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The Linux Foundation

The Linux Foundation is a non-profit consortium that are responsible for furthering the growth and use of Linux, a free and open source operating system. Most notable members are NEC, IBM, Hitachi, Hewlett Packard, Intel and Novell. The Linux Foundations ideals include the free use of computers for everyone and to let anyone contribute to the growth of the operating system, letting the community work on the OS along with the big companies. Their most notable rival is Microsoft.

Microsoft claims that since anyone can look at and change the code that makes the operating system work, that hackers will easily take advantage of consumers' computers. Since Microsoft doesn't give out their source code to anyone, it is therefore more secure than Linux distributions. These claims are simply false. Linux has proven itself over and over again that it is far more secure than Windows. Linux requires a password from the user to write to the harddrive and a root password to write to the operating system files, this makes it impossible for a virus to be installed without that password.

The way windows works is that anyone can write to the hard drive. When you access a website, that website can write anywhere on your computer including where all the important files are for the operating system to function properly. This is one of the ways viruses and spyware get on Windows computers. Whenever you run an .exe file in Windows that too has access to your entire machine. This is another to get a virus or spyware. Most servers in the world run Linux. The servers that run websites or help companies connect to each other are mostly run on Linux. The websites that get hacked the most are the ones that are running a windows server. In the server world Linux has been the standard.

That's not to say they are impervious to attack. A server can only be as secure as the password used to protect it. A properly set up Linux server is almost impossible to get into. Microsoft has tried hard to convince companies to get Windows servers, claiming that Linux is not as secure as it actually is. It is clear that this is simply not fact.

Microsoft, in order to further its dominance, claims that Linux does not provide drivers for most hardware in a computer. This used to be true about a decade ago. There was very little hardware that would work properly in Linux. Although there is still some hardware that does not work with Linux, or requires some tweaking to get working, for the most part hardware will work immediately. Since the Linux foundation does not like keeping code closed and having proprietary drivers, some drivers are not available upon first installation of the operating system. These drivers require the user to install these themselves.

This brings me to another point in Microsoft's argument, the ease of use. Linux, about a decade ago, used to be very difficult to use. It required constant tweaking to get things working right and required the user to have knowledge of computers. Over the years, Linux's ease of use has increased greatly. Whether or not Linux is harder to use than Windows is hard to tell. It really depends on what you are used to using. Someone switching from Windows to Linux would find Linux to be hard because they are not immediately used to it. But at the same time a long time Linux user switching to Windows would also find it hard to do anything since they are used to doing things a certain way that is no longer available. So the subject of ease of use is really up for debate. However Microsoft's point is that you need to be a computer geek to use Linux properly and this is simply not true. With the advent of Ubuntu, a Linux distribution that is attempting to usurp Windows, the requirement of being a computer

geek to use properly is no longer valid.

There was a time where Microsoft ignored the use of Linux, thinking they could never be competition, that their market share could never come close to theirs. In the past 3 years alone the market share of Linux users has increased greatly and is still rising. The disaster that was Vista has converted many to Linux and Mac. Mac OSX being like the brother of Linux. Both Linux and Mac OSX have a Unix base and run similarly. Since Microsoft does not have many valid arguments against the Linux Foundation, it would appear that it would only be a matter of time before the fall of Windows.