

Alan Cox

1968-Present

Welsh computer programmer and keyfigure in the development of Linux

Alan Cox is a computer scientist and programmer. Born in Solihull, he has made his home in Swansea from where he has profoundly influenced the open source software movement that promotes the sharing and building upon source code.

Linux is a free, open-source operating system, created in 1991 by Linus Torvalds, then a student at Helsinki University. Through the collaborative work of enthusiasts, Linux has evolved with versions running the world's computers and digital infrastructures, from retail stores to nuclear submarines. This dominance was made possible by creating a stable and robust 'enterprise branch' of Linux, whose origin is the '2.2 branch' of 1999. The leading figure in this development was Alan Cox.

Cox studied at Aberystwyth and Swansea, graduating with a BSc in Computer Science from Swansea University in 1991. Cox installed an early Linux version on a university computer – perhaps the first installation on a busy network. The bugs in the code prompted Cox to rewrite the networking software. This led him to become one of the main developers, maintainers and distributors of the Linux kernel, and being regarded as 'second in command' to Torvalds by the Linux community.

Cox was involved in other projects promoting free, open-source software (e.g., GNOME, the desktop environment for Linux). He has continued to work at the technical edge of modern computing systems with Red Hat and Intel.

Full name: Alan Cox
Born: 22 July 1968
Hometown: Solihull, England
Occupation: Computer programmer
Present
Best known for: Key figure in the development of Linux



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