

Is Gentoo Linux an anachronism?

By *Roy Schestowitz*

Created *30/05/2021 - 2:25am*

Submitted by Roy Schestowitz on Sunday 30th of May 2021 02:25:25 AM Filed under [Gentoo](#) [1]

When I started visiting the Gentoo Linux discussion forums in 2007 there were at least three pages of posts daily, if not more. These days there is usually one page. I'm sure the number of Gentoo Linux users has dropped significantly since then. Interest in the distribution has certainly decreased since its heyday: Google Trends ? gentoo linux.

I don't think the drop in interest is limited to individuals either. Articles such as ?Flying Circus Internet Operations GmbH ? Migrating a Hosting Infrastructure from Gentoo to NixOS? lead me to suspect that some companies have switched to other distributions over the years. NASDAQ's use of ?a modified version of Gentoo Linux? was publicised in 2011 (How Linux Mastered Wall Street) but I do not know if it still uses the distribution and, in any case, that is only a single significant entity. I personally have never come across another user (corporation or individual) of Gentoo Linux, although I do know several companies and individuals using distributions such as Ubuntu and Fedora.

Gentoo Linux is certainly not for everyone. In recent years the user base seems to have settled down to a smaller number of people, primarily consisting of enthusiasts who appreciate its advanced features and are prepared to put in the extra effort and time required to create and maintain a working installation. I'm sure it also still has a place in some specialised commercial applications, but I have my doubts its deployment comes anywhere near that of the major distributions such as Ubuntu, Red Hat, Fedora, etc. If I were only interested in using an OS that enabled me to perform typical personal and professional tasks, I wouldn't be using Gentoo Linux. Some people touted Gentoo Linux's configurability as giving it a speed advantage over binary distributions but, having correctly installed and used Gentoo Linux and various other distributions on the same hardware, I cannot say I noticed an improvement in performance.

[...]

I personally would now only consider installing Gentoo Linux on a machine with at least 16 GB RAM and a CPU with at least four cores and a speed of circa 3 GHz or more. Additionally, although I have been a user of KDE in Gentoo Linux all these years, I would probably switch from KDE to a simpler, less resource-hungry and less feature-rich (some might say less ?bloated?!) desktop environment such as LXQt in new installations of Gentoo Linux.

One thing that has improved a lot since I started using Gentoo Linux over a decade ago is the package manager

Portage, at least in terms of dependency resolution and blockage handling. I used to have to do a lot more work to resolve problems during package upgrades; ?merging world? (upgrading installed packages) is generally a lot less troublesome than it used to be ten years ago. Portage is a lot slower than it used to be, but that?s because it does a lot more than it used to do. I used to have to use revdep-rebuild ? a utility to resolve reverse dependencies and rebuild affected packages ? frequently, but not any more. Building software from source code takes time, though, so plenty of RAM and a fast CPU are important for installing packages, however good the package manager itself.

[2]

[Gentoo](#)

Source URL: <http://www.tuxmachines.org/node/151739>

Links:

[1] <http://www.tuxmachines.org/taxonomy/term/109>

[2] <https://fitzcarraldoblog.wordpress.com/2021/05/29/is-gentoo-linux-an-anachronism/>