Reader Awards 2008

LINUX FORMAT
The #1 source for Linux

You voted for the software, services and support that impressed you the most in 2008 – and the results are in…

When nearly everything is free, it takes more than just a neat idea and a Sourceforge page to get noticed. In fact, it takes a lot of planning, a lot of hard work, some serious code fu and, above all, a commitment to the free software ideals that underpin our movement.

If you ask people to name their favourite internet application, Linux distribution or office suite, you'll get different answers for every person you ask. That's why the *Linux Format* awards aren't decided in a secret conclave by anonymous judges. Instead, we fling open the door to readers and ask you to assemble the shortlist, then to vote on the winners. All we do is count up your votes and announce the winners – these are your awards, your favourites, and your top choices for the best of the best in 2008.
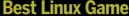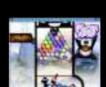
Best desktop application

If there's one award we could have predicted in advance, it would have been this. Whether you're into Facebook or MySpace, Amazon or Borders, HMV or Play, *Firefox* is a portal to the world like no other, and the 3.0 release should allow it to continue its dominance well into 2009.
Runner up Amarok

Best distro

Some might argue that it's little more than marketing that powers the **Ubuntu** hype machine, but it's clear that the blend of Debian-sized packaging, easy integration of features and warm and welcoming colours continues to win a lot of converts.
Runner up OpenSUSE

Best development tool

2008 was the year that Java finally became free, but even with Sun's best intentions, Java-based apps managed only to clinch second and third places: both *Eclipse* and *NetBeans* still fall behind the almighty *GCC*.
Runner up Eclipse

Best hardware support

It's clear that **Intel** deserves this honour: not only does it open source its drivers, it also hires a huge number of people to work on the kernel, *X11* and other projects to ensure maximum compatibility.
Runner up Nvidia

Free software project of the year

A landslide for **KDE**, and rightly so: the team have done an incredible job of getting KDE 4 stable and they deserve the glory. To celebrate, we think we should dedicate our next cover to KDE...
Runner up Compiz

Embedded Linux award

For its continuing excellence in producing the N810 **Nokia** takes the crown, but Trolltech is right behind thanks to its unbeatable work on *Qt*.
Runner up Trolltech

Best server software

If there's one thing that Linux is well known for, it's packagement management. But if there was another thing, it'd be that Linux is a fantastic fire-and-forget server OS that's rock-solid and secure. There can be only one – and that one is *Apache*.
Runner up OpenSSH

Best office software

Even *AbiWord* and *KOffice*'s votes put together add up to only 10% of the votes, which can mean only one thing: *OOo* sweeps the Best Office Software award yet again.
Runner up AbiWord

Best Linux Game

Much as we'd like to report otherwise, it seems that most of you are still playing the crusty old classics – this year's Best Linux Game award goes to *Frozen Bubble*, with *Tux Racer* coming in a close second.
Runner up Tux Racer

Best internet software

Firefox also managed to win over 80% of your votes in the Best Internet Software category, and quite rightly – once you've tried extensions, it's hard to look back...
Joint runners up Konqueror, Thunderbird

Best support resource

This award is usually dominated by Google, but this year there's a bit of an upset for the Do No Evil giant, because the award has been snatched away by the **Ubuntu Forums** for the first time – and with over 6 million posts, it's easy to see why.
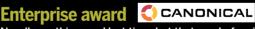**Runner up** Google

Best web host or ISP

The UK Free Software Network has a strong following, but this year has been relegated to second place by internet behemoth **1&1** – proving that it's possible to support a huge range of needs without skimping on support.
Runner up UK Free Software Network

Enterprise award

Novell won this award last time, but that was before it jumped into bed with Microsoft, clearing the field for **Canonical** to complete a glorious hat trick of awards.
Runner up Red Hat
Booby prize Novell

Best geek gadget of the year

We all assumed the iPhone would win this one, but the **Asus Eee PC** got seven times more votes and takes the top spot. Even though Asus is carefully retreating from its big Linux push, the company managed to redefine our expectations of portability and inexpensive hardware. Now if only they could get back to Linux again...
Runner up Apple iPhone