K-splitter
UPGRADE
OR NOT

Thanks to KDE's appearance on CD-ROM and the new programs, icons and features of KDE 3.0, one thing is certain: things won't be boring on the desktop, this year. There's a lot of compiling to do, so let's get stuck in!

Always something new

Scarcely is the latest version of release 2.2 safely installed on your computer, than the KDE developers are starting to prepare the next serving – KDE 3.0. And they're not doing it on the quiet, but publicly on the Web and in the relevant newsgroups. With so many innovations (we present some of them to you in this K-splitter) it's hard to resist the siren song of the new software.

But what should you do with the old version of KDE? Should one really, just because of a few new gimmicks, put the functional and stable-running working environment at risk? It's not an easy decision. So what could be better than deciding on both? José Pablo Ezequiel (Pupeno) Fernández must have had this same idea, because he is letting all curious KDE users share his experiences with the installation and commissioning of the new install on his homepage at *http://www.pupeno.com.ar/runningkdes*.

Mandrake users are best off, because it uses this distribution as its starting point. However, the Red Hats among you may also delight in the tutorial because of the similarity between the two Linux distributions. Only SuSE users may have to proceed differently every now and then. But who knows, maybe one of them will then sit down and put their experiences with dual operation under SuSE Linux on the Net.

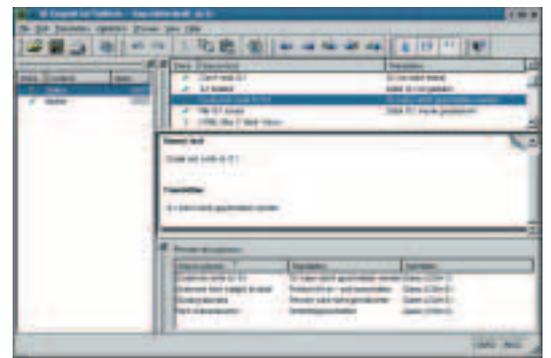**Figure 1: With a good tutorial, dual installation is much easier**

Figure 2: The new localisation tool, Qt Linguist

Major events...

... cast their shadows before them, as progress on KDE 3.0 development is making great strides forward. We present you with one way of installing the recently-released *Alpha1* in the section "Always something new". But why should you take the risk? The answer is obvious: the KDE surprise package of the third generation has more than one marvel in store. The majority of the innovations result from the change over to Trolltech's new release of the Qt-GUI toolkit.

One of the most important expansions will be especially appreciated by all users who have a lot to do with databases. Because the new KDE version will at last include an independent interface, which supports almost all the well-known SQL database
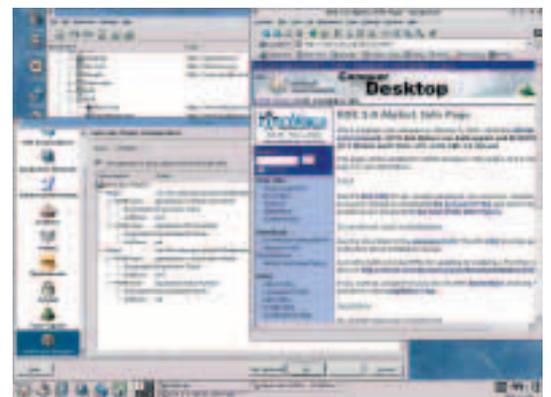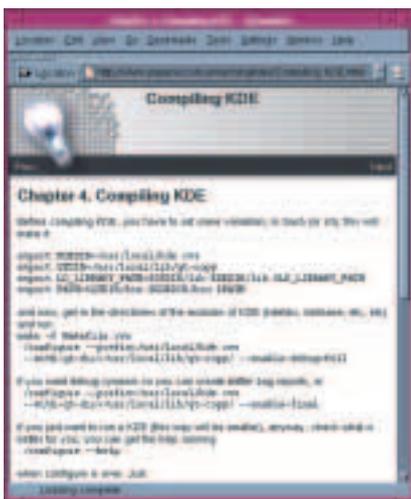

Figure 3: New icons for the 3rd generation

Happy programming!

We have previously reported on the Andamooka site *http://www.andamooka. org/*. This is a site to find your online versions of useful Linux and KDE books. Not just for computer books – you will find a wide range. What makes the site special is the ability to annotate the books for others. This lets you see what other people thought about or want to give further hints on as you read.
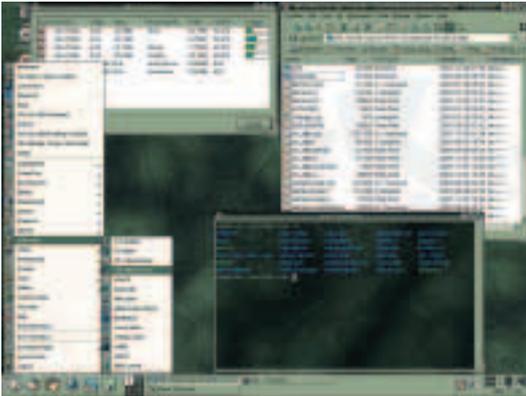
Figure 4: KDE 3.0 has new themes in its baggage, too

systems, including Oracle, PostgreSQL, MySQL and also the ODBC interface.

The developer community is working equally feverishly on further internationalisation. Since Qt 3.0 greatly improves the display of non-Latin character sets, such as those running from right to left, KDE also benefits from this. What's more, the "Qt Linguist" stemming from the new Qt distribution helps in translating all text visible to users in Qt-based programs into another language (Figure 2).

There are also glad tidings for the graphics people among you. In future you will at last be able to run several monitors at once under KDE. In future the graphical user interface will simply blend out unnecessary icons by means of so-called *Alpha Blending*. Although that would be a shame, as Figure 3 proves, because apart from lots of new functional features, KDE 3.0 also comes with a treat for the eyes, like the gaily coloured icons from Figure 3 or the new style themes – Figure 4.

Anyone not wanting to wait for version 3.0 and who would rather avoid Alpha and Beta versions, will not have to forgo the icons and the new styling, because both can now be downloaded separately. You can find the style theme at *http://clee.azsites.org/kde/*; whilst the icons can be downloaded from *http://users.skynet.be/bk369046/ icon.htm*.

In addition to optical innovations, there are also new programs in KDE 3 to quicken the pulse. So, for example, *KonCD*, the burn program we introduced to you in Linux Magazine issue 11, has made its entrance into the main distribution.

Imagemaps made easy

Imagemaps are a fine thing. These little images, which include a number of links within the graphic, for example the left half of the image could point to the Web page "1.html" and the right-hand one to "2.html", are a splendid gimmick for any Web site.

With the *KImageMapEditor* (the latest version can be found at *http://kimagemapeditor.sourceforge.net/*) the author Jan Schäfer has developed a KDE tool

with which such imagemaps can be created with wonderful ease. Neatly enough, the editor can be completely integrated into *Quanta*, one of the most powerful HTML editors under Linux. In order to do this, you will need Quanta 2 Pre 2, because it is only from this version on that its own actions can be integrated. To do so, select the menu item *Settings/Configure Actions*, and click there on the New button. In the Input tab, in turn, select None. With the aid of the button with the three dots, you can now track down the binary of your map editor. Found it? The correct path to it should now appear in the text field in front of the dot button. Add an extra *-c* there and a %f as placeholder for the current document.

Now you can look for a suitable icon in the top row, with which the *Imagemap* action just made will later appear in the Quanta toolbar. You also have the option of sending the icon on its way with a so-called
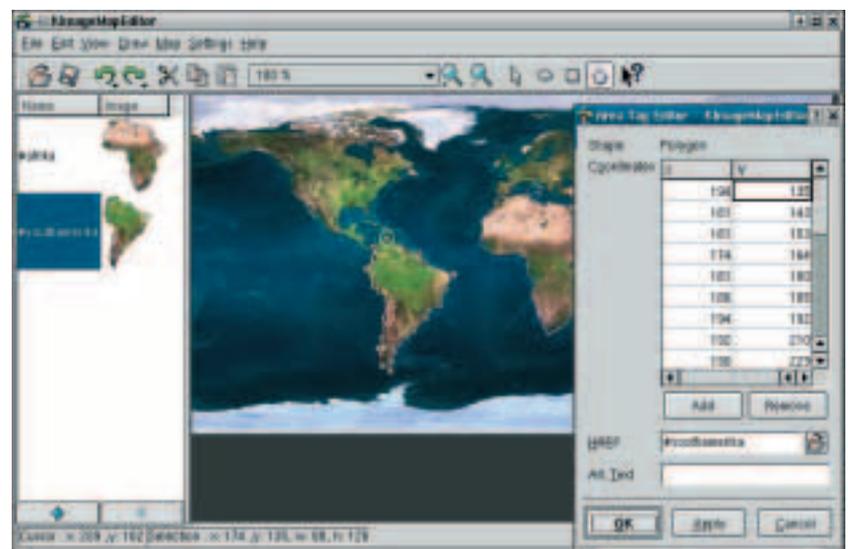
Figure 5: Imagemaps made easy

tooltip, i.e. text which appears whenever you move the mouse over the icon. Enter the text of your choice in the ToolTip box.

Now click on the Output tab. Here you should opt for the item Insert on cursor position. One last click on the OK button, and you will have now integrated the imagemap editor in Quanta. If the action is to pop up in the toolbar, you must end by telling your HTML editor this via the menu item *Settings/Install toolbar*.

Strategic

The game players among users of KDE will soon have one more game to enjoy: Andreas Beckermann recently announced on the KDE Games Developer List that he has started further development of Boson, a real-time strategy game in the style of Command & Conquer and StarCraft. For the project to progress rapidly, Beckermann is still seeking keen combatants. Anyone interested can contact the team at *boson-devel@lists.sourceforge.net* and offer assistance.