

Managing Nokia Mobile Phones with Gnokii

Mobile Manager



Need a new logo? Or is your mobile phone's keyboard simply too small for longer SMS messages? Enter a mobile phone manager called Gnokii to ease your pain.

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Gnokii allows you to remotely operated nearly any Nokia mobile phone using your PC. Of course you need a serial data lead or an infrared port to do so. Bluetooth would not work in the 0.5pre6 version that we investigated, which was supplied with SuSE Linux 8.2.

Gnokii is available both as a command line tool (in the *gnokii* package) and with a GUI front-end (in the *xgnokii* package); it makes sense to install both, although we will only be looking into the GUI program *xgnokii* in this article.

Getting Started

The central Gnokii configuration file is called */etc/gnokiirc*; you will probably want to copy it as *.gnokiirc* to your home directory. Before launching the program for the first time, you will need to modify

the program to reflect your environment. This involves entering the name of your serial or infrared connector in the *port* field (typically */dev/ttyS0*) and your mobile phone type in *model*. Specify the connection type for your mobile phone in *connection*, where *irda* means infrared, and *dau9p* or *dlr3p* refer to a serial data cable model number supplied by Nokia.

After completing the configuration, attach your mobile phone and launch *xgnokii* via your KDE-Konsole or the quick launcher [Alt F2]. The Gnokii window (see Figure 1 above) appears and initializes your mobile phone: a short time later, the display shows the charge state of your batteries and the reception strength.

SMS Center

When you first open the *Short Message Service* the SMS area will be totally empty, as you have not yet synchronized with your mobile phone. You can press [Ctrl-A] to do so (Figure 1). Gnokii will display a small SMS icon at the bottom left of your screen to indicate new messages.

If you launched Gnokii in the command line, you will note that SMS templates and graphics will be listed on the text console – do not worry, these are debugging messages, and quite normal.

New Logos

The Logo Manager, which is launched by right clicking on the Gnokii window, allows you to create new logos (see Figure 2) or to edit any logos already stored on your phone. Also, the program saves logos in the Nokia logo format (NOL), and can read and transfer logos in NOL and NLM formats to your mobile.

The Debian logo in NLM format from [3] did pose a problem however. We had to restart Gnokii to load it without causing an error message, and after doing so, were unable to move it.

Before we could edit the logo, we first had to transfer it to the mobile phone,

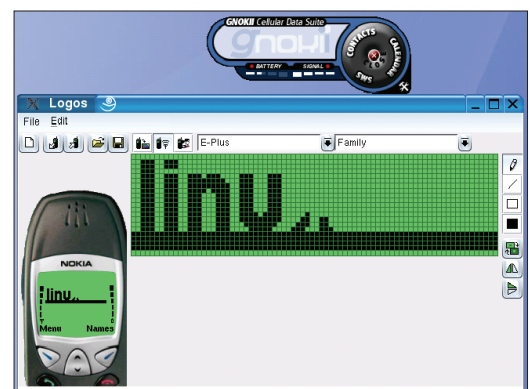


Figure 2: The simple logo editor allows you to create your own logos and can also read and store NLM or NOL files

restart Gnokii and transfer it back from the phone.

At present, Gnokii does not provide support for importing graphic formats with the exception of NLM and NOL, although a converter is available from [2]. The converter allows you to create Nokia logo files from existing bitmaps.

Promising

Apart from the odd glitch, Gnokii appears to be a practical and stable tool. On the downside it supports only Nokia phones, and only those that have an IRDA or serial port – Bluetooth support was under development when this issue went to print.

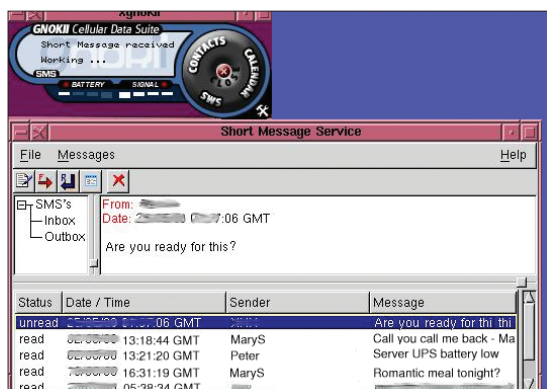


Figure 1: When you first launch the Short Message Service facility the folders are empty. You can press [Ctrl-A] to talk to your phone

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- [1] Gnokii project: <http://www.gnokii.org>
- [2] Converter from BMP graphic to Nokia format: <http://stalmp3box.sourceforge.net/kylixprojects/main.html>
- [3] Free logos for mobiles from the Debian project: <http://www.debian.org/events/materials/cellular>