

The Green Slot

Greener Computing *or* Old PCs Never Die

It was depressing to see the number of old PCs dumped at Dean Pit the other day, just because they are not the latest whizz-bang hardware. They were destined for landfill or melting down for scrap, but there is a better way!

Re-use Don't Recycle

For the latest mega games or business applications you'll probably need a High power, multi core, hi-res beast of a PC, but for the more mundane day to day applications you're likely to use, that five year old PC you've just replaced has more than enough grunt. So instead of driving to the recycle point with that old PC, think about how you might re-use it. OK what could you use that old PC for?

Simple Web Browser: You don't need huge amounts of power, hi-res graphics or memory for that, so a simple install of Linux on an old PC and hey-presto, you'll have the latest version of the Firefox browser installed as a matter of course.

Dedicated Firewall: The boys in the know never trust a broadband router's built in firewall. Installing Smoothwall, Monowall or IPCop on a ten year old PC will protect you from the bad boys on the internet. All are stable, and kept up to

date regularly and can also provide usage reports to help stop you exceeding your download limit.

Network Storage Device: Now you're really showing off, but installing FreeNAS will turn that PC into a file share and allow you to backup your precious data easily.

These software packages are all Open Source and so are FREE and installation is simple.

Free For All!

In fact if you're re-using an old PC, the last thing you want is to spend more money. Using Open Source software will save a packet, for example use Linux instead of Windows as your OS and you instantly gain. It's free, it comes packed with software that would cost thousands for the commercial equivalent and performs well on older PCs and is an absolute doddle to install.

So you don't have to chuck that old PC away. With a little thought and some free software there's life in the old dog yet!

Karl Walde

For more details and download links check out the Online Club on www.thewychwood.co.uk/club

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