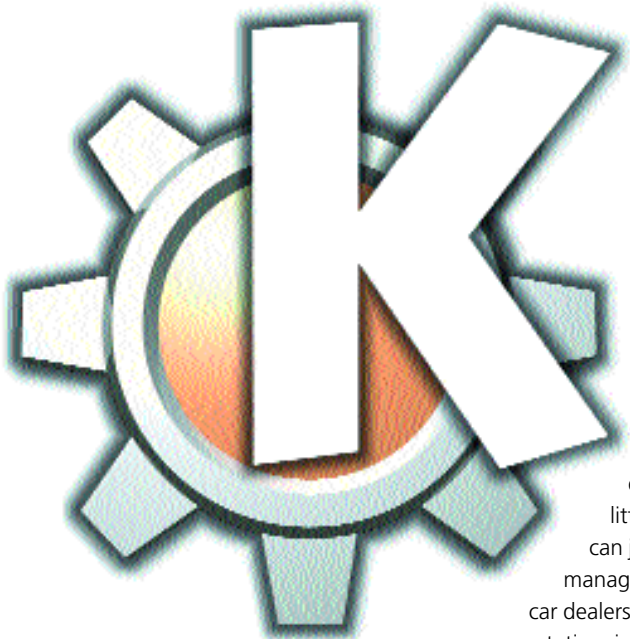


Koffice Workshop: Part 5

PRACTICAL EXERCISES WITH K

TIM SCHÜRMAN



This, the final part of our KOffice Workshop, is about the components which have made the largest advance in terms of range of functions.

As usual, in this last part, all the functions of KPresenter will be explained with the aid of a little example with which you can join in. Noah Deer, managing director of a reputable car dealership, in the frame of a small presentation, is going to cover what the presentation is about and then introduce the firm to the audience – a group of investors.

Let's get one thing out of the way right from the start. At the moment, KPresenter cannot match the range of functions offered by StarOffice Impress. Nevertheless it is possible to conjure up some pretty respectable presentations with the KOffice components. At this point express reference must once again be made to the fact that all applications of the KOffice package, including KPresenter, are still in development. So you should not entrust important data to any of these programs, and back up the documents you create often during your work.

Thinking things through

But before we really get going, as is always the custom with presentations, the running order comes first. If you want to produce your own presentations,

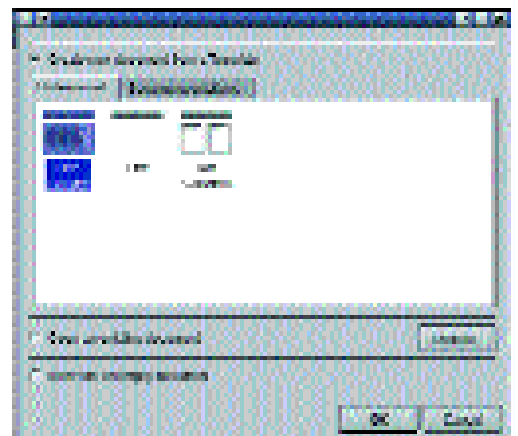


Figure 1: The professional templates provided by KPresenter

you should always give some thought to structure and content. Thorough planning can eliminate the need for later corrections.

In Noah Deer's case the presentation is to start off with a cover sheet, which includes the topic of the presentation. Then follows a slide on which the firm is introduced (by means of bullet points).

In order to be able to take part in the Workshop, you should now start KPresenter either via the KOffice desktop (see Part 1 of our Workshop in issue 8) or via the KDE-2 start menu under *Office programs/KPresenter*.

Once KPresenter has been loaded, you have the option of creating a new, blank presentation, opening an existing one or generating a new presentation from a template. If you decide on a template, after a click on *OK* the first slide will be created according to the content. Some of the templates contain coloured backgrounds, while the professional templates limit themselves to text boxes. For Noah Deer's example, select the *professional* template *1-column* and click *OK*.

Buenos Dias

KPresenter works – as do most presentation programs – with dias or transparent sheets, but refers to these as slides. These names stem from the days when presentations were still cast on transparent slides for a daylight projector or via a slide projector onto a screen. This procedure can still be found in the presentation programs of today. The user can make several slides, on which words, images or graphics can be arranged, as on an ordinary slide. These slides can then be output via a suitable printer onto transparent overhead slides or presented directly via the program.

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In addition to this, the computer-supported presentation offers extra options which ordinary slides do not. First you can cast your presentation directly from the computer onto a screen provided an appropriate projector is available. But that's not all: Using the option of adding animations and sounds within and between the individual slides, this type of presentation turns a boring lecture into a multimedia event.

As already mentioned, KPresenter refers to transparent sheets as slides; we will also be using this term here. In our example the first page should now be exactly the same size as the screen, which you can check and if necessary correct under *Extra/Page layout*. If all you want to do with KPresenter is prepare a slide show, it will make sense if you insert the dimensions of the slide to be used later. As a rule this corresponds to the A4 format (29,7 cm x 21 cm). But if on the other hand your presentation is to be a projector presentation direct from the computer, then leave the *page size* at the default setting *Screen*. Changing between the different page sizes later is possible at any time, but in most cases it also leads to tiresome repairs to the already existing pages.

Work area

In the main window of KPresenter you will find several toolbars around the white working area. On the top edge, in addition to the painting and drawing tools, there are also arrow symbols, with which you can scroll back and forth between the various slides. The clipboard editing functions have been shunted off, somewhat unusually, above the colour palette, on the right edge. The picture is

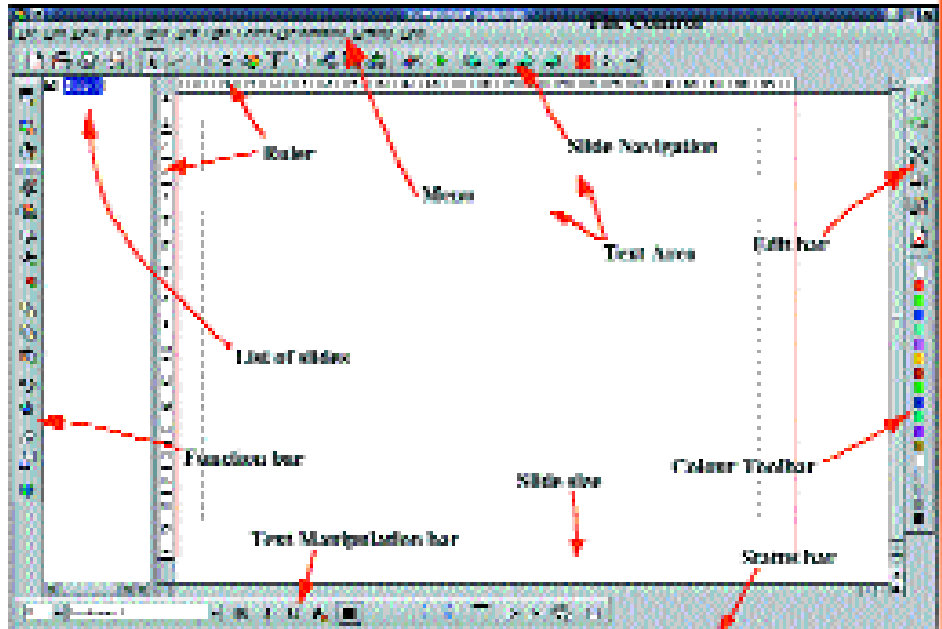


Figure 2: The KPresenter window after opening the template

rounded off by the easy-to-view toolbar on the bottom edge of the screen, which accommodates the text formatting functions, and the bar with the tools on the left side.

The white working area, which takes up the majority of the KPresenter window, is again split into two. While in the middle (within the red border) there is always a display of the page on which you are currently working, on the left-hand side there is a list of all the pages in your project. The little box with a tick indicates that this page will also be used later in the presentation. If you do not wish to present a page listed there later, all you need to do is deselect the relevant box here. This way you can easily manage two different target groups in a single project. Depending on the group for which you are holding your presentation, simply select or deselect the correct pages prior to the presentation. And you can also add to annotation pages, which serve only for your own notes.

Background

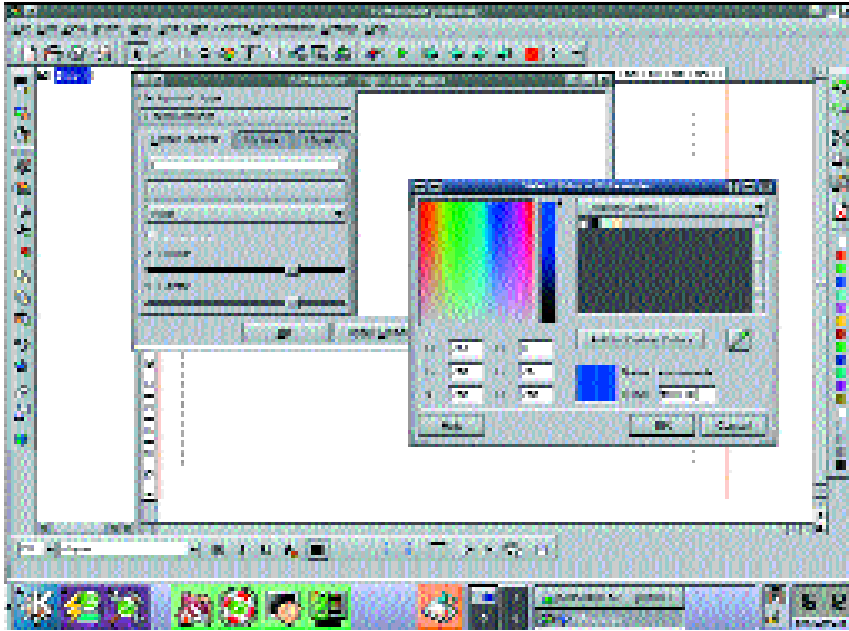
But now back to Noah Deer's example. On each page a blue colour scheme and the logo of Mr. Deer's firm will be displayed. On the lower edge of every page the name of the holding company and the date of the presentation will be shown.

To create a coloured background, select *Extra/Page background*. For the colour scheme, on the first tab, click on the top coloured line in the left upper half of the window. From the colour palette that appears, use the sliders in the left upper half of the window to select a blue tone.

Take care to ensure that in the longish, smaller of the two colour palettes the black triangle does not remain in the lowest position. This represents the colour black there – your other settings in this window will be ignored. In the box above the *OK* button, the colour you have just selected will be

Workshop summary

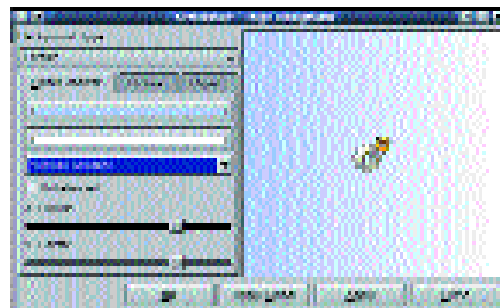
1. Word processing with *KWord* (1): A business letter
2. Word processing with *KWord* (2): A newspaper
3. Tables and diagrams with *KSpread* and *KChart*
4. Graphics and images with *KIllustrator*
5. Presentations with **KPresenter**



[top]
Figure 3: The background takes on some colour

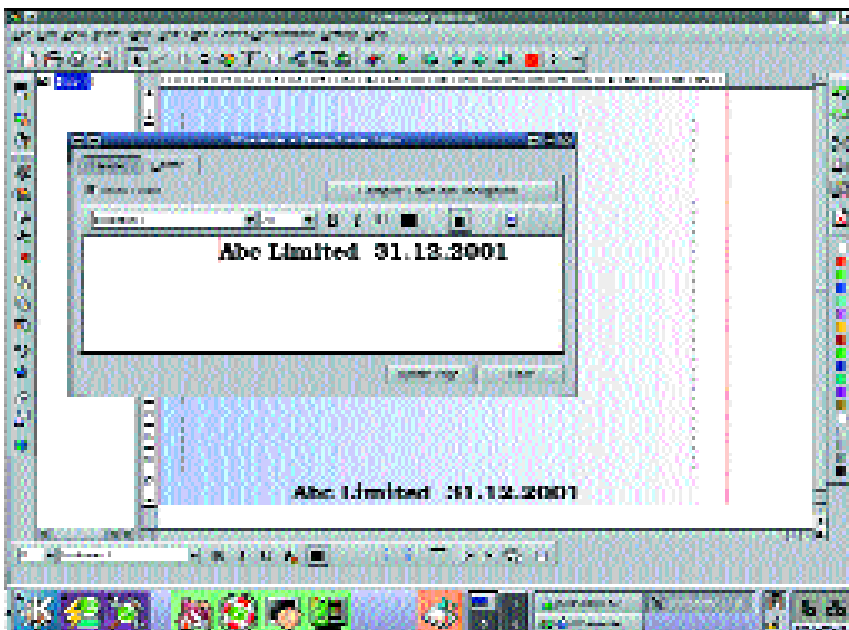
displayed. As soon as you have found the right colour, click *OK*. Now select *Vertical gradient* from the *Plain* list. This will create a vertical run pattern starting with blue. Now click on the *Unbalanced* box and use the two slide controls to set a soft, fairly discreet run. You should also take note of the preview in the right side of the window.

To insert Noah Deer's logo, change to the



[right]
Figure 4: The completed background in the preview

[below]
Figure 5: A footer is quickly created



second tab sheet. First, make sure that in the top list there *centered* is selected. Then click on *Choose Picture* and in the window which opens, insert an appropriate image of the firm on your hard drive. After a click on *OK* it should be displayed in the centre of the page.

To finish, click *Apply*, so that the background thus created is also assigned to the current page in the main window. If, later, you have several pages in your project, you can assign this new background to all the pages there using *Apply globally*. Now close the window by using the button of the same name.

To complete the background, you should also create a footer including the name of the presenter and the date. To do this, select *Edit/Header/Footer*. In the *Footer* tab, in the big input box, enter the text "Abc Limited". Press the tabulator key twice and enter the date of the fictional presentation.

Now make sure that the box *Show footer* is selected, since otherwise the changes you have made will not be visible on the slide. Then click on the symbol for centring and assign all the entries you have made here via *Page update*. After closing the window KPresenter should now return to the first page in the main window.

Foreground

Now your presentation is ready to be filled with life. Double-click with the mouse on the upper frame on the page and enter "Trusted Used Car Sales" for the first page. If the text appears too large or too small, you can reduce or enlarge it using the symbols from the bar on the lower edge of the screen. With the centring symbol (also found there), you should centre the text. All the commands in this toolbar can also be found in the menu under *Text*.

When applying text formatting you should always remember that the text or area to be altered must be selected first. To do this, you can either use the mouse, or hold down the Shift key and then select text using the arrow keys.

Now go to the lower, larger text box, enter "Business Proposal 2002". Unfortunately the preset layout in this text box does not have the ideal structure for a front page. For this reason, the layout of this one page should be amended manually. To do this, click the mouse on a blank area outside the page. Now select the lower, large text box by clicking with the mouse on its edge. The box should display two small black boxes on its sides. All functions which you carry out henceforth are applied to all the text within the selected frame.

As you can see, the text in this lower box is split into a format set by default by KPresenter. To switch off this automatic formatting, select from the menu the item *Text/Type/Normal Text*. This will make the bullet point before the text disappear. Now centre the text, by clicking on the corresponding symbol from the lower toolbar with the text formatting functions. Since the frame is still much too big for

the text, in the next step, this will be reduced. There are two ways of doing this:

- Firstly, you can move the mouse onto one of the small black dots, hold down the mouse button and then bring the frame to the right size by moving the mouse accordingly.
- A somewhat faster variant leads via *Text/Extend object to fit the contents*: This automatically adapts the size of the frame to the size of the text.

In the last step, you should move the frame into the centre of the page. To do this, move with the mouse pointer over the frame, until it turns into a cross. Now hold down the left mouse button and place the frame roughly in the middle of the page. As you will discover when you do this, the frame snaps into certain intervals. The grid is responsible for this behaviour, and you can adjust its step size under *Extra/Options*; it makes it easier to arrange several elements in parallel.

That's our front page completed. Next, the slide with the general information on the company is to be produced. To make the second page, you again have two options:

Either create a completely new page using the menu item *Insert/Page*, or simply copy the current page, using *Edit/Duplicate page*.

We are selecting the second variant, since this is the only way the painstakingly created background will also be transferred onto the second slide.

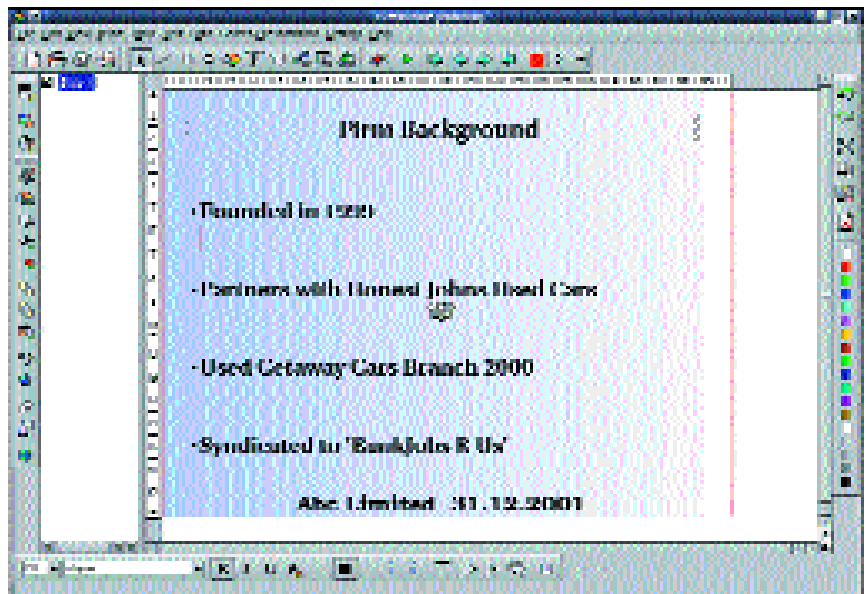
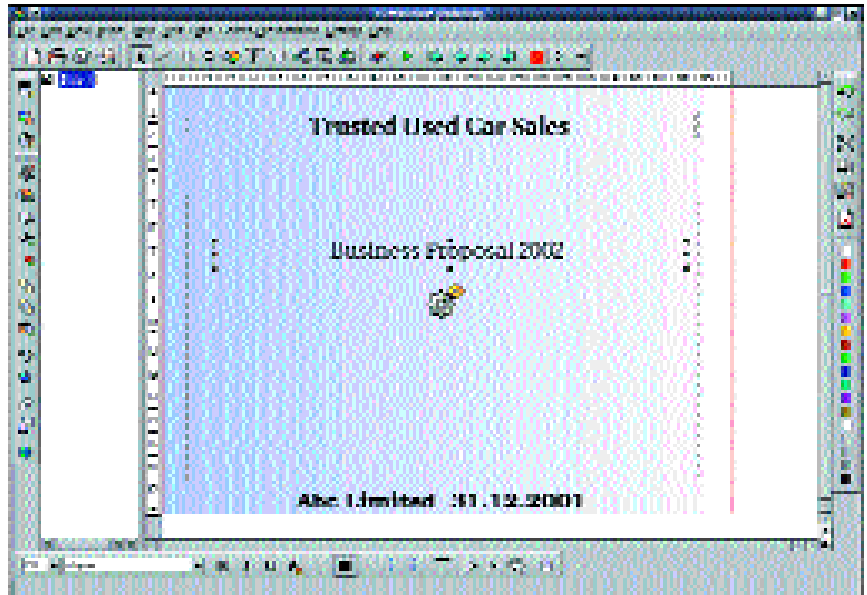
After the copying procedure, KPresenter should automatically display the newly-created page in the working area. You can always tell from the marking in the left-hand list which page you are currently editing. With the light blue arrows on the top edge of the screen, you can scroll back and forth between the existing pages.

Fine-boned

In the upper text box with the heading enter the text "Firm Background" and then enlarge the lower text box until the frame displays roughly its original size, before it was reduced. Then align the text included in it on the left. The company history of Noah Deer's employer should now be listed in the form of a bulleted list. To do this, first change the type of the text box to *Unsorted list* by selecting from the menu the item *Text/Type/Unsorted List*. All the indents are now preceded by a bullet point when they are entered, in the form of a black spot. To create a new bullet point, when entering the text, simply press the enter key within the frame. If you don't like the round bullet points used by default, you can change these to anything you like under *Text/Settings*.

Now enter a few points for Noah Deer's example, as shown in Figure 7.

To make any point appear indented, mark these and select from the menu *Text/Increase depth*. You can also decrease the indent of any lines, by calling



up *Text/Decrease depth*. In this connection it should also be stressed that KPresenter is still at the development stage. As proof of this, unfortunately we still had a few problems in connection with bulleted lists. If KPresenter does not want to make the bulleted list as you have originally set it, you should completely delete the affected text frame (mark, then select *Edit/Delete*) and make a completely new frame. To do this, click in the upper toolbar, under the menu bar on the symbol with the big slanted *T*. The mouse pointer then turns into a small cross. Now move to the point at which the left upper corner of the text box is to be created, hold down the left mouse button and drag the new text frame up. In this way, you can add as many text frames to your page as you like.

Noah Deer would like to make use of computer-supported presentation during his talk and have each item of the bulleted list just created "move in" from the left at the press of a button. To do this, first select the text frame with the bulleted list and then select

[top]
Figure 6: The completed front page of our presentation

[above]
Figure 7: A bulleted list explains the company history

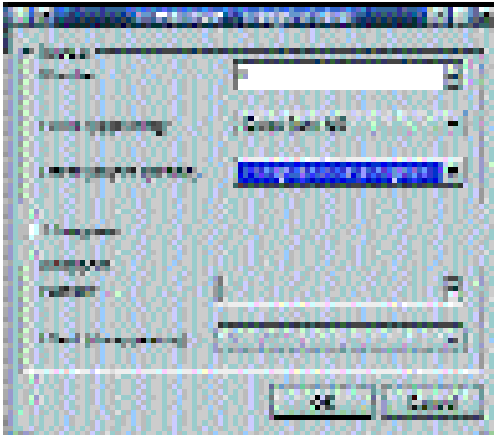


Figure 8: An effect is assigned to the bulleted list points in the second slide

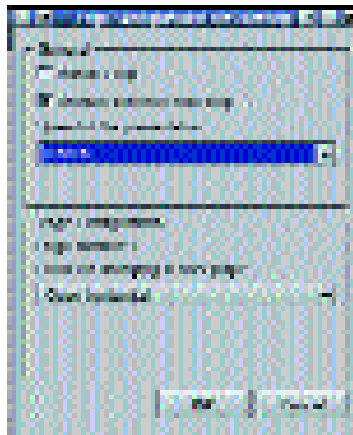


Figure 9: Using these settings, slide three is faded in with *Open horizontally*

click on any blank space on your page.

Lights out

Before the presentation is started for a test run, you can assign more cross-fades to the individual pages. These cross fades specify the way in which the next page is to be faded in during the presentation. For each such procedure, change to the previous page. In Noah Deer's example page 3 is to be opened horizontally. Therefore, you should change to page 2 and call up *Screen-presentations/Configure Page*. In the window which opens, select *Open horizontal* and click on *OK*.

Now you can start the finished presentation via *Screen-presentation/Start* or with a click on the big green button in the toolbar. During the presentation you get to the next respective page by pressing the [->] key. [Esc] ends the entire presentation and returns you to KPresenter.

We shall also end our five-part Workshop on KOffice with Noah Deer's presentation. It was the aim of this Workshop to acquaint you with the individual components of the package and to show what a free office package can do. As we hope you have realised, despite a few errors, even at this development stage a few tasks can be performed well with a bit of practice. We are eagerly waiting to see how KOffice will develop in the future. ■

KPresenter: (almost) a little painting program

To brighten up your presentations a bit, KPresenter offers a few paint functions. These essentially correspond to those from KIllustrator (see *Workshop Part 4 in Linux Magazine Issue 11*) and are also used in the same way. As you will soon see when you work with it, KPresenter can hold its own alongside KIllustrator in terms of drawing functions.

Unfortunately KPresenter spreads its drawing functions over several toolbars. To draw geometric objects such as triangles or circles, use the symbols from the top toolbar, on the right next to the mouse pointer symbol. Alternatively, the associated functions can also be selected via the menu under the item *Tools*.

In the toolbar on the left edge, KPresenter stores the more complex manipulation functions. With the symbols housed there, an object can be rotated, moved up or down one hierarchy level, and you can combine several objects into a group.

Screen-presentations/Assign effects. Then, in *Appear* set as "Effect (appearing)" "Come from the left" and as "Effect (object-specific)" "Paragraph after paragraph". To assign this effect to the object, click on *OK*.

Downward trend of a company

All Noah Deer's presentation needs now is a third slide with the profit and loss figures. To do this, copy the second slide via *Edit/Duplicate page* and on the new slide change the heading into "2002 profit and loss figures". To make the data for Noah Deer's firm visually appealing, you should use a chart. First make a bit of room for the new object, by removing the lower text frame with the bulleted list. Then select the chart symbol (not to be confused with the pie/arc/chord tool) and drag up a corresponding frame using the mouse. When you do this, proceed in the same way as you did for the text frame already mentioned. To alter the chart, double-click on the inserted frame. To use the chart editor, refer to Part 3 of the KOffice Workshop (Linux Magazine issue 10). For Noah Deer's example, simply enter a few made-up figures, which show that his company is going downhill. To get back to KPresenter, simply

Info

KOffice homepage: <http://koffice.kde.org>
Homepage of the KDE project: <http://www.kde.org>
Information on KPresenter: <http://koffice.kde.org/kpresenter/>

Problems

Below are a few problems which occurred during the tests with the version of KPresenter we were sent:

- *Page numbers could not be inserted (Text/Insert page numbers)*
- *When editing bulleted lists there were frequently problems (see relevant paragraph in article).*
- *Other KOffice objects, such as a KSpread table or a KChart diagram were inserted, but not displayed.*
- *The presentation was not executed correctly or there were still serious representational errors on the upper edge.*