

K-splitter ACTIVATED INSTRUCTED WARNED OFF

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Who says there is no place for gossip and scandal in a Linux magazine? K-splitter chats month by month from the KDE sewing box, broadcasting news from the K-World and nosing around here and there behind the scenes.

ActiveX: This technology, developed by Microsoft, is used to add multimedia elements to websites, such as video, audio, animation and "virtual reality". To do so, the developers use so-called ActiveX-Controls to link and embed objects ("Object Linking and Embedding" OLE). ActiveX has in fact been praised as a cross-platform solution, but is not supported by all operating systems. The danger of ActiveX components lies in the fact that they have executable content. If, for example, this function is activated in Microsoft's Internet Explorer, when you visit a website, programs can be downloaded onto your PC which allow access to your computer.

QuickTime: Standard, defined by Apple, for the transfer of image and audio data. Usually used for smaller films.

Flash: A program from the company Macromedia for making vector-based animations for websites. To play back the data format of the same name, you will need the Flash player as a browser-plugin.

Fully active

The presentation of *reaktivate* at this year's Linuxtag in Stuttgart caused a great deal of excitement. Behind this name lies none other than an **ActiveX** expansion for KDE's *Konqueror* based on the emulator *Wine*.

Not everyone is happy about this, because Microsoft's ActiveX technology has been under discussion for a long time due to the considerable security concerns. Contrary to many rumours, *reaktivate* will not therefore be a standard component of future versions of KDE. Anyone who wants to use the software must therefore make a deliberate decision to do so and not have it planted on them on the sly, as with Windows. For all those whose fingers are just itching to try it all out, you'll have to scratch just a bit longer: The proposed solution, according to the developers, Malte Starostik and Nikolas Zimmermann, is still at a very early stage of development. Theoretically, every ActiveX element should run in *Konqueror*, but at the moment some components are not yet compatible with *reaktivate*, such as Microsoft's Windows Media

Player. The developers now say they are working even harder at getting the Apple **QuickTime** plugin up and running. The ActiveX elements *Macromedia Shockwave Flash 5* and the *Macromedia Shockwave Player 8* have already been successfully tested.

Aethera changes fronts

Aethera, the messaging and groupware client for KDE, is not only slowly but surely taking on forms which are ever more stable, but has also changed fronts or, to put it more precisely, the server. Henceforth the new beta versions can no longer be found on the home page of the developer company *theKompany.com*, but at <http://sourceforge.net/projects/aethera/>. *Aethera* (Figure 2) can send and receive emails and manage contacts, notes, tasks, appointments and to-do lists. New to the fourth beta version are primarily the first attempts at *Korganizer* support for scheduling, markedly improved **IMAP** support and the complete drag & drop implementation.

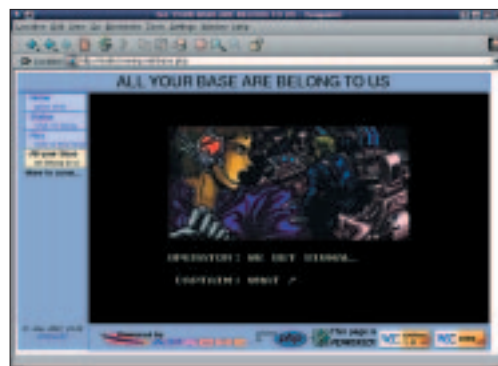


Figure 1: Konqueror with Flash-Control

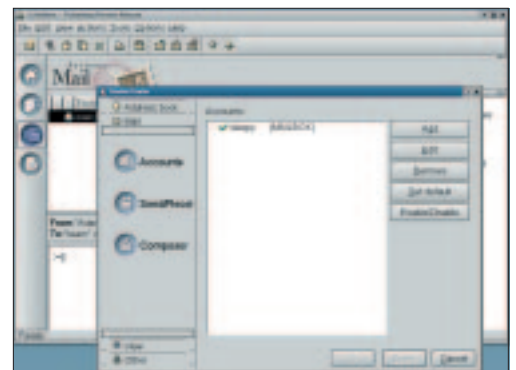
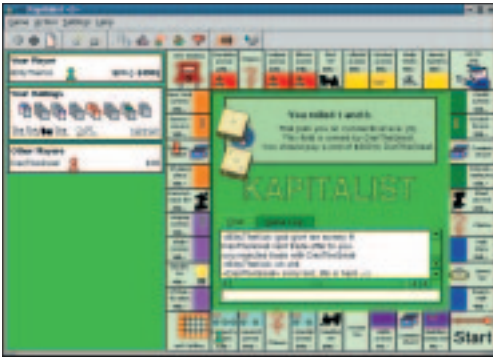


Figure 2: One-stop shopping



Capitalist...

Instructed

Everything you ever wanted to know about KDE programming is now hopefully explained by the new *KDE Developer FAQ*. Philippe Fremy and David Faure have collected the most important questions to do with KDE development at <http://developer.kde.org/documentation/other/developer-faq.html>. Anyone searching for answers to questions such as "What tips are there for creating a new application?" or "How do I access a CVS?", will find help here. Philippe Fremy will be glad to receive supplements, suggestions and support. An e-mail to pfremy@chez.com is all it takes.

Rivals

Competition is the spice of business and creates innovations. Convicted capitalists have known this for hundreds of years. So can it be any surprise that Monopoly, the game for this economic system, is competing within KDE itself? Exactly one week after Rob Kaper announced *KMonop* (<http://capsl.com/kmonop/>) (now renamed Atlantik) on the *KDE-Games-Developer* list, he has found himself competing with Daniel Hermann with his *Capitalist* (<http://www.uni-karlsruhe.de/~Daniel.Hermann/Capitalist/>). *Capitalist* is, says Hermann, a **client-server** version, which is intended to be played over a network with several players. But before any misunderstandings arise: Obviously *KMonop*, too, has a server behind it. Figures 3 and 4 show both versions in use. The best thing to do is to try out both for yourself, to find in which virtual environment you want to build your hotels in Mayfair in the future.

Warned off

Recently the University of Magdeburg was warned off by the firm of lawyers Reinhard Skuhra Weise & Partner. Reason: The home page of Uni staff member Kai-Uwe Sattler, where he presents *Killustrator*. The lawyers accused the University of infringing the copyright of their client *Adobe* and said this was also defamatory. In addition to an injunction backed up by the threat of punishment, the warning was accompanied by an invoice for £1500 plus VAT. After



... or (K)Monopolist?

the lawyers at first refused to accept Sattler's offers to rename the open-source software, they now appear to have come round. When this issue went to press *Adobe* had declared that the company was only concerned with protecting the copyright of the product *Adobe Illustrator*. *There was no desire to hinder the distribution of Killustrator; the author should merely alter the name of the program. This should not cost the Killustrator developer anything. The University has since commissioned a firm of lawyers to look after their own interests. What reaction there will be to the Adobe offer is something the Magdeburgers want to discuss first with their own lawyers. But it looks as if Killustrator will just be renamed, by way of precaution, as Kontour. Watch this space...*

Without words

... or to be more precise, without *Word* is what one or two prolific writers might be soon, if the development of *KOffice*, the office suite of the KDE Project, continues at the same pace as in recent months. The developers of the third beta version recently released the coming version 1.1, which will again come up with some innovations. One of the main innovations is the integration of *KGhostview* for a print preview (but anyone wanting to use this feature must have *kdelibs* from series 2.2) in addition to a greatly improved display of embedded images etc, in *KWord* documents. Plus, *KWord* has now come up with the option of autocorrection, a further improved spelling corrector, a new preview alternative (several pages in a row) and also a greatly reduced loading time for large documents. Despite its beta status this version should run a bit more stably than version 1.0 released with KDE 2.0.

Client-server architecture:

This describes a model where the allocation of tasks and the sharing of responsibilities between programs lies with the server. The server program is a utility program which provides services for the client programs. To transfer to the world of computers, a computer which makes available services, such as application programs, memory space or computing power for other computers on the network, the clients, is also called a server.

IMAP: Short for "Internet Mail Access Protocol", an access option for e-mail. IMAP not only allows you to collect e-mail from the server, but also to edit it there (deletion, especially useful in these times of ever-bolder spammers, and renaming or sorting into sub-directories). E-mails can also be selectively downloaded.

CVS: Especially when several developers are working on a software project, a method is needed to prevent someone unintentionally overwriting changes made by his co-programmers or destroying the only working version. For this reason, many projects therefore use the "Concurrent Versions System". An older version can be reconstituted at any time from a CVS file tree, but obviously it is used most often to save the latest program code.