NimbleX 2008 Manual

This manual is a work in progress!

Boot Options

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About NimbleX

NimbleX is a small but versatile operating system which is able to boot in various fashion, like from a small 8 cm CD but also from flash memory (USB pens, Mp3 players, ...), from hard drives and even from the network. Because it runs entirely from a CD, USB or network it doesn't require installation or even a hard drive. NimbleX is based on Slackware with the use of linux-live scripts and is has a lot of this distribution advantages. One of them is the availability of thousands of free software that can be found in the form of packages. The beauty of it is that even if is small it has a beautiful graphical interface and also a lot of built in software for browsing the internet, writing documents, listening to music, playing movies and many more. You even have basic server functionality.

The best thing is to discover NimbleX for yourself!

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Parameters specific to NimbleX

Some of the following boot parameters are very important because they can help you boot NimbleX in various ways, sometimes better than the default boot configuration.

You can benefit from many advantages if you copy the contents of the NimbleX CD on the hard drive. The most important are a much increased speed in boot time and the possibility to keep your changes and configurations.

You have one boot parameter that allows you to specify from where do you want to load nimblex and another that allows you to store changes.

changes=/dev/device ---> allows you to use a partition formatted with a Linux file system (e.g. ext3) to store all the changes you made in NimbleX. This way you can use NimbleX a lot like a conventional Linux that's installed on the HDD. If you don't want to bother creating a Linux partition you can also use a file that can be generated with the wizzard found in "K Menu > System > Save in NimbleX" and use the parameter like this: changes=nimblex.data This parameter is used by default on the CD but I wanted to explain what it does.

changes=/nimblex will save all the changes where you have nimblex, in a directory called changes if your filesystem is writable. This is usually the prefered option because you don't have to do anything, it just needs a decent filesystem.

from=/nimblex ---> Here we assume that all the files from the NimbleX CD where copied in a directory called nimblex that's located in the root on one of your partitions or on a USB memory. It doesn't matter on which partition you stored this directory, it just matters that you specify the correct path. If you store the nimblex directory in another one called useless_stuff :) you just have to specify like this: from=/useless_stuff/nimblex Actually it doesn't really have to be a directory! It can be the .iso file. Let's assume that you stored the .iso file in a directory called Download then you can boot NimbleX faster straight form that file like this: from=/Download/NimbleX-2008.iso

Other interesting parameters are:

autoexec=command1;command2 ---> Skips the login prompt and executes the commands you specify. For some of the commands you also have to use sleep~999999 because in some cases NimbleX will auto shutdown after the commands are executed. sleep delays reboot for a number of seconds. The tilta (~) character is treated like a space here.

toram or copy2ram ---> provides the best speed out there for NimbleX during utilization. It slows booting time because it copies all the files in RAM but it allows you to utilize the optical drive and provides a very good performance in the graphical interface. This one is especially useful when you boot from the CD.

load=module1;module2 ---> allows you to load a modules from the /optional/ directory. If you want to load modules automatically just copy them in the /modules/ directory.

noload=module1;module_x ---> allows you to disable loading of the modules from the /modules/ directory.

passwd=yourpass ---> Changes the default "toor" password to "yourpass". If you use "ask" instead of "yourpass" you'll have to enter the new password during boot.

httpfs=http://10.10.1.1/NimbleX-2008.iso ---> Allows you to boot NimbleX from a http server where the NimbleX iso is stored. Keep in mind that you have to use the IP address of the server (not the DNS name) and before using the parameter make sure you have the correct http address to allow you to reach the ISO from a browser or something.

The NO parameters:

nopcmcia -> disable PCMCIA

noagp -> disable AGP

nodma -> disable DMA for HDDs and CD-ROMs

nohd -> disable automounting of disks

nocd -> disable mounting of CD-ROMs

nosound -> I used this to avoid waking up people in the middle of the night. The sound is just set to 0% so it's not disabled.

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Tips for installing NimbleX

Starting with NimbleX 2008RC, it can be installed very easily on the HDD or on a USB drive using the built-in installer. There is an icon on the KDE Desktop and you can use that to fire the installer.

The installer was designed to be usefull in several cases:

- Install on a portable USB drive. In this case you'll have to select the USB option (I bet you didn't know that) and the prefered bootloader. With Grub your drive will be formatted with 2 partitions(one FAT and one ext3) and with syslinux it will use your current partition but it will write the syslinux bootloader on the MBR.

- Install on a HDD where an operating system is already present. This is actually a very safe method but with in 2008 works only with scenarios where Windows and/or GRUB is present.

If something went wrong and the system doesn't boot anymore, ... USE THIS CD TO FIX THINGS!

You can read more on the forum!

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Kernel Options: vga

This parameter allows you to get more lines of text and more colors in the console.

If your hardware can't use this option you'll not be able to see Tux in the upper left corner.

Possible options are:

vga=791 - VESA framebuffer console @ 1024x768x64k

vga=normal DON'T USE FRAMEBUFFER | Standard console

vga=790 - VESA framebuffer console @ 1024x768x32k

vga=773 - VESA framebuffer console @ 1024x768x256

vga=788 - VESA framebuffer console @ 800x600x64k

vga=787 - VESA framebuffer console @ 800x600x32k

vga=771 - VESA framebuffer console @ 800x600x256

vga=785 - VESA framebuffer console @ 640x480x64k

vga=784 - VESA framebuffer console @ 640x480x32k

vga=769 - VESA framebuffer console @ 640x480x256

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Kernel Options: apm

APM is one of the two power management strategies used on current computers. It is mainly used with laptops for functions like suspend to disk, but it may also be responsible for switching off the computer after power down. APM relies on a correct working BIOS. If the BIOS is broken, APM may have only limited use or even prevent the computer from working. Therefore, it may be switched off with the parameter

apm=off -- switch off APM completely

Some very new computers may benefit more from the newer ACPI.

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Kernel Options: acpi

ACPI (Advanced Configuration and Power Interface) is a standard that defines power and configuration management interfaces between an operating system and the BIOS. By default, acpi is switched on when a BIOS is detected that is newer than from year 2000. There are several commonly used parameters to control the behavior of ACPI:

pci=noacpi -- do not use ACPI to route PCI interrupts

acpi=oldboot -- only the parts of ACPI relevant for booting remain activated

acpi=off -- switch off ACPI completely

acpi=force -- switch on ACPI even if your BIOS is dated before 2000

Especially on new computers, it replaces the old apm system.

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Kernel Options: ide

IDE is, unlike SCSI, commonly used in most desktop workstations. To circumvent some hardware problems that occur with IDE systems, use the kernel parameter:

ide=nodma -- switch off dma for IDE drives

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