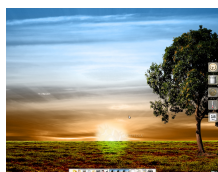


18 March 2009

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OpenGEU 8.10

[First Look: OpenGEU 8.10](#)

Ubuntu and Enlightenment meet again

Another week, another First Look and yet another Enlightenment-using distribution came knocking at our doors. It's OpenGEU this time around and it has reached version 8.10, beautifully codenamed Luna Serena. If my memory is correct, OpenGEU (actually Geubuntu, its ex-name) was my first encounter with the Enlightenment window manager and, though I couldn't get used to it, I was quite impressed overall.

As you probably already realized, OpenGEU is built on top of Ubuntu (not a surprise these days) and though the packages for the 8.10 version were made available about a month ago and users could upgrade their 8.04 install, a complete Live CD was just released a few days ago. A bit late, given the fact that Ubuntu Jaunty is right around the corner, but still a good (and fun) time-waster for users and a "development and testing playground for the upcoming version" for OpenGEU's team. Without further ado here's our test machine configuration:

- AMD K8 nForce 250Gb Motherboard
- AMD Sempron 2800+ Processor
- Nvidia GeForce FX5500 Video Card
- 512 MB RAM
- LG CD-RW/DVD-ROM Drive
- 17" BENQ T720 Monitor

And so started the usual process. Downloaded the 687 MB ISO, quickly burnt it to a CD, booted from it and was greeted with the golden OpenGEU logo and a loading bar that was probably intended to be golden as well but, because of the low resolution, it turned out to look like mustard. And mustard looks good only on a hot-dog. It didn't take long and the desktop appeared with the usual rising Enlightenment sun and the lonely tree relaxing/getting bored on a pretty pasture. I immediately noticed a problem with the golden cursor, which, depending on its location on the desktop, was invaded by some green pixels (zombie-pixels maybe?). I didn't allow myself to be bothered by a minor glitch too much so I went on and clicked on the Install button on the bottom panel (or shelf). A few more clicks and OpenGEU took its place on our hard-drive. A normal 47-second boot time from GRUB to a functional desktop was expected so no surprise there. The developers said that all the latest updates made to the Ubuntu Intrepid would be available in OpenGEU 8.10, and so it was; only fifteen more had to be downloaded and installed. The login screen looks very nice and polished, featuring the same golden sunny appearance. It would have been nice though if it automatically changed its colors depending on which of the two official themes (moonlight and sunshine) you used last.

Besides the aforementioned bottom shelf, the default desktop has another one that sits vertically on the right edge of the screen and consists of five icons: a simple and elegant analog clock, a battery indicator, a CPU frequency module, system temperature and a calendar. Being surrounded by Enlightenment, I expected some eye candy as I hovered my pointer over them, but they didn't seem to care and remained static. Moving on, the menus can be accessed by left or right clicking on the desktop. At first, my eyes took some time to

adjust, as the shadow behind the menu items' text was a bit too obtrusive for me, especially on the Moonlight theme. Speaking of which, the Moonlight wallpaper appeals much more to me with the huge moon surrounded by pretty stars that twinkle from time to time (animated wallpapers rule!). This time, the cursor is blue and doesn't suffer any glitches like the golden one.

After playing around with the themes, I started looking through the installed software and I was happy to see that the developers included more than the usual choices for a Linux distro: the Hydrogen drum machine 0.9.3 and the Jokosher Audio Editor, both very entertaining and more productive than a session of Same Gnome. The flash plugin wasn't available by default but installing it was easy. Also, I had to manually download the graphics card driver in order to enable some pretty fading and transparency effects. Moreover, OpenGEU offers some impressive animated modules like snow, rain, fire or walking penguins. As you can see in the screenshot below, it's quite a sight having all these enabled. Unfortunately, our poor test machine wasn't too excited about them, as they are extremely hungry on resources.

One of the advertised features of OpenGEU is the Defaults Configuration Manager, a tool that, for some reason, didn't seem to work on our machine. It was supposed to either restore the system to its default "factory" state or log you out and present you with a wizard to configure Enlightenment to its finest details. Another nasty bug revealed itself when I tried to access the "Colors" option under "Appearance." And it doesn't just crash the application, it freezes the whole system, pops an error and asks if you want to exit or recover, so either you'll be returned to the login screen or the window manager will reload. Please use the comments section below and tell me if this happens to you too. (Update: this bug occurs in moonOS 2 too - it's an Enlightenment problem).

Overall, the system was very snappy and responsive while running OpenGEU, with the CPU chillin' at around 9% load and only 33% of the RAM occupied. USB devices were, of course, recognized the moment I plugged them in and the Internet connection was auto-configured. Gnumeric and Abiword come in handy if you actually need to do some work (instead of watching those penguins fly around your desktop!), but if they're not enough for you, Synaptic is there to make your wishes come true and install OpenOffice.org.

In the end, OpenGEU 8.10 is a pretty decent distribution, but I think it's safer to wait for the 9.04 version as it's sure to improve on many aspects. The Enlightenment window manager still fails to make a fan out of me, but it definitely deserves its share of appreciation and devoted community.

Having tested three Enlightenment distributions to date ([Elive Compiz](#), [moonOS 2](#) and now openGEU), many of you are probably curious which of them I would choose if I had to. And though it's a tough call, as all three have their flaws and qualities in equal amounts, I think I would stick with moonOS 2 for it is, in my opinion, more stable, more eye-pleasing, and has more useful tools than the rest.

Download OpenGEU 8.10 right now from [Softpedia](#).