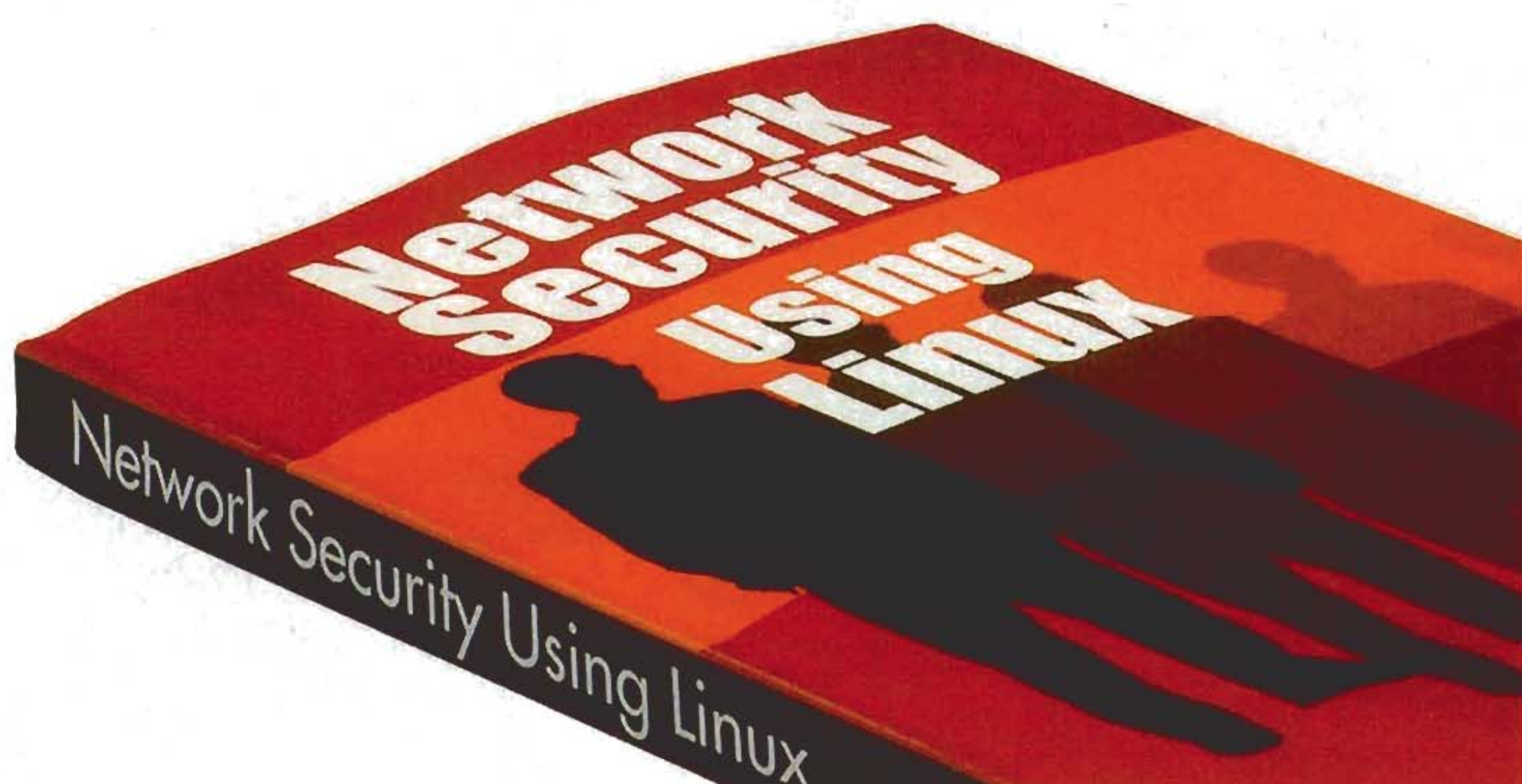


# Network Security Using Linux

**Paul Hudson** reads a self-published work that thumbs its nose at the establishment and comes out on top.



## BUYER INFO

- **AUTHOR** Michael Sweeney
- **PUBLISHER** Packet Press
- **ISBN** 1-4116-2177-8
- **PRICE** \$21.95
- **PAGES** 230

**Many people avoid self-published** books. Years of jokes about 'vanity publishing' have taken their toll: people believe that a book turned down by the big houses can't possibly be any good. This is a shame: independently published books fill the same niche as independently published music, because most large publishing companies depend on huge sales volumes and would actually lose money on books that sell comparatively few copies, no matter how good they are. So don't be alarmed that Packet Press, the low-key publisher of *Network Security Using Linux*, was set up by one of its authors when a relationship with one of those large companies soured.

The book is pitched as a guide for intermediate administrators aiming to learn more about network security. But there is a lot of purely geek-oriented technical content here that will interest a wider audience. For example, the book goes into depth on CIDR subnetting so that all readers are at the same basic level of networking before going further. Some parts are perhaps a little *too* off-topic – we're not sure why the OSI 7-layer networking model kicks off the book, nor why there are usage instructions for APT, RPM and Yum. These parts read more like a generic instruction

manual – this isn't necessarily a bad thing, but will probably surprise people who read the book looking for a firm focus on security.

Fortunately, a large part of the book does stick to the topic, and does well at it. Lots of books focus on *Snort* or on VPNs; this one takes both on, without losing much quality. Of course, if you're looking to do some very particular tricks with *Snort*, you'll need to reach for a specialist book, but as a general introduction to a variety of security topic, this is an easy read.

There are some editing problems in here that will irk people, but the unique thing about this book is that you can – if you wish – purchase it as a PDF, rather than a dead tree. With the PDF version you get thumbnail images, hyperlinks, and bookmarks, as well as corrections to the text. It's uncertain yet whether the author will allow people to 'upgrade' their PDF book as fixes are made, but if so that would provide a truly compelling reason to buy both the printed copy (for ease of reading) and the online copy (for ease of reference, and 'patches'). As it stands, the low price of this book makes it hard not to recommend – the author is clearly passionate about the topic, and wants to share that with the world. **LXF**

## LINUX FORMAT VERDICT

Well written and informed, with timely information on a wide variety of topics.

**RATING**

**8/10**

