

LinuxCertified Laptop ? a review, and a side plug for Linux, and Mint!

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I have spent two days with my new laptop, the LC2210Si from LinuxCertified.

Why did I order this laptop? It is one of many companies, known and less-known, who offer their hardware with Linux installed, instead of a version of Microsoft's Windows. You can read about the beginning of my research and these companies in my previous blog, [?Buying a Linux Laptop ...?](#) [2]

As stated there, the LC2210Si is replacing my Dell XPS 1330, which is following signs of failure. The Dell has a 13.3" screen and weighs 4.5 lbs, and I was seeking something in the same screen size and overall weight. This time around, I was also budget-constrained to a price around \$600US.

I would have gone with a netbook, but I sometimes do some graphical work which requires more horsepower. I was mindful of ports, especially HDMI, and with CD/DVD capabilities, (not ready for the cloud, completely!)

This may seem to have limited my choices, but there were many choices.

The LC2210Si, specs out this way.

Processor Intel Dual Core T4300, 2 GHz, 1MB L2 Cache

Memory 2GB DDR2 800MHz (Upgradeable to 8GB!) Standard Five-Year Memory Warranty!

Hard Drive 250GB SATA II 5400RPM (Upgradeable)

Display 14.1" TFT LCD WXGA Display 1280X800 Pixels Crisp Widescreen

Video/Graphics Intel GM45 Series Optical DVD Writer

Networking Built-in 10/100 Base T

I/O Ports

3 USB 2.0

1 Mic-in jack

1 Headphone jack

1 S/PDIF O/P jack

1 RJ-45 Ethernet plug

1 PCI Express socket

1 External VGA

1 HDMI

1 3 in 1 Card reader

1 DC-in jack

1 Webcam

Battery Smart Li-Ion 6 Cell battery Physical

Dimensions 14.1" (335mm) x 10.2" (255mm) x 1.03"~1.4" (26~35mm sloped)

Weight Approx. 5.3 lbs (2.4 kg)

Pre-loaded with Fedora or Ubuntu Linux. Linux distribution CDs included. Optional Dual-Boot Install with Windows

Warranty One year. Upgradeable

Going from the outside in...



The case is plastic, somewhat boxy on the bottom, yet with rounded, beveled edges on the top. The color is a dark, finely mottled grey. It doesn't glare or show fingerprints. There are no stickers on the case except for LinuxCertified's own on the top and above the keyboard. I would have liked a replacement of the Window's key, ala System76's. The keyboard base is solid, while the screen side does have some flex to it.

Speaking of the keyboard the keys have more travel and more noise than the XPS (reminding me somewhat of the old Northgate keyboards of the late 80's). I am still getting used to it. The key placement looks more like the Lenovo, and is different from the Dell's setup, i.e. the Function key outboard of the Control key.

There are no media buttons, back to using Fn key combos!

The screen is bright, sharp, clear and evenly lighted. It is a gloss screen, but doesn't appear to be too affected by reflected light.

The initial boot surprised me ? the fan was loud, just for a second, at start-up. Gratefully, the fan is very intermittent and scales to the appropriate need, and MUCH quieter in normal use!

LinuxCertified offers variety of distribution installs, with or without Windows. I choose Ubuntu, both to try it out, but also knowing that I would install my own favorite distro, LinuxMint. As ordered, it arrived with Ubuntu 9.10 x64, which I used for about 3 hours. I guess it was alright, but it just doesn't have the whole out-of-the-box feel of Mint. I prefer Gnome, but appreciate more the bottom, single taskbar, like in Mint's offering. So, I installed Mint 8 x64 ? and more ? in the time that Microsoft says one can install Windows 7 (30-40 minutes). In this same amount of time, I installed Mint 8, updated and added other applications I use, and my data! Great job, Linux!

Checking System Monitor during operation, with Compiz activated at advanced setting, and Cairo-Dock replacing my Gnome panel (taskbar), browser (Intellicast weather animation running), music player (I use Exaile) and OpenOffice Writer, I am using ~500megs of the RAM, and 10-30% of the CPU resources.

The sound is adequate, better than the XPS, but it is a laptop! External speakers show that the audio is very good and powerful.

To LinuxCertified.com, itself. I tested LinuxCertified's phone help during ordering, and I got adequate answers to my questions, especially since there was a difference between the specs listed for the LC2210Si's wifi and those on the ordering page. The LC2210Si arrived on the day expected, and I was offered to track the shipping process, which was excellent, even getting two email's from LinuxCertified during the time, too.

Upon opening the package, I was astonished with the dearth of information/manuals. I guess I am used to the overproduction of material from the mainline commercial offerings ? but still ?

There are two buttons above the keyboard that still mystify me. One is a button (with a lit stylized ?S?) that I don't recognize. Another has a USB logo on it, which I am not sure of its purpose.

Maybe another call to [LinuxCertified](http://www.linuxcertified.com) [3] is warranted!

[Reviews](#)

Source URL: <http://www.tuxmachines.org/node/42971>

Links:

[1] <http://www.tuxmachines.org/taxonomy/term/57>

[2] <http://www.tuxmachines.org/node/42647>

[3] http://www.linuxcertified.com/linux_laptops.html