

Brazil's Computers for All Program Gets 50,000 Linux Machines

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Computers for All, a program from the Brazilian federal government whose goal is to make computers affordable to the population, has already received 50,000 desktops from a consortium involving BitWay Computadores, EnabledPeople and IMTECH Brazil, which offers support to the program.

The announcement of a large delivery of new machines was made yesterday, March 1st, in Ilhéus, in the northeastern state of Bahia. The so-called Ready PC solution provided by BitWay includes preinstalled Linux XP Desktop operating system developed by EnabledPeople. About 10,000 desktops are being delivered every month.

The Brazilian government announced last month that the Computers for All program put for sale 530,000 units during the whole of 2006. The number of all PCs running on free software sold in Brazil last year reached 1.5 million machines.

Brazilians bought 8.3 million computers in 2006, which represents a 46% growth when compared to the previous year. From this total 7.6 million were desktops (a 42% increase) and 680,000 were laptops (a 116% increase). 2.2 million Brazilians bought their first computer in 2006.

The Linux XP Desktop inside the BitWay machine is being presented as a user-friendly desktop operating system for home and office users. With a preinstalled version, a user gets an application set including an OpenOffice package (supports .DOC, .XLS, .PPT formats), corporate class Evolution e-mail client, Firefox web browser, multi-protocol GAIM instant messenger and other applications.

Linux XP Desktop is RedHat-compatible OS and has other software available.

"First, we developed Linux XP Desktop as a solution for those PC users who don't want to spend their time studying Linux-specific technical stuff," said EnabledPeople's CEO, Timofey Korolyov. "That's why our system is much simpler than a lot of Linux distributions.

"Second, our roadmap includes serious improvement on compatibility with corporate Windows like Windows NT/200X domains support. We almost completed development of a unique integration toolset, which allows remote Linux desktop management from Microsoft Active Directory."

Isamar Maia, from IMTECH, says: "We see Linux XP as definitely the best desktop solution for people who have no PC experience because it's very simple and has a compact set of powerful applications. The system is 100% compatible with RedHat platform technologies; this means simpler support procedure for us than with numerous Debian-based desktop

solutions available on the market.

"Moreover, Linux XP Desktop has a perfect Windows compatibility that is desirable for our corporate clients (they were impressed that they could choose Windows domain in the system login window or run Windows programs).

According to a partnership agreement signed between EnabledPeople and IMTECH, the companies will work together on Latin America Linux solutions market. IMTECH will represent EnabledPeople's interests, sell EnabledPeople's products and provide technical support in Portugal by phone and by web helpdesk. «Computers for All» is the first joint project of the companies under this partnership.

To meet the Computers for All program requirements, EnabledPeople and IMTECH rebuilt Linux XP Desktop, adapted it to the Program specifications, performed full Portuguese localization and included specially built hardware drivers (some modem drivers were built in Motorola company specially for the project).

Commenting on the work, Martial Câmara from BitWay stated: "For this government program, we need very simple and user-friendly desktop solutions including phone technical support in Portuguese language. The solution proposed by EnabledPeople and IMTECH companies fit these requirements.

Computers for All is part of Brazil's Digital Inclusion program which was started in 2003. The program is supported by several ministries including Cities, Science and Technology, Industry and Commerce, Communications and Education.

EnabledPeople is a trademark of Linux-Online LLC, a leading Linux corporate solutions provider in Russia. They have been developing Linux XP Desktop since 2005.

BitWay Computadores, located in Ilhéus, is the biggest manufacturer of personal computers in the North and Northeast of Brazil. BitWay is also the first PC manufacturer in Brazil providing 100% of its products with preinstalled Linux systems.