TempleOS

TempleOS (formerly **J Operating System**,[1] **SparrowOS** and **LoseThos**)[2] is a biblical-themed lightweight operating system created by American programmer Terry A. Davis. He developed it alone over the course of a decade after suffering from a series of psychotic episodes that he later described as a revelation from God.

Designed to be the Third Temple prophesied in the Bible, TempleOS uses an interface similar to a mixture of DOS and Turbo C. Davis described the operating system as a modern x86-64 Commodore 64 with a variation of C (named HolyC) in place of BASIC. According to Davis, he was in direct communications with God, and that God said to create the operating system with 640x480 resolution, 16 color display, and a single audio voice.[1] The operating system was released in 2013 and last updated in 2017.

Davis struggled with schizophrenia and periods of homelessness throughout his adult life. Over the years, he posted hours of video blogs to social media, and at the time of his death, had amassed a small online following. One fan described him as a "programming legend", while another, a computer engineer, compared the development of TempleOS to a one-man-built skyscraper.[3] In 2017, TempleOS was shown as a part of an outsider art exhibition in Bourogne, France.[4] Davis died in 2018 at the age of 48.[3]

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Background

Terry A. Davis in 2017

Terrence Andrew Davis was born on December 15, 1969 in West Allis, Wisconsin as the seventh of eight children. later moving to Washington, Michigan, California, and Arizona. His father was an industrial engineer. As a child, Davis owned an Apple II, and subsequently learned assembly language on a Commodore 64. He earned a masters degree in electric engineering from Arizona State University and worked for several years at TicketMaster[1] as a programmer for the company's VAX operating system.[2] In 1996, Davis began experiencing regular manic episodes, leading him to numerous stays at mental hospitals. Initially diagnosed as bipolar, he was later declared schizophrenic and remained unemployed for the rest of his life.[1]

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TempleOS 4.05

Developer	Terry A. Davis
Written in	HolyC
Working state	Discontinued
Source model	Open source (Public Domain)
Initial release	2013
Latest release	5.03 / 20 November 2017
Platforms	x86-64
Kernel type	Monolithic
Official website	www.templeos .org (http://www.te mpleos.org/)

The development of TempleOS began in 2003, after Davis suffered from delusions of space aliens and government agents that left him briefly hospitalized for his mental health issues.[1][5] Davis grew up Catholic and was an atheist before experiencing a self-described "revelation". Afterward, he proclaimed that he was in direct communication with God, that God told him the operating system he built was for God's third temple, and that TempleOS is of "divine intellect" due to the inspired nature of the code. He acknowledged, "It looks a lot like mental illness, as opposed to some glorious revelation from God. ... I felt guilty for being such a technology-advocate atheist ... It would sound polite if you said I scared myself thinking about quantum computers."[1]

Once TempleOS was completed, most of Davis' time was spent "coding, web surfing, or using the output from the National Institute of Standards and Technology randomness beacon to talk to God".[1] He posted hours of video blogs to social media, and at the time of his death, had amassed a small online following. On the evening of August 11, 2018, while walking alongside railroad tracks in The Dalles, Oregon, Davis was struck from the back and killed by a Union Pacific train. Investigators could not determine if his death was suicide or accidental.[3]

System overview

TempleOS is an x86-64 bit, non-preemptive multi-tasking,[6] multi-cored, public domain, open source, ring-0-only, single address space, non-networked, PC operating system for recreational programming.[7] The OS runs 8-bit ASCII with graphics in source code and has a 2D and 3D graphics library, which run at 640x480 VGA with 16 colors.[2] Like most modern operating systems, it has keyboard and mouse support. It supports ISO 9660, FAT32 and RedSea file systems (the latter created by Davis) with support for file compression.[8] According to Davis, many of these specifications—such as the 640x480 resolution, 16 color display, and single audio voice—were instructed to him by God.[1]

The operating system was written in a programming language developed by Davis in C and C++, called "HolyC".[2] HolyC is a variation of C, developed by Davis as the programming language of TempleOS. It is used to interact with the shell, and to write and execute entire applications from the shell. The IDE that comes with TempleOS supports several features, such as embedding images in code. It uses a non-standard text format (known as DolDoc) which has support for hypertext links, images and 3D meshes to be embedded into what are otherwise regular ASCII files. A file can have, for example, a spinning 3D model of a tank as a comment in source code. Code can be compiled JIT.[9]

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External links

- Archive of the TempleOS website and operating system (https://archive.org/details/TempleOS_Website_Archive)
- "Terry Davis: Rises to Throne" (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oH41gGBVpkE) on YouTube