Lubuntu 20.04 beta review

Presented to Peterborough Linux User Group (Canada) on March 2, 2020

Lubuntu

- Ubuntu flavour with lightweight LXQt desktop environment (Qt is a set of libraries used most popularly for KDE Plasma)

- LXQt is NOT a rewrite of LXDE in Qt – there are both Qt and GTK components

- LXQt is a merge between LXDE-Qt and and Razor-qt, a project aiming to develop a Qt based desktop environment with similar objectives as the current LXQt (more here: https://github.com/lxqt/lxqt/wiki/History)

- LXQt project formally split from LXDE in 2018

- Uses Openbox as Window Manager and X display server (plans to port Openbox to Mir and change to Wayland as display server)

- Development team does not recommend upgrading from 18.04 or any previous version because of changes in desktop environment

Minimum Requirements

Lubuntu website no longer lists minimum requirements but it ran fine on my laptop with these specs:

- Toshiba Satellite Z830 (laptop)
  - CPU: Dual Core Intel Core i3-2367M 1.4 Ghz
  - 4 GB RAM available
    - 390 MB with nothing running (other than qps), down from 540 MB 6 weelsmine ago
    - 1.2 G used with Firefox (1.9 GB), LibreOffice Writer (0.9 GB), qps, pcmanfm, Trojita and SpiderOak One running, same as before
  - i915 integrated graphics – used 1920x1080 external monitor
  - 128 GB mSATA 300 SSD
    - 52 GB available, 44 GB left

Desktop Environment

LXQt 0.14.1

Qt 5.12.5

ScreenGrab

Qlipper

Programs Installed

Removed programs from 19.10 ~~crossed out~~. If underlined, notable for uniqueness or brokenness

Accessories:

Ark 19.12.1 (KDE Application)

FeatherPad (written in Qt)

Kcalc (KDE app)

PCManFM (specific to LXQt)

Qlipper (specific to LXQt)

QtPass (cross-platform)

TeXInfo (CLI info viewer)

Vim (CLI editor)

Compton (standalone compisitor) – clicking this doesn't seem to do anything

nobleNote (cross-platform)

Education:

LibreOffice Math

Games:

2048

Graphics:

LXImage (Image Viewer)

LibreOffice Draw

ScreenGrab

Scanlite

Internet:

BlueDevil Send File (Bluetooth)

BlueDevil Wizard (Bluetooth)

Firefox Web Browser 72.0.1

Qtransmission 2.94 (torrent client)

Quassel IRC

Trojita (email client - Qt-based)

Office:

LibreOffice 6.3.4.2

LibreOffice Calc

LibreOffice Draw

LibreOffice Impress

LibreOffice Math

LibreOffice Writer

qpdfview

Sound and Video:

K3b (cd writer)

PulseAudio Volume Control

VLC Media Player 3.0.8

System Tools:

Discover (package manager)

Fcitx (input method framework)

Htop (terminal System monitor)

K3b (cd creator)

KDE Partition Manager

Muon Package Manager (like Synaptic)

Qterminal

Qterminal drop down

Startup Disk Creator

~~Timeshift~~

~~VirtualBox~~

qps (graphical process monitor)

Programs I added

Minetime (calendar app)

SpiderOakONE Backup

Firefox was already there but logged in and synced to home computer

Review

- Starting up, asks if you want to adjust power management

- While basic, LXqt is pleasant looking desktop – LXqt is the same desktop as LXDE mostly except for parts re-written using Qt toolset

- Other than heftier apps like LibreOffice and Firefox, most apps load and feel fast and those load fast after first opened in a session

- Links to file manager, Firefox, and minimize all button on bar

- Firefox and VLC Player are good choices for default browser and video players

- Qtransmission – Transmission is an excellent light torrent client with the Qt flavour

- 4 virtual desktop screens available on panel

- Some things are broken – as to be expected in a beta – compton and Fcitx don't seem to do anything

- File manager basic but not as basic Gnome's – everything most users will need is there, common folders and devices on left, search function, different sort methods and views

    - Split view available in Tool menu as is the ability to open a file or folder as root

    - Path menu at top is cool e.g. while in *home/jason* I can click on home or */* button to move around the file tree

    - Adding bookmarks is a bit, you have to select it and then choose Bookmarks menu – you can't just drag and drop, but it gives the impression that you can

    - Advanced users will appreciate that Muon is pre-installed since it's like Synaptic

- The multiple Appearance options in configuration center can be confusing but if you come from the Plasma you'll be used to this but not used to the options being in different settings apps

    - Can choose different window manager looks which affects how the title bars and min/max/close widgets look through Openbox settings

    - Lxqt appearance app has some nice themes it including a Dark one – it just affects look of program menu and bar

    - Would be nice if default buttons were there to return the desktop that state – I changed states and no longer remember the way Lubuntu came on all settings for this presentation

    - You can change wallpapers but when you click on browse, it doesn't take you to the folder with wallpapers – but it is listed so you can note it and go there

        - not many wallpapers are included (maybe a dozen) and most are lubuntu-designed variants with just a few being photos

- Was notified of updates maybe 20 minutes of system start – noticed in previous version and couldn't check this time as was informed of 38 updates on starting discover to install something else

- Installing a deb file using Open in Firefox leads to Discover being opened

- Bottom line: Good distro if you have an old computer and want speed or newer and just want better performance – low memory usage and fast loading of most programs, loads up fast, too (using SSD)