This article highlights the pros and cons of both the operating systems, given a set of requirements, it also attempts to show you which OS would be best suited for you.

Let me begin with an introduction of the Linux operating system as I imagine many of you must be pretty new to this. In fact, a common misconception is that Linux is 'ridiculously complicated'. While I admit getting used to Linux may take a while for an average windows user, it is definitely easy to use.
Linux comes in various flavours, also known as 'distributions'. The most popular Linux distribution is 'Ubuntu', pronounced as *'oo-boon-tu'*.

➔ Since the 'look and feel' is a personal choice, I leave it up to you to decide which is better.
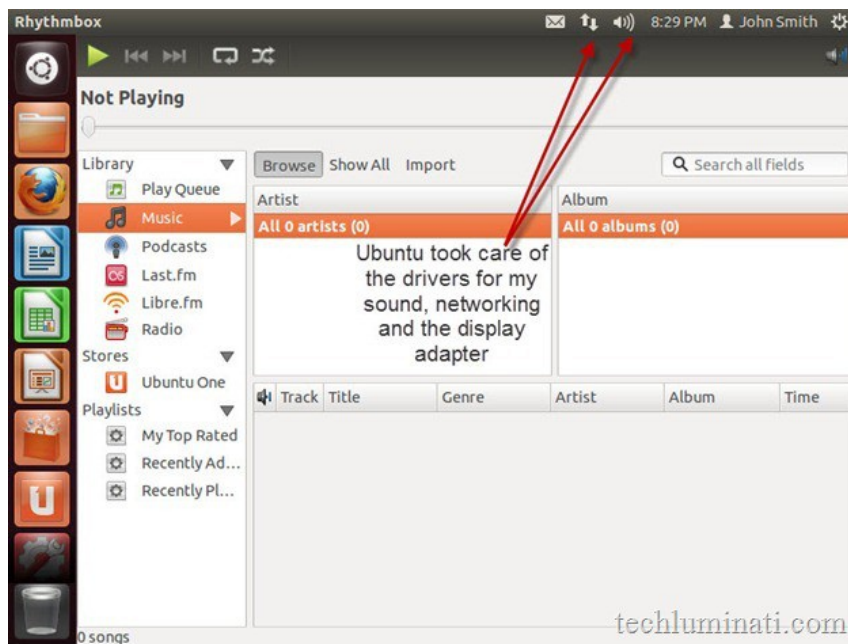
➔ **Bundled software -**

➢ **Proprietary software (Microsoft Windows):** By default has very minimal software set, the basic features that we need – word processor, spread sheet and a presentation software are not present. You'll have to purchase and install the MS Office suite separately, this is something that should be bundled with the operating system. The question I ask is "What good is an operating system, if it doesn't provide the basic features?".

➢ **Ubuntu:** comes with the LibreOffice suite (a Microsoft Office Equivalent) preinstalled. It also has F-spot, an image editing program that and an Instant messaging client called Empathy – that has chat provisioning for Facebook, G-Talk, Yahoo, MSN and VOIP capabilities all under a single applications.

➔ **Drivers** –

➢ **Proprietary software (Microsoft Windows):** One of the biggest advantages of Linux is its built-in driver set, or rather the ability of automatically downloading and installing them. This includes the drivers for your webcam, Wi-Fi, Ethernet Card, even your printer or scanner! We all know drivers is a big pain that comes when completing a fresh install of Windows .

➢ **Ubuntu:** With Linux, there is rarely any need to download the drivers manually. Linux also has the ability to download proprietary drivers (The ones from Nvidia and ATI), unlike windows where we have to manually download and install a driver for everything.
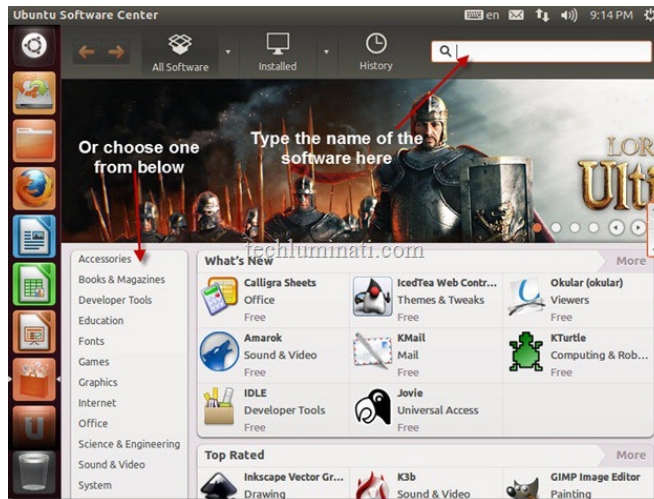
➔ **Media -**

➢ **Proprietary software (Microsoft Windows):** comes with Windows media player, which is pretty much useless without codecs, as majority of the videos/movies that we watch require codecs like Xvid. So there is a need to download a codec pack before Windows media player becomes fully functional.

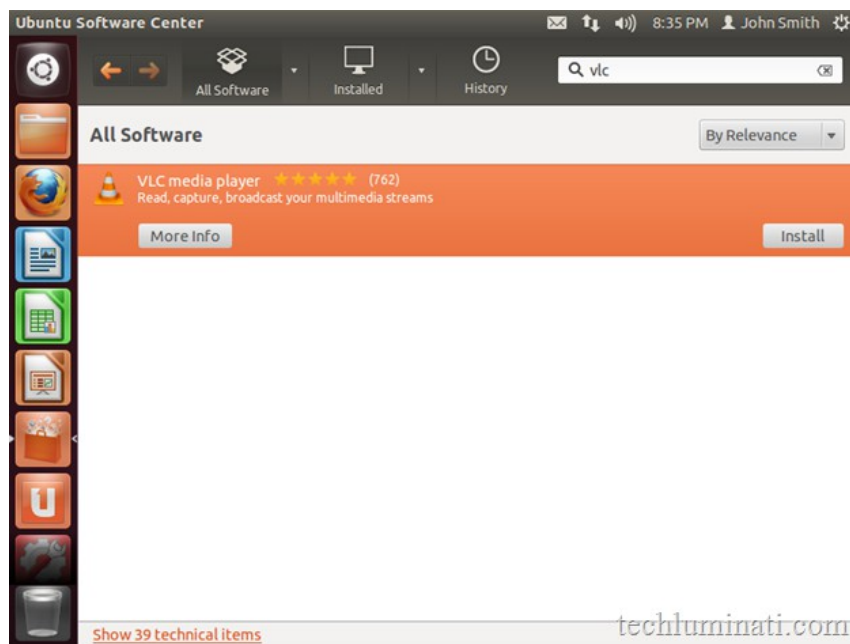➢ **Ubuntu:** is bundled with Movie Player, and also requires downloading codecs.

However, in both the operating systems, it is very easy to watch videos by simply installing VLC media player.

➔ **Installing third party software** –

➢ **Proprietary software (Microsoft Windows):** We need to download from there website or from developer website and install. In most of case we need to pay and buy software.

➢ **Ubuntu:** When it comes to installing third party software, the steps required to install a software in Ubuntu is considerably less. An illustration is shown here of installing software in Ubuntu.

Ubuntu has a utility called Ubuntu software centre. This is one of the most loved features by   Ubuntu users. It is as simple as installing an app in your phone from iTunes store or Android   Market (now rebranded to Google Play). Just select the software that you need, hit install, and the software is ready to use.

It is clear from the screen shots, that installing software in Ubuntu is a lot simpler than it is in windows. Moreover, Ubuntu will check for any dependencies that the software needs and it will be installed automatically.

➔ **Minimum Requirements -**

➢ **Proprietary software (Microsoft Windows):** requires a minimum of 1000 Mhz processor with 2GB of RAM.

➤ **Ubuntu:** requires a minimum of 700 Mhz processor with 1GB RAM. While these are the official requirements, in practice, the requirements are considerably higher. From my experience, If you install both the operating systems on identical hardware, Ubuntu's performance is significantly higher than that of Windows.

In fact, if you were to pull out a 7 year old computer from a junkyard, Ubuntu will work   flawlessly.
Moreover, the boot time of Ubuntu is considerably less than its Windows counterpart.

➔ **Cost -**

➤ **Proprietary software (Microsoft Windows):** ranges from Rs. 5000 to Rs.15000 depending on the version you are buying.

➤ **Ubuntu:** On the other hand, Ubuntu/Kubuntu is free of cost. You can download it from the official website.

➔ **Ease of use -**

➤ This is the part that worries most users who are used to the **Proprietary software** User interface.
In case you are not pleased with the Ubuntu user interface, there is another distribution of Ubuntu called Kubuntu, which has a marvellous user interface,its very easy to use and is similar to the look and feel of Windows 7 in many aspects.