

THE COMPUTER CORNER

No. 291: Updates – Win vs Linux

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I routinely update a lot of computers. To be specific, 11, as summarized in Table 1 below. Five are Linux Mint Cinnamon 20.3 (“Una”) and six are Windows 10. Of the Linux machines, one is not mine and is off-site. Of the Win machines, two are not mine and are off-site. Of the six Win10 machines, half are desktops and half are laptops. Of the Linux machines, three are laptops and two are desktops.

Table 1

SYSTEM	TOTAL	LAPTOPS	DESKTOPS	OFF-SITE
Linux Mint 20.3	5	3	2	1
Windows 10	6	3	3	2

I present this detail to emphasize that I really do routinely update a fair number of machines, of different styles, and have a pretty good feel for working with the update process in two major OS (Operating Systems). So, when later I reflect that the Windows update process frustrates me, it is with a fair view of the update process in general.

Good record keeping is essential, and I have recorded the updates on all 11 machines under my control for some time. Below in Table 2 are the number of updates performed by me during the first three months of 2022, in the two Operating Systems.

Table 2

2022	Linux 20.3	Windows 10
January	8	5
February	12	4
March	13	3
Total	33	12
Average	11	4

Clearly, Linux had almost three times the number of updates as Win10, but that does not tell nearly the whole story. Granted, the next comments are my personal opinion, but it seems to me that Linux has more updates because more new improvements are coming out, when compared with Win10. Win10 seems to me to be instituting more bug corrections than Linux. Don’t forget that Linux has hundreds (if not thousands) of

writers making new changes to the OS all the time, while Microsoft has a limited number of paid staff working on Win10.

There is another difference. Microsoft updates take forever to install, including the necessity for you to wait while it slowly tics off “10% installed ... 20% installed and so on. Often, when it gets to 100% installed, it stays there for several frustrating minutes until it is really done and moves on. On top of that, if a reboot is required, the reboot process is really slow. It will count up in percentage finished until it gets to 30%. Then it will reboot the machine and start counting again from 30% to 100%, typically with another delay at 100%. It is sloooow and frustrating!

Linux, on the other hand, updates in much smaller “chunks”, informing you what is happening at each step, and it goes much faster than a typical Microsoft update. You can even expand a window to show more of the processes that are chugging along during the update, should you wish to see what is going on. If a reboot is required, it happens as quickly as any normal system restart. There is no dragging out of the process, as is the case with Windows, where a post-update reboot may take several more minutes than a regular reboot. In Linux, you are not left with the feeling that the update process is never-ending.

These observations are made from experiences with both desktops and laptops, with fast machines and with slow. Am I biased? You bet, but I think for good reason. Updating of systems, though necessary, interferes with your efficiency. It takes time and therefore reduces your productivity. Updates should be as quick and painless as is possible! Linux beats Windows hands down. Happy Computing!