Letters to the editor

Write Access

■ Linking ideas

Q I have installed a program which adds commands to my system. I have to be in the directory where I loaded the program to make the commands work. Where do I need to make the symbolic links so the commands work no matter where I am in the directory structure?

K Cheng, Gosford, NSW, Australia

A Symbolic links redirect the kernel to the pathname stored as the link's contents. These can be created using

```
ln -s /home/jack/jack.h ⏎
/usr/include/jack.h
```

Here a file is created in */usr/include* called *jack.h* which is redirected to */home/jack/jack.h* However, this is not the way to go around adding the commands to your system. You need to add the directory path to the commands to the environmental variable PATH. If our new commands are in the directory */home/jack/myprog/* we use

```
export PATH=/home/jack/⏎
myprog:$PATH
```

Now when we type in a command it searches through all the directories listed in the PATH variable to find the command. You can see where PATH is checking by typing

```
[root@home jack]# echo $PATH
/home/jack/myprog:/sbin:/usr/⏎
sbin:/bin:/usr/bin:/usr/local/⏎
bin:/usr/local/bin
```

■ Keeping secrets

Q I have managed to install Mandrake-Linux on my PC. I have to share the computer. How do I add my sister as another user to the system and keep her away from my private email.

R McQueen - email

A Depending on the desktop you have running you can add a user by either, in a shell, typing *userdrake* to access a GUI based wizard or from KDE panel use the *Configuration/Other/UserConf* option to add and modify users. If you are not running X you can use the *useradd* command as superuser.

```
[jack@home jack]# su
Password: ********
[root@home jack]# useradd jill
```

This creates the user called jill in a group called jill.

It also creates a home directory */home/jill* The next step is to create a password for Jill. The UserConf wizard allows you to add a password, but from the commandline you need to use the following

```
[root@home jack]# passwd jill
Changing password for user jill
New UNIX password: *********
Retype new UNIX password:
********
passwd: all authentication
tokens updated successfully
[root@home jack]# exit
```

When jill now logs onto the system, she is in her own home directory */home/jill/*. Your email and settings are protected in your own directory which she has no access to. ■

Spelling it my way

Q How do I make an exclude dictionary in StarOffice 5.2? In MS Word I do this by creating a list of words I do not want in the standard dictionary and renaming it the same as my normal dictionary but with .exc as the ending. I use this tool in my job and do not want to do without it.

M Chrisostomou, London

A StarOffice makes this task a little easier to accomplish. Normally when using the spellchecker we can add words that are not in the standard built-in dictionary by placing them into a custom dictionary. Similarly if we want to remove a word we need to create a custom exception dictionary. Suppose that we want to never use the word "hopefully". We start this by using *Tools/Options*, then from the general menu choose *Language*. On the right you now get to high-light the exception dictionary. Choose the *edit* icon and you can now add any word you do not like. In our example we also add a replacement word "cheesecake". Now whenever we invoke the spellchecker it will, upon finding "hopefully", ask if we should replace it with our new word "cheesecake". ■
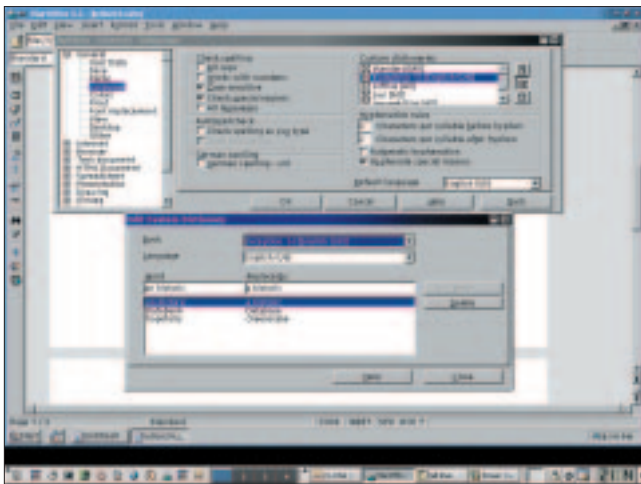

Figure 1: Configuring the exception dictionary

Together with Kate

Q I tried using the KDE editor Kate. It ran fine and I use it as my default editor. When choosing a file to open, the "File List" now appears in a seperate window. How do I recombine it back so it just appears in Kate but as a split window similar to Konqueror.

WD Parkin, Brugge, Belgium

A You can either change the settings within the *Settings/Configure Kate* or you can remove your katerc configuration file which will be found in your personal home directory *~/.kde/share/ config/⟳ katerc* This will then reset Kate. ■

Figure 2: The Undocked File selector

Friendly e-mails – hidden problems

Q I have started to use Linux after many years using Outlook. I have sucessfully configured it to download my mail. The only problem is html mail sent from a friend is displayed as code. Can Kmail support HTML and if so what do I need to add?

S George

A Kmail will support html coding and display it as you want. Choose the *Settings/Configure Kmail* option. Select the Security option and the General tab. Here you can turn on *"Prefer HTML to plain text"*. The drawback to this is the possiblity of security flaws by running HTML automatically. Emails from a friend are fine but spam is normally sent in HTML. Downloading a small spam message in plain text you can usually see it is junk mail. With HTML turned on it would start to connect to whatever advertising site is in the spam. It is considered bad netiquette to send HTML emails outside the world of Microsoft. ■
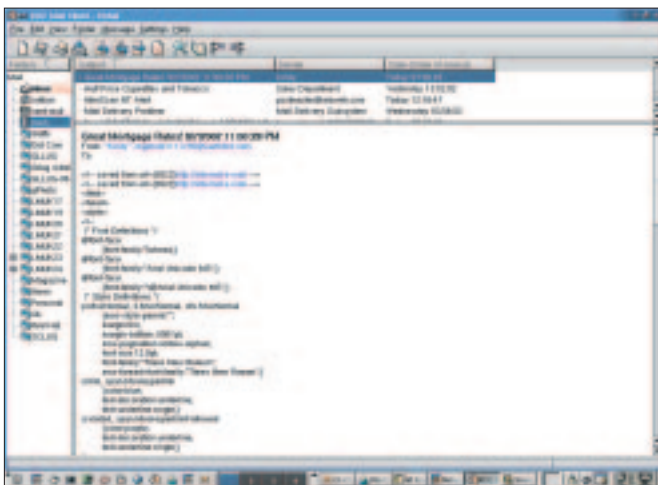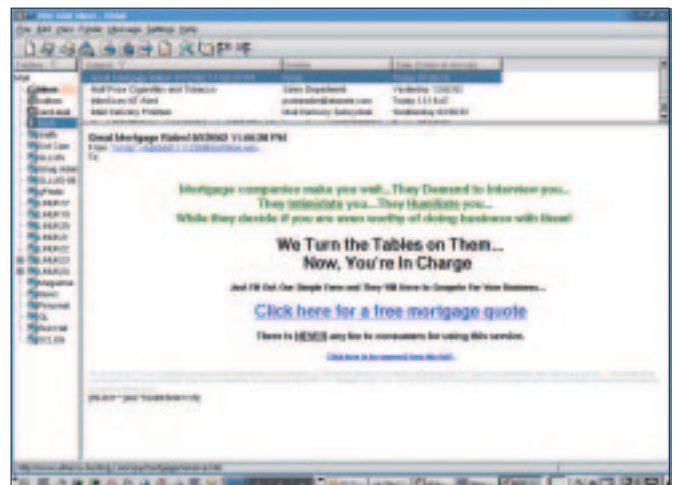

Figure 3: Kmail in plain text mode

Figure 4: Kmail with HTML turned on