

PCPAC History

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Background and History

By 2004 it was evident that the PAC user functions, browsing, office, were far more efficiently supported by Linux than by Windows or Apple. In early 2005 BECTA issued a report documenting workstation TCO savings of about 24% for secondary schools and far more for primary schools.

BECTA indicated that the Linux, savings come from:

- Lower hardware costs for equivalent performance
- No license fees.
- Lower support efforts cost.

Increasingly important nowadays are that Linux solutions may be configured for less power consumption and carbon footprint.

Even before the BECTA report, in late 2004, a donated PC (900 mHz, 256M RAM) had MEPIS Linux installed and was placed in the Wellfleet Public Library for tests. Intentionally, no upgrades were applied. At first weekly, and later less frequently, A-V and Nessus scans were taken to see if intrusion had occurred.

Until May, 2007 when the system software was replaced by PCPAC, there were no indications of problems and the system functioned well enough for library users, considering the elderly hardware, e.g. it was faster than the 2006 upgraded Windows systems for browsing and downloads. Of course it was slower for launching OpenOffice.org, or would have been had any of the Windows systems had OpenOffice.org.

The total cost of ownership was the power used as the installation and configuration of the software was supplied free.

After this success PCPAC was designed with the goal of providing safer, more efficient PACs with near zero installation costs and minimal update costs.