**The Cloud in a USB Stick**

Written by Marco Attard
29 September 2011

Can a cloud fit inside a USB stick? Piston Cloud Computing says it can, fitting a version of open source cloud OS OpenStack inside a "cloud key."



The OpenStack version-- pentOS (Piston Enterprise OS)-- is an enterprise cloud OS focusing on security and easy private cloud operation, using Piston's Null-Tierarchitecture.

Piston says pentOS installs in minutes, and the Null-Tier architecture allows simple private cloud scaling "one server at a time."

IT managers install a new pentOS cloud by first plugging the key into a PC to set cloud parameters, before plugging the key into a data centre network switch on a server rack.

According to Piston, pentOS will load and configure the private cloud automatically-- delivering what the company says is "99.99% automated and hands-free installation ... to servers and switches."

The OS itself is open standards-based and vendor agnostic, and is interoperable with other OpenStack-based public cloud environments (including Rackspace, Dell, Amazon and Internap).

Piston will provide a free pentOS preview version on October 3rd, while pentOS will be

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