

From The Editor September 2021

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Last month in PC Update we celebrated the fortieth anniversary of the IBM PC with an article. This month, if I'd had more time, I would have done a similar article on another momentous anniversary in the history of computing that occurred this past month. On September 17 2021, it was thirty years since Linus Torvalds first released his Linux kernel.

Compared to the fanfare of the IBM PC, the Linux kernel was released inauspiciously on an Internet newsgroup back in 1991. But in some ways its contribution has been almost as significant. As well as the many distributions of Linux that are made for the desktop (of which some such as Linux Mint and Ubuntu are occasionally reviewed in PC Update), it's also gone onto power a number of other things. A significant percentage of the servers on the Internet are running a Linux distribution, so when you're viewing your favourite website or downloading your email, chances are it's happening thanks to Linux. Linux is also the kernel for Android, and although there is debate over whether this makes Android a Linux distribution, it is inarguable that Android is the most widely used smartphone operating system in the world. On the supercomputing front, 100% of them are powered by Linux, meaning that important scientific discoveries are happening thanks to Linux.

So we have almost as much to thank Linux Torvalds for as we do IBM, and if he hadn't wanted to run Unix on his 386 thirty years ago, we might be in a very different situation today computing wise.

Elsewhere in PC Update this month, you'll find Harry Lewis's thoughts on MacOS Time Machine, more fiction from George Wright, the East SIG Report from Neil Muller, DOTW Winners from Roger Brown, Yammer Highlights from Dennis Parsons and Presidential Musings from David Stonier-Gibson. Thanks as always, to all our contributors.

Enjoy the issue!