Brenda's voice heard.)*

"Welcome back, Mr. S. I see you've brought back your leftovers and mayonnaise and the dog. Well we had a swell time tonight learning English from that detective who's dirty and harried and those big exterminator robots that pick on people. And we really enjoyed those cute pix of you and Ms. Pickle smooching in the park that Perky e-mailed to us and everybody on your office list and..."

(Sound of something hitting the wall, hard. Perky screams "Batti!" Kitchen door bangs.)

Sunday 4 a.m. *(Kitchen door opens, shuffling sounds, door shuts. No interaction.)*

Sunday 7 a.m. *(Mr. Bart the RoboButler puts one dog in the charger, the other in the dog house on newspaper, checks and reverses dogs. He opens the door to Brenda the Blewtooth Refrigerator, mutters "Excuse me, Ms. B", takes out the mayonnaise, starts to empty and wash out the jar, stops, looks inside.)*

Monday 4 a.m. *(Kitchen door squeaks open. Brenda's cheerful voice heard.)*

"Well, good morning, Mr. S. Why don't you join us for an early morning bracer? I think we'd better chat before you brush your teeth, put on your PJs, and get into work. Just look what Mr. Bart found. Now how did a diamond as big as a ritzy cracker get into the mayonnaise?"

(To be continued.)

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