

# GNOME news and programs

# GNOMO-GRAM

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**GNOME and GTK as the basic programs of GNOME have been attracting more and more followers in recent years. There are now programs for almost every task and new ones are being added daily. In the Gnomogram column, we present the pearls each month among GNOME tools and report on the latest rumours and information about GNOME.**

## GNOME Foundation elections over

Unlike the US elections, the election of the eleven directors of the GNOME Foundation Board went off without a hitch and with no great surprises. Naturally Miguel de Icaza and Federico Mena Quintero, the founders of GNOME, are still members of the board as are Havoc Pennington and Owen Taylor, who are working on many fundamentals such as Gconf and GTK. Also, Bart Decrem, who made a crucial contribution to the creation of the GNOME Foundation, Maciej Stachowiak, an important Nautilus hacker, Dan Mueth, co-ordinator of the GNOME documentation and John Heard, responsible for the collaboration between Sun and GNOME, were elected. Experience with organisations like the GNOME Foundation is also being contributed by Jim Gettys and Daniel Veillard. The only German candidate, Martin Baulig, was unfortunately short of a few votes, which means the Board is still a tad short on Europeans. But overall some very highly qualified directors were elected and it is to be hoped that any problems which the future may bring can be dealt with the GNOME Foundation Board.



helix-setup-tools 0.2.1,  
gsmssend 1.0, smssend 2.0  
*LinuxMagazine/gnomogram/*

## Kylix for GNOME

According to zdnet, Borland is going to disclose the sources of its Delphi (and later C++) development environment Kylix, at least to the GNOME Foundation, and expand Kylix by adding GNOME support. Borland is also going to join the GNOME Advisory Board and

collaborate on Bonobo; Kylix, too, is to support Bonobo in the long term. Whether Kylix will become open source or free software has not yet been settled – but it is not expected that the complete development environment, just CLX (the Library on which programs developed with Kylix are based) will get a free licence. But it remains to be seen when Borland will actually take steps to realise any of this; at the time of going to press there was no official comment.

## Mandrake joins GNOME Advisory Board

Apart from Borland, MandrakeSoft has also joined the GNOME Advisory Board and will take part in the development of GNOME Office and/or provide this with financial support, as announced on [linux-mandrake.com](http://linux-mandrake.com).

## Helix setup tools

With Helix Setup Tools, Ximian, formerly known as Helix Code, is now also making an effort to simplify the configuration of Linux and other Unix variants. Despite the low version number the tools are already very stable. Nevertheless a certain amount of care is still needed when tinkering with the innards of the system. As to be expected with Helix Code, all the tools consist of a single back-end written in Perl and a graphical front-end. Care has been taken here to ensure the back-ends can detect existing configurations and do not simply over-write them. Front and back-end communicate via XML, which makes it possible simply to save an existing

configuration in a file and load it again as necessary. Although this feature cannot yet be used via a graphical interface, it is possible, with the command

```
programmname-conf -g > now.xml
```

to save the current configuration or to load it with

```
cat now.xml | programmname-conf -s
```

The respective back-ends can be found in */usr/share/helix-setup-tools/scripts/*, if the tools have been compiled as recommended using the options

```
./configure --prefix=/usr --sysconfdir=/etc
```

All components of the set-up tool will be included in the next version of the control centre, though at present one still has to start each tool individually, which means of course you also need *root* privileges to make any modifications.

Even if it is already possible to do some configuration with the tools, later on sound, printer, hardware configuration and other components will be added. With *disks-admin* you can now get an overview of all hard disks and partitions in the system and can alter settings such as Mountpoint and Filesystem. *shares-admin* configures all filesystems imported via SMB or NFS or even exports to other systems. The swap memory in use can also be configured with *memory-admin* and with *networking-admin* the basic network settings can be made. Everything to do with DNS, and thus name resolution, can be found in *nameresolution-admin*. *Time-admin* not only sets the time, but also configures time synchronisation with other servers via NTP. And with the aid of *users-admin* there is no longer any need to make */etc/passwd* or */etc/group* by hand, to administer groups and users in the system.

## Gsmssend

SMS mania goes on, even with GNOME - with *Gsmssend* you can even send SMS messages without a mobile. To do this, *Gsmssend* falls back on *smssend*, which in turn makes use of free SMS offers on the Web. *Smssend* has its own script language, which defines to which sites the SMS is sent, and saves the user logging on. Even if the provider expects you to look at certain sites before sending an SMS, *Smssend* can just pull the wool over their eyes by using a false referrer. For each script *Gsmssend* has a view in which one can enter the necessary options and the actual SMS, always displaying how many characters are still available to you. This can vary from provider to provider, as advertising messages of different lengths are attached to the text you send. Since the providers' sites change from time to time, under *Settings/Check for Updates* you have the option of checking whether more recent versions exist. Unfortunately *Gsmssend* in the current version does not yet pass on the information issued by *smssend* to the user, so you have to start it in an *xterm* in order to make sure no errors occurred when it was sent.

## Icons on the GNOME desktop

Anyone with icons on his desktop, is certainly aware of the problem that the background and text colours set by the GTK theme clash with the background. But fortunately, the colourful boxes around the icons or the text can be switched off in the menu *Desktop Properties/Desktop*, which opens by means of a right click on the desktop. Nevertheless it may be that a few icons are displayed surrounded by a coloured edging or that the text does not match in terms of colour even without a box. To change the colours, the file *~/.gtk.mine* has to be edited, which is loaded from *~/.gtkrc* with the line

```
include "/home/user/.gtkrc.mine"
```

As can be seen in Listing 1, the colours of the foreground and background are set in selected and in normal condition. The three figure values correspond to the RGB value of the respective colour, where you can specify values of between 0.0 and 1.0. (hge) ■

### Listing 1: .gtkrc.mine

```
style "my-desktop-icon" {
fg[NORMAL] = { 0.8, 0.8, 0.8 }
bg[NORMAL] = { 0.0, 0.7, 0.0 }
fg[SELECTED] = { 0.0, 0.0, 0.8 }
bg[SELECTED] = { 0.0, 0.8, 0.1 }
}
widget_class "*DesktopIcon*" style "my-deskU
top-icon"
```

### URLs

[www.zdnet.com/eweek/stories/general/0,11011,2652581,00.html](http://www.zdnet.com/eweek/stories/general/0,11011,2652581,00.html)  
[www.linux-mandrake.com/en/pr-fgnome.php3](http://www.linux-mandrake.com/en/pr-fgnome.php3)  
[www.ximian.com/desktop/setuptools.php3](http://www.ximian.com/desktop/setuptools.php3)  
[zekiller.skytech.org/smssend\\_en.html](http://zekiller.skytech.org/smssend_en.html)

### The author

*Björn Ganslandt is a student and passionate bandwidth squanderer. When he is not busy testing new programs, he reads books or plays the saxophone.*

[top]

Fig. 2: SMS without a mobile

[above]

Fig. 1: Disk-admin in action

