Discussion comments

Dictionaries in LibreOffice

One of us did not have the expected dictionary for English UK, so this was fixed at the session.

To determine what dictionaries are accessible to LibreOffice, one easy way is to look at the Writer styles. Start a new text document, and then hit F11, or use Styles → Manage Styles. This will open a pane or window showing all the styles that are available.

The language is part of each character, so ensure you are looking at paragraph styles (the left hand icon along the top should be highlighted). Then go to any style (the Default Style at the top of the list when Hierarchical is chosen) is a good choice. Click on it and then right click and select Modify. Then select the Font tab in the ensuing window.

You should then see a drop down list showing the Language currently in use. Clicking on that to expose the list will show all avail;able languages. Only those with a tick mark in front of them have associated dictionaries installed.

If you are missing one, then how that is corrected depends on the system you are using.

One way would be to see whether a dictionary is available as an extension. Go to Tools → Extension Manager and follow the link at the bottom to Get more extensions online. Then search for what you want. Note that this method will install only in the current user, and not for all users on the system.

For Linux, then you should open the package manager (Synaptic for Ubuntu based systems) and first ensure that the package *hunspell-xx* is installed, where *xx* is the suffix for the language you want. The package *hunspell* is not required for LibreOffice, although for other applications it may well be needed.

If you want the user interface to be changeable to another language, then installing packages named *language-pack-xx* are required, and also the package *libreoffice-l10n-xx*. If you find that you see American spellings in the menu items, then get *libreoffice-l10n-en-gb*.

Logical Volume Manager

There was a question about LVM (Logical Volume Manager), which is a feature that enables a number of physical disks to be considered as though they are one very large disk. This is the sort of thing servers will want to do in order to make use of reliability features such as RAID systems. So far as a simple one-user system, like a desktop or laptop, then it is an extra level of overhead that is totally unnecessary. If you are offered it as an option, decline.

This led on to a discussion about partitions. My thoughts are that is better for simple systems to plan ahead and fix them at the beginning. Modern disks are large enough not to cause difficulties for

normal use. If you have massive amounts of music on a server somewhere, then that is another matter.

Malware protection

We covered Firefox extensions last month, here:
https://www.u3ainbath.org.uk/group_pages/foss/LinkedFiles2019/2019-03-March.pdf

But then talk turned to Android. My opinion is that sooner or later we will have to confront the problem. For the moment though, making sure that any application you select has been downloaded a large number of times will mean that any issues should have been found already before you get to it. And sticking to the official repositories would help too.

The same would be rue of Apple store applications.

We cannot do much about the extraordinary permissions that some applications appear to require, except judge whether us of it is worth the potential leaking of user data it might entail.

Linux Source Repositories

In answer to a question about selecting a repository, the it is worthwhile finding one near you, or at least having fast access to one. Linux Mint can help by checking the speeds on all the mirrors and you can take one as required.

These are all mirrors, and are run by volunteers and organisations, and consequently may be slightly out of date, but never seriously so. In addition, they may very occasionally show a lack of consistency, or shortage of the appropriate signing keys. This will be due to a mirror taking updates out of order, and all you will have to do is wait a couple of hours and try again, when it will have been corrected.

Emblems

We discovered something as well, viz. emblems in the Linux Mint file browser. If you right click on a file or directory, and select Properties, then one of the tabs is Emblems. Selecting one of those will add a small mark to the icon normally shown in the view, so you can mark favourites, or important items, or tag them in other ways.

For the explorers, this link tells you how to add your own emblems to the list:
https://github.com/linuxmint/nemo-extensions/issues/166

New users

It was suggested that you should create another administrator user just in case the existing one fails for some reason. Going to Menu → Administration → Users and Groups will get you to the right place to make a new user. But beware, there seems to be a problem with Mint 18. Mint changed the

login process for 18, and did not complete the feature list. So it seems difficult to force a password to be required after a new user has been created.

I did not notice when I was using it because I used an encrypted home directory, and that need a password before it can access the home directory to start a user.

Upgrading to 19 will fix it, but the upgrade from 18 to 19 looks tricky unless you know what you are doing; https://blog.linuxmint.com/?p=3615

The link inside that page contains the actual instructions to do the job.

Firefox Send

Mozilla have introduced a way of transferring files safely in an encrypted way at this site: https://send.firefox.com/

You can transfer up to 1 GB without announcing who you are. Up to 2.5 GB needs a sign-in. It enables you to select the file, and then you are given the option of changing the number of download and/or the number of days it will be available for recovery.

You can optionally set a password to encrypt it. I successfully did that, and then recovered it again using Chromium. However the password must be transferred in some other way, for example by text message in Signal or Whatsapp which are also encrypted.

You do not need Firefox to be able to use this service.

They claim they cannot read the contents of an encrypted file, although how they do that I am not sure.