Sponsors brochure for the Randa meetings 2012

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In a nutshell

The association „Randa Meetings“

After three successful and steadily growing meetings in Randa the association „Randa Meetings“ was found in June 2012 to base further meetings in Randa on a legally sounder ground and to lower the financial and liability risk for the organizing persons. Furthermore we wanted to keep the option for additional free software and free data meetings in the course and holiday house Randa. More information about the association from page 3 on.

KDE & free software collection

KDE as a free project and community create and produce free software for the desktop and mobile end user devices. Multimedia players, educational, office and PIM software, games and even development tools are available by KDE. Free software means in this context software to use for every purpose, to modify and study, to share and to share in modified versions. Further information if available at page 4 and following.

The most important dates

- Place: Randa, Valais, Switzerland
- Time: Friday, 21st to Thursday 27th of September 2012
- Participants: more than 30 people from all over the world
- Reason: To further develop and better free desktop software

Randa Meetings 2012 groups

- Accessibility Software for differently abled people too
- Education Free educational software for school and at home
- Multimedia Multimedia software, platform and the Amarok mediaplayer
- Plasma Workspaces for the desktop, notebooks, tablets & Co

Sponsors programme

- Platinum sponsor: 10'000 CHF (Whole day, presentation, web, WB, flyers, Raclette)
- Gold sponsor: 5'000 CHF (Presentation, web, WB, flyers, Raclette)
- Silver sponsor: 2'000 CHF (Web, WB, flyers, Raclette)
- Bronze sponsor: 1'000 CHF (WB, flyers, Raclette)

The association „Randa Meetings“

After three successful and steadily growing meetings in Randa the association „Randa Meetings“ was found in Bern on the 16th of June 2012.

The board of the association consists of the following persons:

- President: Detlef Kuonen, Visp (Valais) detlef.kuonen@gmail.com
- Treasurer: Pascal Mages, Zurich pascal@planetmages.ch
- Secretary: Mario Fux, Burgdorf (Bern) fux@kde.org

Sebastian Nellen is the controller on of the association at the moment.

It is the one goal of the association to base further meetings in Randa on a legally sounder ground and to lower the financial and liability risk for the organizing persons. Furthermore we wrote the bylaws in a way to keep the option for additional free software and free data meetings in the course and holiday house Randa.

According to the bylaws a concept (incl. preliminary budget) for a certain meeting must be presented at the yearly general assembly. This concept must be accepted by the present members. In the following year there must be a presentation with a detailed report about the meeting (incl. the definitive budget). Again this report must be accepted by the members by vote to relieve the working groups for this meeting.

At the moment a new webpage is going to be created. Current information can be found in the community wiki of KDE

- http://community.kde.org/Sprints/Randa

For further information about the association you can contact the board (see above).

KDE – The Community

KDE, which initially stood for 'K Desktop Environment', was founded in 1996 by the German student Matthias Ettrich. His goal was to create a slick and easy to use desktop environment for Linux. Pretty soon a community developed around this idea.

Today KDE is an international team of developers, artists, translators, writers, advocates, usability experts and people who help with quality assurance and user support. But most importantly KDE values its users and involves them. All kinds of people are a part of it – a 18 year old student from India, a 32 year old artist from the US and a 70 years old English grandma. KDE became one of the biggest and well known Free Software communities with thousands of volunteers and dozends of millions of users.

(source: KDE Booklet (http://community.kde.org/index.php?title=File:Kde_booklet_ver8.pdf))

KDE e.V.

The KDE community is supported by KDE e.V., a non-profit entity which represents us in legal and financial matters. It secures cash, hardware, and other donations and uses these to support us in developing and spreading our products. In 1997 KDE e.V. was registered as an association under German law. The “e.V.” stands for “eingetragener Verein” which means “registered assocation”. The e.V. does not meddle in with development itself, nor with the goals the community has set. For more information about KDEe.V. go to ev.kde.org.

(source: KDE Booklet (http://community.kde.org/index.php?title=File:Kde_booklet_ver8.pdf))

KDE in Use

One of our major deployments took place in Brazil’s primary school education system with computers running KDE software serving nearly 52 million children!

Besides this, a thousand more students in Brazil use KDE products in their universities. But Brazil is far from being the only country to use KDE software for their educational system. KDE software can also be seen running on computers in Portuguese and Venezuelan schools, with respectively 700 thousand and one million systems reached. As you might imagine, all these children and teachers particularly enjoy the work of the KDE Education team.

Countries not only adopt our technology for their schools, some of them use it directly in their administration.

KDE technology is used by millions of people around the world. Our products serve a broad range of people and organisations well.

(source: KDE Booklet (http://community.kde.org/index.php?title=File:Kde_booklet_ver8.pdf)

You can find out more about KDE at www.kde.org or in the KDE Booklet.

The concept of „Free Software“

Free in Free Software is referring to freedom, not price. Having been used in this meaning since the 80s, the first documented complete definition appears to be the GNU's Bulletin, vol. 1 no. 1 , published February 1986. In particular, four freedoms define Free Software:

- **The freedom to run the program, for any purpose.**

  Placing restrictions on the use of Free Software, such as time ("30 days trial period", "license expires January 1st, 2004") purpose ("permission granted for research and non-commercial use", "may not be used for benchmarking") or geographic area ("must not be used in country X") makes a program non-free.

- **The freedom to study how the program works, and adapt it to your needs.**

  Placing legal or practical restrictions on the comprehension or modification of a program, such as mandatory purchase of special licenses, signing of a Non-Disclosure-Agreement (NDA) or - for programming languages that have multiple forms or representation - making the preferred human way of comprehending and editing a program ("source code") inaccessible also makes it proprietary (non-free). Without the freedom to modify a program, people will remain at the mercy of a single vendor.

- **The freedom to redistribute copies so you can help your neighbor.**

  Software can be copied/distributed at virtually no cost. If you are not allowed to give a program to a person in need, that makes a program non-free. This can be done for a charge, if you so choose.

- **The freedom to improve the program, and release your improvements to the public, so that the whole community benefits.**

  Not everyone is an equally good programmer in all fields. Some people don't know how to program at all. This freedom allows those who do not have the time or skills to solve a problem to indirectly access the freedom to modify. This can be done for a charge.

These freedoms are rights, not obligations, although respecting these freedoms for society may at times oblige the individual. Any person can choose to not make use of them, but may also choose to make use of all of them. In particular, it should be understood that Free Software does not exclude commercial use. If a program fails to allow commercial use and commercial distribution, it is not Free Software. Indeed a growing number of companies base their business model completely or at least partially on Free Software, including some of the largest proprietary software vendors. Free Software makes it legal to provide help and assistance, it does not make it mandatory.

(Source: http://fsfe.org/about/basics/freesoftware.en.html – 26.07.2012)

You find more information about the topic of „Free Software“ on www.fsfe.org.

Randa Meetings 2012

This year the meeting is going to start on Friday, the 21st of September and to end on Thursday, the 27th of September. The following five groups will participate:

Groups - Participants

This year the following five groups will work at the Randa Meetings 2012:

0. Accessibility (people mainly from KDE (but some two people from Gnome as well) who improve their software and the infrastructure for differently abled people) [2]
1. KDE Education (people from the KDEDU team) [3]
2. KDE Multimedia/Amarok/Phonon [4]
3. Plasma Meeting Tokamak 6 [5]

Until this moment we've around 40 registrations for the meeting [6]

Further ideas

It's the idea to invite, for one or two days, people from the federations of blind people or accessibility office to test with the participants of the Meeting the software and improve it. We already have the contact with an accessibility office from the university of Zurich and one person has the connection to different federations of blind people.
An other idea is to offer at one day during the week some fee required workshops for outstanding peoples. Leaders from the workshops would be some voluntary meeting participants and with the generated money we could pay a piece from the traveling- or accommodation costs. We don't know yet if we can realize this already this year.

OpenDay – Sunday, 23th of September 2012

At this Saturday we organize a open day, at which all interested from near and far away can visit us. We could show them, on what we are working on and the interested visitors can try out our software and can ask questions. At the evening we offer some delicious Raclette, what more discussions under interested people and KDE-people permits.

Food

Like each year a cook and the cooking team will prepare for the duration form the meeting for the participants tree meals a day. We already asked a cook (Randa Meetings 2009). The participants pays a day (tree meals) 15 CHF.

Budget

Earnings (temporarily)

Reserves from 2011	1000.00 CHF
Raiffeisen Mischabel-Matterhorn	1000.00 CHF
Jungwacht-Blauring	500.00 CHF (Discount on costs for the house)
SuSE	4000.00 DOL (for travel costs)

KDE e.V.	7000.00 EUR

Expenditure (temporarily)

House (Accommodation & Co)	3000.00 CHF
Travel costs international	10000.00 EUR
Travel costs Switzerland	3000.00 CHF
Expense allowance staff *	
Main organizer (200h)	2000.00 CHF
Chef (50h)	500.00 CHF
Main helper 1(20h)	200.00 CHF
Main helper 2(20h)	200.00 CHF

* We think about an expense allowance of 10 CHF per hour and we'll search for helpers who work for free too.

Links

[1] http://www.hausranda.ch

[2] http://accessibility.kde.org

[3] http://edu.kde.org

[4] http://amarok.kde.org

[5] http://plasma.kde.org

[6] http://sprints.kde.org/sprint/98

[7] http://www.kde.org

Where do we need some help/which positions are still open?

How you can see on the budget above, we would like especially some financial support. But also foodstuffs and of course electronic stuff (WLAN access points, connector strips, switches) and stationery items. At concrete material donates we would thank you if you contact us in advance, so we could coordinate this and not have finally 50 AccessPoints.
Of course you can send us gifts or souvenirs for the participating, but we would like aso here, if you contact us in advance.

At this place we would like to say thanks to current sponsors, which are:

- BAR Informatik AG, for the internet access and further support – www.bar.ch
- Jungwacht-Blauring for the house and support – www.hausranda.ch
- BudgetComputer.ch for the demo computers – www.budgetcomputer.ch
- Various private person for their support
- And of courese KDE e.V. and its sponsors – ev.kde.org

Sponsoring

- Platinum Sponsor: 10'000 CHF
  - Whole-Day-Package, Presentation, Web, WB, Flyers, Raclette
- Gold Sponsor: 5'000 CHF
  - Presentation, Web, WB, Flyers, Raclette
- Silver Sponsor: 2'000 CHF
  - Web, WB, Flyers, Raclette
- Bronze Sponsor: 1'000 CHF
  - WB, Flyers, Raclette

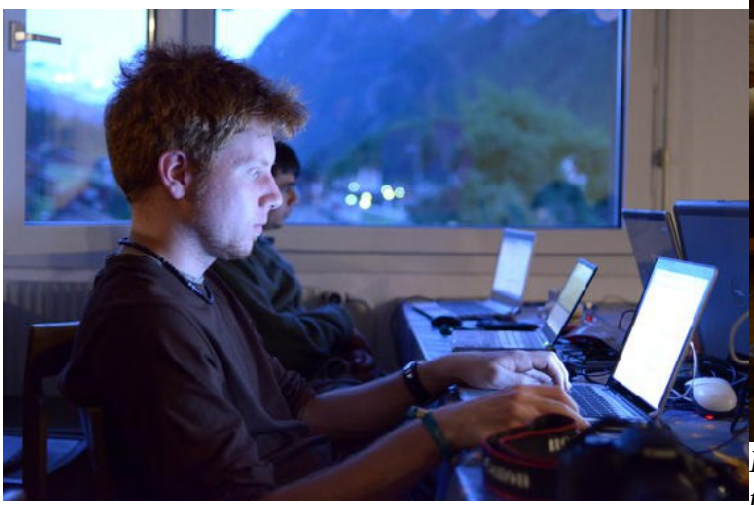
Legende:

- Whole-Day-Package: A whole day including a guided tour and lunch
- Präsentation: To present itself (15 to 30 minutes)
- Web: Banner on the Website
- WB: Mention in the local newspaper Walliser Bote (WB)
- Flyers: Put on some flyers from your company/institution
- Raclette: Invitation for Raclette on the OpenDay and the possibility to speak with the Developers from all over the world

If you have further questions, please contact us at any time:

- Mario Fux – 078 768 42 60 – fux@kde.org

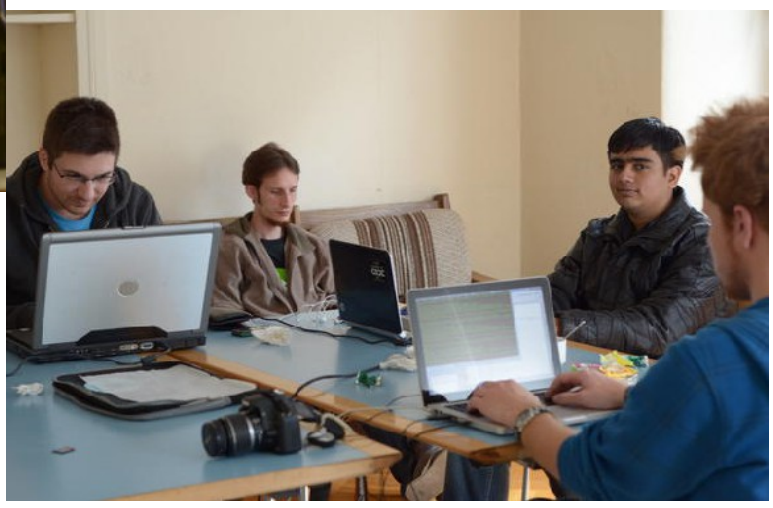
Impressions 2011



They programmed till in the morning...

In between the groups presented the progress and work to the other groups

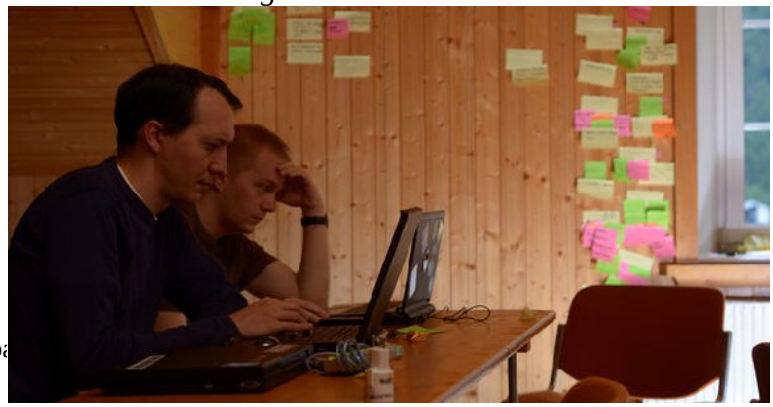
A jigsaw with a picture of the participants from last year offered a moment to rest.



Italy, Serbia, India and Czechia (and many more): all discuss and work together at the same table

If the weather was good they discussed and worked outside

pa



Notes helped to hold down the results of the discussions

Report about the Randa Meetings 2011

From Platform to Frameworks -- KDE hackers meet in Switzerland

By Sebastian Kügler

In early June 2011, a sizable group of KDE hackers met high up in the Swiss Alps. In Randa, four co-located meetings took place to further KDE technologies. One of these groups, Platform 11, had as its goal to take the KDE development platform to its next level. This group consisted of about 25 people who work on and around kdelibs, the build-system, distributions, and 3rd party developers, and was intended to represent needs and wishes as completely as possible, while trying to find better ways to organize the KDE development platform.

The overall scheduling was done by Kevin Ottens, who used a Kanban wall to manage discussions, tasks, and results. The meeting started with small, focused groups that discussed current problems for a while, and then came up with several short suggestion notes for meetings. The suggestion notes were then clustered into topics to create an agenda for the meeting. In the following days, groups of up to 5 people dove into these topics one by one. Sometimes this would take two hours of discussion; sometimes it would be a two day class-by-class analysis of kdelibs and other modules to examine work and decide on what needs to be done. Each day the whole group would gather at least once to present the results of the previous day's sessions, to review the solutions the subgroups came up with, and to move on to the next topics. This way, a lot of ground was covered, and a lot of details were examined with input from all sides. These results and plans have since been discussed on various mailing lists such as kde-core-devel, refined and further followed up on.

Platform to Frameworks

One of the primary results of Platform 11 was gaining consensus on making KDE's development platform more modular, with each library (or technology within it) clearly defined in its purpose and how it can be deployed for use in a Qt or KDE application. The goals are to create a more maintainable set of libraries with higher quality, to make KDE libraries accessible to the current community of Qt developers, and to provide KDE with a set of libraries that are well-suited for use in mobile and consumer electronic devices. The end result is a shift from a "platform" to a set of integratable "frameworks". This is reflected in what will be the name for this next version of KDE's libraries and basic application runtime requirements: KDE Frameworks.

All of the libraries and run-time requirements in KDE Frameworks are being placed into one of three categories:

- **Functional Qt Addons**, which provide a well defined purpose (e.g. configuration management) and carry no additional runtime dependencies other than Qt;
- **Operating System Integration**, Qt Addons that can have operating system-specific dependencies to provide their features (such as how a theoretical libktimezone would use ktimezoned on Linux but the native API on Microsoft Windows); and
- **Solutions**, which implement a full technology or stack, including a library and mandatory runtime dependencies.

Each of these categories contains a hierarchy of dependencies to prevent internal dependency tangles. A preliminary plan of how this may look for some of the existing libraries can be found in

this PDF.

These rules will help guide development and make it easier for developers to use specific libraries in their Qt applications. The reduced dependency graph and the ability to rely on libraries being individually available with only their own dependencies should increase the appeal of the KDE libraries significantly to Qt developers. It will also make deploying KDE libraries across different platforms easier.

To realize the goal of transforming KDE Platform into KDE Frameworks, the team at Platform 11 swept through every class and library in the kdesupport, kdelibs and kde-runtime modules, and did initial surveys of kdepimlibs and kdepim-runtime. Each item was identified and categorized as to where it fits within the Frameworks scheme.

KDE Frameworks and Qt 5

With Qt 5 on the horizon, the sprint took place at exactly the right time. With an idea of the future of the KDE Development Frameworks, natural overlap in Qt can be reduced by merging certain parts into Qt. With Qt opening up its governance model, we are presented with a nice opportunity to take a more proactive role in the future of Qt. A team of KDE developers has naturally taken part in the recent Qt Contributors Summit, and presented some ideas from the sprint in Switzerland. First patches have already been merged into the Qt 5 source-tree, and more are yet to come.

Timeline

When KDE Platform 4.7.0 is released, a set of feature branches will be opened up in KDE's git for work to commence on KDE Frameworks. Initially work will proceed in the existing modules (e.g. kdesupport, kdelibs, kde-runtime, etc.), though it is expected that these will eventually break out into several modules with one module per library or solution.

Means to build all of these new modules in one monolithic build, as is done with kdelibs today, will be provided to maintain the level of ease for those who wish to build the entire set of Frameworks rather than cherry pick through them. KDE will still also provide monolithic tarballs at release time as we have done in the past for those who would like to get larger chunks in one go. This was seen as critical to several of KDE's distribution partners in terms of their available people resources and the complexity of packaging a more modularized set of libraries.

While work proceeds on KDE Frameworks, further releases of the KDE Workspaces and Applications 4.x will continue. These releases will target the existing KDE Platform 4.x, allowing for the Frameworks evolution to be undertaken without disrupting application development. Only when Frameworks moves into the stabilization phases will application developers be broadly invited to start targeting them. As with Qt 5, the intention is to keep source compatibility high so as to minimize disruptions in existing applications as well as the existing workspaces such as Plasma Desktop.

No firm delivery date was decided on for KDE Frameworks. The goal of a release in a timely fashion with the first release of Qt 5 was entertained, but discussions were postponed until KDE Platform 4.7 is officially released and Frameworks development can begin in earnest.

Not Just Technical

While there was certainly a lot of highly technical content, there were also less technical moments that helped draw members of the community closer together. There was a visit to scenic Zermatt, a

football (or soccer to the North Americans) game and a foosball tournament. One of the more memorable moments, however, had to be when David Faure grabbed an entirely different sort of keyboard and shared his skills as a jazz piano hacker with everyone.

The team thanks Mario Fux, his family and the rest of the organization team for taking good care of us. Thank you also to the sponsors Swisscom, openSUSE and KDE e.V. (through the supporting membership programme) for financially supporting this meeting.

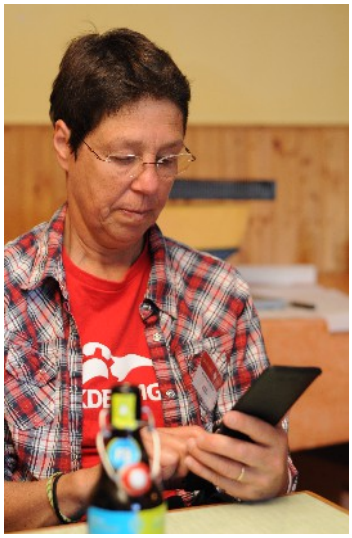
Impressions 2010

Up to new horizions

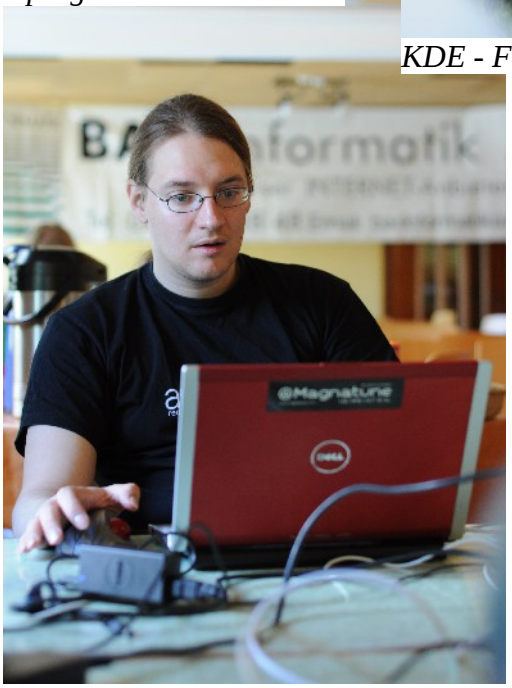
KDE creates the software of tomorrow

An empty belly doesn't like to program

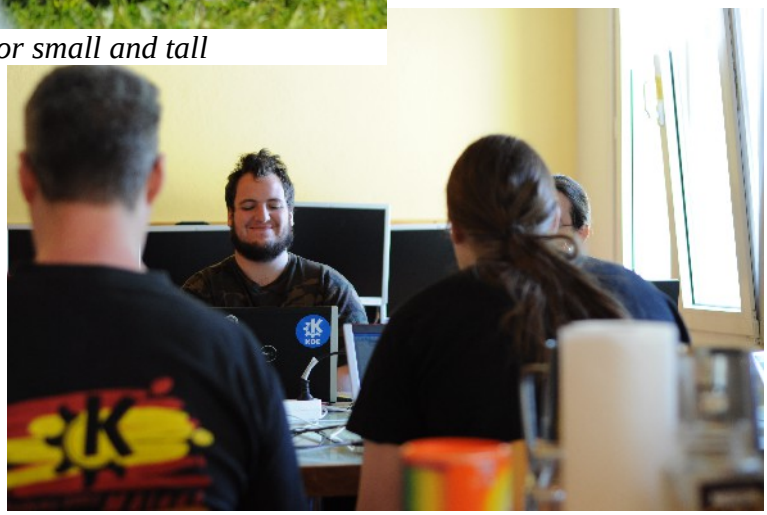
KDE - For small and tall



They used computers even during the breaks



Concentrated at work



KDE is international

Report about the KDE Multimedia Meeting 2010

Report from Successful Multimedia and Edu Sprint in Randa

By Frederik Gladhorn

43 persons (including organizers, designer, bugsquashers, and others) from 17 different countries gathered in Randa from Thursday 20 May to Tuesday 25 May. Why Randa? It is a marvelous place in the mountains of Switzerland where Mario Fux knew a house that would be perfect for KDE developers. Several groups that work on different parts of KDE had a chance to meet and mix in one house. Present were KDE-Education, Amarok, various multimedia people (Phonon, KMix, vlc) and Gluon developers.

From KDE-Edu 12 motivated developers were present. Three of them were at a KDE meeting for the first time. Amongst other things they worked on defining a vision for their project and to define in which direction they want to go in the future. It was the second meeting of KDE-Edu developers since the project started ten years ago. A new logo for KDE-Edu is in the making, the concept being based on "KDE-Edu makes your knowledge grow". The logo and conveys the idea that you can grow your knowledge with KDE-Edu!

Anne-Marie summarizes about the work KDE-Edu did: We shared our work with Sabine from Vox Humanitatis (less resourced languages) and Bèrto from the Ambaradan project (making dictionaries for those languages). Vox Humanitatis promotes the use of Parley and KHangMan as Free Software for languages and we talked about how we can interact better: how to improve the KVTML format that we use for languages for example. An export of Ambaradan data into the KVTML2 format was successfully conducted by Vox Humanitatis. This means that Parley and other applications can retreive the data from Ambaradan directly without intermediate conversion. Parley was able to digest a huge file with 100000 entries and still remained fast. For the future this means that vocabulary data can be acquired fast, directly from Ambaradan. Further ways of co-operation with other KDE projects were discussed and we will come back to these points step by step. Coding work was done too. Parley became more polished, Kalzium has a new developer working on improvements and we looked at some Step and KTouch bugs. We talked about using more libraries and planned a framework to regroup some of our programs. Another big topic was promotion of KDE-Edu. Related to that we got started on updating and improving our website.

On the KDE-Multimedia side, lots of time went into discussions regarding Phonon and its backends (especially Phonon-VLC), PulseAudio, and Amarok. KDE is looking forward to having a closer cooperation with the VLC team, which also sent one of their main developers to discuss the new Phonon backend. We had a teleconference meeting with the Brisbane office of Nokia, Qt Development Frameworks, that finally cast some light on the whole Qt Multimedia vs. Phonon issue, and the consensus seems to be that KDE would stick to Phonon for the time being. The Amarok team had several meetings regarding the future direction of Amarok, and some focused hacking took place to address Amarok's startup time. It was also decided that this would be a particular area of interest for the next few Amarok releases.

As even the most dedicated geek needs a break every once in a while, a really nice trip to Zermatt to see the Matterhorn was organized. For those interested, it was possible to walk the 12 or so kilometers back to Randa and many took the opportunity to do so rather than taking the lazybus. The mountains around the house also provided many nice walking paths, and some also took the opportunity for a few improvised walks around the area. This allowed community bindings between the different KDE sub-teams and a lot of possibilities for collaboration were explored.

Lots of work was done as we did not waste time with commuting as everything happened at the same

location. A professional cook prepared meals for us, donating his holiday time for free. Thanks Hadrien! Many thanks also go to the KDE e.V. for sponsoring of travelling costs, Bar Informatik for the internet connection, www.budgetcomputer.ch for the computers, Zermatt tourism for the caps, the mayor of Randa for a generous donation and of course Mario Fux for the most excellent sprint organization.

A completely unexpected result of the sprint was the inception of Fluffy, Harald's and Frederik's vision of how the desktop should look like.

Report about the Plasma Meeting Tokamak3 in 2009

Third Plasma Summit Lifts KDE Desktop To Higher Grounds

By Sebastian Kügler

Last week, the third Plasma developers meeting was held in the Swiss Alps. 15 developers from 3 continents came to Randa, Canton Wallis to work on Plasma's code, design new ideas and concepts and to strengthen their bonds as a sub-community within KDE. Topics of this third Plasma sprint, which is named after a plasma fusion reactor, included but were not limited to Plasma on mobile devices, network-enabled Plasma widgets and a richer user interface thanks to a new animation framework. Furthermore deeper integration of web services in the Plasma shell, semantic awareness of Plasma components, secure privilege elevation and polishing of the existing functionality, among many other things, were on the agenda. The results of Tokamak III are, with all due modesty, nothing short of mind-blowing and display the health and swift pace of development of the whole KDE community. Plasma lead developer Aaron Seigo wraps up "*It's been one of the longest KDE sprints ever, and after a week, we're all quite exhausted. Looking back at the results, however, the we have shown impressive progress all over the KDE desktop shell. We're reaching out to new use cases, new developers, new devices. Meanwhile the social aspects within the Plasma team continue to impress me. The Plasma team has grown into a small community, a group of friends that have set out to revolutionize the desktop. With the previous KDE releases, we mainly focused on providing and improving existing technology, now we're pushing the boundaries of the Free Desktop. Looking at the results that have materialized over the past week, this is the Plasma promise coming true. And we've only just begun...*"

Remote Controlling KDE

Dutch Plasma hacker Rob Scheepmaker presented the results of his work on sharing and controlling Plasma applets and KDE applications over the network. He presented how the user can easily share locally installed widgets over the network. As an example, he showed how to share the "Now Playing" Plasmoid with other machines and users on the local network. The "Now Playing" Plasmoid can now be used to control the media player running on another computer, all using KDE's Plasma technology. Under the hood, a number of technologies for communicating, orchestrating and announcing local services is used. For announcing the availability of an applet on the network, the Zeroconf protocol is used. The orchestration and transferring of applets, data and control commands happens using the JOLIE and QtJolie technology. The remote widget support is another long-planned feature for Plasma which will become available in the 4.4 release, as Scheepmakers worked hard to ready the API and polish the user interfaces to meet KDE's standards for inclusion in a main module. "*The remote control of a media player on another computer is only the tip of the iceberg of what we make available across the network. Prepare for some completely new and truly innovative collaboration and interaction features coming up using this unique new technology*", Scheepmaker lets us know.

Plasmate Development Update

 The Plasmate Development Tool

Plasmate is the working name for a new Plasma-addon development application. It provides a workflow-oriented tool to make it easy to create Plasma components such as widgets. By providing this kind of tool on top of scripting languages that can be used to create Plasma components, the plasma team aims to open development of Plasma add-ons to a much wider audience. Plasmate specifically targets programmers and designers that are currently focusing on web technologies. This way, JavaScript (or rather its ISO-standardized version ECMA) becomes a first-class citizen to develop Plasma components that can be shared across the network, for example using the new remote widget support or web services such as Get Hot New Stuff, the application-store functionality integrated into many KDE applications.

New System Tray Standard Matures

Plasma core developer Marco Martin a.k.a. notmart has readied the implementation of the new System Tray standard for inclusion into kdelibs and merged it as part of KDE's core UI framework. The new system tray standard provide a D-Bus based interface, providing a strong separation of system tray needs and their visualisation. The goal is to make the system tray more accessible, more consistent in its interaction model and more flexible with respect to displaying its contents. The idea is that applications register with the systray and provide icons, titles and tooltip information to display. Those systray gizmos have a status ("passive", "active" and "needs attention"). The application ("client" of the systray) receives event from the systray, those events are for example "requesting context menu at position x,y", wheel up/down event, or "activated". Systray "clients" have categories. The categories "System Service", "Application Status", "Communication" and "Hardware" are available for application developers to choose from. A package update notification for example would be in the category "System Services". When it's checking for updates, it would change its status from "passive" to "active", when new packages or updates are available it would go into "need attention" and ask the user if she wants to install the updates. The Plasma team has designed the new standard during the previous meeting, Tokamak II. A first experimental version has been released with KDE 4.3.0, the Plasma developers around Marco Martin have now merged this work as stable into KDE's trunk, 6 months after starting the design work on it. The new specification is being discussed on Freedesktop.org's xdg-devel list for adoption as Freedesktop-wide standard.

KAuth Provides Secure Privilege Elevation

 Secure authorization based on PolicyKit

KDE developer Dario Freddi presented the work of his GSoC student Nicola Gigante during Tokamak III. The project's aim was to provide fine-grained user privilege elevation using the FreeDesktop.org PolicyKit technology. PolicyKit provides a D-Bus interface offering control for actions that can be run in a different user context, for example by running certain commands as root. Freddi readied the KAuth library for inclusion into kdelibs and integrated it with various elements of the user interface, such as the Date and Time configuration module in KDE's System Settings. He also added a specialized version of a KPushButton for application developers that can

be attached to a certain action to be run with elevated privileges. This makes it almost trivial to provide direct manipulation of system administration tasks in a secure way, well integrated in the user interface and the set of policies the underlying operating system provides. "*KAuth currently works on Linux and Mac systems, support for the Windows platform will be added soon*", Freddi explains. More work on integrating KAuth into System Settings and other parts of KDE is needed, but the work up until now surely paves the way to a more secure and at the same time more user-friendly integration of KDE's desktop and applications with the underlying OS.

New Widgets Exporer

 The new widget explorer with the optionto publish Plasmoids on the network

Plasma designer Ana Cecília Martins Barbosa presented the work she did within this year's Summer of Code to her fellow Plasma developers. The new widget explorer has been developed using a design-driven development approach. Based on the research results AnnieC gained within the first part of her SoC project, she subsequently implemented a completely new way of adding widgets to the Plasma shell. During Tokamak III, she implemented additional feedback from fellow developers and was able to merge her work into KDE's trunk development tree, meaning that it will be available as part of KDE 4.4 in January. The new widget explorer provides a more beautiful and usable interface for adding Plasma widgets to the desktop or netbook shell and integrates better with other Plasma components such as the Panel controller which is used to manipulate visual and layout aspects of panels in Plasma. While some more polishing is still needed, the whole team is happy to see yet another Summer of Code project come to fruition.

Plasma Netbook Shell to be Released in January

Plasma developers Marco Martin and Artur Souza demonstrated the new Plasma Netbook project, a user interface specialized to be used on netbook devices. The Plasma netbook shell has moved to the kdebase module, making it part of KDE 4.4. The netbook shell is built around constrains on these kinds of devices, in terms of screen space but also optimized for use-cases around the web. The Newspaper page of the Plasma netbook shell provides direct access to information from the web that is important to the user, such as news on interesting websites and weather information. These are only the first step of deep integration of the web into KDE applications and Plasma, more steps towards this direction will become apparent in the next months.

Plasma netbook's application launcher page leverages KRunner plugins to provide all kinds of functionality in a full-screen view. Application switching, access to the file index, Wikipedia search, a quick calculator -- you name it, the new application launcher provides it in an appealing way, optimized for portable devices.

New Anchorlayouts Enhance Canvas-Based Interfaces

INdT and Plasma developer Artur Souza presented a project, his team and the Qt developers in Oslo have been working on over the last months. The new Anchorlayouts provide a way to position user interface elements relative to each other filling a gap Plasma developers have been experiencing when experimenting with new ways of layouting UI elements on the Plasma canvas.

KDE and Plasma on ARM

The Plasma developers worked on running KDE on a so-called "mystery device", a working name for a class of relatively low-performance devices based on the ARM architecture. As a reference device, the developers used a 800 Mhz ARM CPU with 512MB of RAM. During the sprint, KDE 4.2's Plasma was presented running on the device. The overall performance was quite good, although it showed room for improvement. Even without having an accelerated graphics driver available at this point, the developers were quite happy with the performance so far as Souza a.k.a Morpheuz reports on his weblog. Using Qt 4.6 on the device gave another boost in speed. *"Even with the short time available to make Plasma run on the device, and without having a proper graphics driver available, we can now be sure that running Plasma on this class of devices is absolutely feasible. I'm sure that, with a bit more integration work, Plasma will offer a premium choice for UI technology on this new class of devices."* concludes Souza.

Plasma Team Provides Input and Feedback to Qt Developers

Alexis Menard from the Qt team presented the innovations in the new version of the Qt framework. KDE, and especially Plasma will be able to benefit from vast performance improvements in the QGraphicsView canvas. The addition of Qt Kinetic enables Plasma to easily animate various parts of the UI, using this standard framework. The addition of Qt Kinetic marks a milestone is what can only be described as a successful collaboration between Qt Development Frameworks and Nokia. During the first Tokamak meeting in Milan, Italy, Qt engineer Andreas Aardal Hanssen had presented the plans for a standardized and shared animation framework in Qt, oriented, amongst others, towards the need of rich, canvas-based user interfaces. Subsequently, the Plasma developers have provided use-cases, feedback and API reviews to make sure that Kinetic meets its users' needs and provides the tools necessary to enhance UIs built on top of Qt with smooth and natural animations while being easy to program. During the second Tokamak meeting in February 2009, Qt and Plasma developers Menard presented an example of the Plasma picture frame using kinetic to animate transitions between images in a slidehow. Qt Kinetic will be part of Qt 4.6 which has recently entered feature freeze and will be released in late 2009. The Plasma developers have taken the first steps to be able to use Kinetic in KDE's upcoming release, 4.4 which will be released in January 2010. In the course of the week, a Google Summer of Code project to integrate Kinetic into libplasma has entered review stage, and will probably be merged into KDE's upcoming release branch in the next weeks.

Menard also talked about vast performance improvements in QGraphicsView and how these were achieved. For selected use-cases, the performance in handling items on the GraphicsView canvas has been improved by orders of magnitude. Those changes will automatically become available to KDE by using Qt 4.6.

Another new piece of technology the Qt team is working on is QML, the Qt markup language. Menard gave an update of the progress in this field, after Plasma developers had provided an initial round of feedback earlier this year. QML is an implementation of the declarative UI technology that will make it easier for designers to build rich user interfaces on top of Qt. The Plasma developers are looking forward to use QML in order to make it easy to build Plasma components in a visual way, much like Qt designer does for traditional widgets.

Community and Team-building efforts

An important aspect of this kind of developer sprints is the team building and bonding aspect.

Getting away from their keyboards every now and then, the team had a daily nature walk. With the terrific surrounding of the Oberwallis, the scenery provided a unique opportunity to re-charge the batteries and talk about various things off-line for a while. Experience with this kind of focused developer meetings has shown that personal interaction is an essential ingredient for good collaboration online. Activities off the keyboards included hiking in the surrounding Swiss Alps, building a dam in a mountain creek and going up onto the "Kleines Matterhorn", one of the mountains surrounding the valley at a height of approximately 3800 meters. The atmosphere in Chalet Nachtigall, (the "*Plasmaniac Mansion*") was very family-like with the daily lunches and dinners, where everybody sat around a table. In terms of productivity, the results of this meeting are nothing short of impressive.

Over the course of the week, the team welcomed a number of visitors, both local and regional. The local newspaper "Walliser Bote" had published an article and interview with Mario Fux, the organizer and host of Tokamak III, which drew the attention of people from Randa who dropped by to take a peek at how the new breed of technology enthusiasts collaborates. The team also welcomed Mark "markey" Kretschmann and Myrian "Mamarok" Schweingruber from the Amarok team during the sprint, and a number of local visitors dropped by to find out about the world of Free Software. Most were attracted by an article in the local newspaper "Walliser Bote".

Other Achievements

The performance of the job viewer in the new Plasma system tray has seen some major performance optimizations. Davide Bettio has overhauled the structure of Plasma's configuration dialogs in an effort to reflect the mental model of the user closer, rather than the technological structure of these components. Sebastian Kügler presented his work on a new, netbook-friendly Plasma network management applet and a work on integrating information from the Akonadi PIM storage framework into Plasma. Chani Armitage has further polished the work on mouse plugins for Plasma she conducted as part of her Summer of Code project. Artur Souza has separated the back- and front-end of the Plasma pastebin widget. This widget now consists of a Plasma applet and a dataengine, making it easier to share this web service between applets. Ivan Cukic has worked on Plasma's context, a service using the Nepomuk semantical framework as provider of context information. In the future, this will be used to adapt applications and the Plasma shell what the user is doing, where he is and other environmental constrains. Cukic, who is the main developer of Lancelot, an innovative application launcher for Plasma and an alternative to the KDE "start menu" Kickoff, integrated KRunner plugins into KDE's default application launcher. While Kickoff is in theory a competitor, or rather a replacement for Lancelot, Cukic showed great team spirit by implementing this substantial improvement into KDE's default setup. KRunner plugins are used to provide matches for the search bar which can be found in Plasma's application launcher, making this technology more accessible to everyday users.

Martin Grässlin, developer of KWin (pronounced: "*Quinn*"), KDE's window and compositing manager joined the Plasma sprint to provide feedback about deeper integration between KWin and Plasma, and to implement new border snapping features of KWin, much like the new mechanism Windows 7 provides. This, and the support for tiling and tabbing, which Grässlin told us will be included in KDE 4.4, complements nicely the leaps Plasma is making in this release cycle.

With all the work on new features, Plasma developers surely did not forget to further stabilize the current set of features. During the sprint, every day saw annoying bugs being squashed and the less intrusive fixes among them being backported to the 4.3 branch. A more stable set of features will be made available to the users with the upcoming monthly bugfix and translation updates the KDE

team provides -- a number of the improvements made, such as the performance optimizations for the job viewer, are scheduled to become available as soon as KDE 4.3.2 comes out next month.

Tokamak III Concludes

The Plasma team thanks the KDE e.V. for providing funding to the team, which made it possible to bring people from all over the world together in one place to collaborate on KDE's primary user interface. Special thanks go out to host Mario Fux, who not only provided the unique premises of Chalet Nachtigall in Randa, but also took care of all the needs of the developers. Fux already showed interest in organizing another sprint in the beautiful Randa, if your team is interested, get in contact with him. Tokamak III was certainly a very unique experience and enabled the developers to fully concentrate on work while gaining new inspiration and ideas. Without the KDE e.V.'s financial support and the friendly support of Mario Fux, this would not have been possible.

Impressions 2009

Discussing and programming

Building a dam together starchs the group feeling

Everybody was helping, e.g. for fresh bread

All present their work in a moment...

The location of the meeting

Sponsors list 2009

We would like to thank the following person and institutions:

- Family Fux for their help and the chalet „Nachtigall“ in Randa
- Family Pöllmann for the accommodation in their holiday appartement in Randa
- KDE e.V. for paying the travel tickets of the participants
- And all we have forgotten and who helped us!

We would be very happy you would support us too and already want to say 'thank you' for your time and effort!

Hint:: This brochure doesn't talk in the name of the KDE community or KDE e.V. but in the name of the organizers of the Randa Meetings.