Linux Alternative

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This project was born from the need of a local company that wishes to expand its IT infrastructure, due to growth, but do not have a lot of money to do so. Final year students from Northland Polytechnic have done two projects with this company, and the company is eager to expand on this cooperative effort.

In order to curb costs and provide more stability, companies are investigating Linux as an alternative to Microsoft. The immediate question, of course, is if Linux can provide the same (or better) functionality as Microsoft products, and secondly if Linux is more stable.

The objective of this project is to find the answers to these questions: a) is Linux a viable alternative operating system to Microsoft? b) what business software is available on Linux? In order to find the answers, various distributions of the Linux OS were installed on a number of machines, and the two main Graphical User Interfaces (GUI's), KDE and Gnome, were tested. A number of Linux application software packages were installed and compared with the equivalents in Windows. A final conclusion was reached and some recommendations were made. The main recommendation being that Linux can be used in a number of areas and should be seriously investigated. However, there are a number of business applications still missing from Linux.