There's always hope...

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Submitted by stmok on Saturday 10th of November 2007 08:08:41 AM Filed under [Linux](#) [1]

Back here...
http://www.tuxmachines.org/node/21635 [2]

...I talked about how the CEO of Mandriva seemed a little unprofessional in his open letter about suspicion that MS paid a Nigerian company (called TSC) in charge of the Classmate PC deployment/training to dump Linux in favour of Linux after the deal.

What I should have also add was that one should be patient and have a little faith in your fellow man. (once in a while, you'd realise not everyone is a corrupted, heartless, a$$hole in it for themselves!)...I guess there is still hope left for humanity.

It took about a week, but the government of Nigeria stepped in: *"We are sticking with that platform," said the official*.

Meaning its not the decision of the supplier, but the govt agency funding the project. (Nigeria's Universal Service Provision Fund). I'm sure Mandriva will be happy. They'll switch IF it proves necessary.

You can see the links to the articles about it here.
http://www.tuxmachines.org/node/21811 [3]
http://www.tuxmachines.org/node/21828 [4]

The gist? TSC is the largest supplier in West Africa. MS pays and discounts TSC to take Windows as preference regardless if alternatives are selected over Windows for Classmate PC deployment. Things like: **US$400,000 for "marketing activities"**.

A flag was raised as to why the heck public money was spent in Classmate PC with Mandriva, AND for buying/installing Windows!

We're not sure how much WinXP license costs in that deal, but the customised Mandriva one with tech support, costs $10 (£4.7) per licence. To give some perspective, in 2005, the average annual salary for a West African country was approx $160 (£91). So US$400,000 is A LOT!

MS is fighting Linux in the developing world. Its about bribing people to attain Windows preference. Who cares if Nigeria is a developing nation. Who cares about the users (kids or poor). Its about making MONEY and ensuring that source of money is forever flowing as people are constantly tied to your products. (Get them while they're young or clueless about alternatives).

That kind of thinking is reinforced by MS's general manager in Africa. Back in 2005: *"It's easy to focus on cost and say how much is a product, but at the end of the day it's the total impact that's important. You can give people free software or computers, but they won't have the expertise to use it," he said. "Microsoft is not a helicopter dropping relief materials; we're there in the field."*

And to back his buddy, the MS dude (Neil Holloway) in charge of Europe branch: *"It's not about the cost of the software, it's about how you take your expertise to people. We are sharing our expertise, particularly with governments in emerging markets. Cost is not the barrier here ? expertise is,"* said Holloway.

Talk about spinning to a ridiculous level!

If it isn't about the cost of software, why don't you give all your products away for free? You can't teach ANY computer skills without the software. And guess what? MS software costs money!

Overall, we're talking more than 100,000 Classmate PCs when the deployment is complete. That's a crap load of licenses!

Of course, time will tell if Nigeria sticks with the customised Mandriva.

[Linux](#)

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Links:
[1] http://www.tuxmachines.org/taxonomy/term/123
[2] http://www.tuxmachines.org/node/21635
[3] http://www.tuxmachines.org/node/21811
[4] http://www.tuxmachines.org/node/21828