

# KDE: An International Community



KDE is an **international community** made up of programmers, translators, contributors, artists, writers, distributors, and users from all over the world. Our international technology team is **committed to creating powerful and innovative graphical applications** for a variety of devices like desktops, netbooks, mobile devices or television screens. And not only contributors, but **users and fans of KDE software can be found throughout the entire globe**, giving help to other users, spreading the news, or just simply enjoying the experience.

This document provides background on KDE and the reasons to choose our software. Further information about KDE is provided on our website at [www.kde.org](http://www.kde.org) and some key facts for journalists can be found at [www.kde.org/presspage](http://www.kde.org/presspage)

## More Than Just Software



KDE started life as a desktop environment, a piece of technology which forms the basis for your desktop computing experience. As activities have grown and we've become creators of a whole range of products, KDE now stands for **an international team that creates Free and Open Source Software**.

What this means in practice is that the many applications from the KDE community work together to give you the best possible computing experience. Does that mean you can't use a KDE application if you don't use the KDE desktop? Not at all. Our applications can be used almost anywhere. Not just on Linux desktops like Gnome, the KDE Plasma Desktop or the netbook optimized Plasma Netbook interface, but also on Windows and Mac machines. And we are moving mobile - KDE software works on and is being adapted for mobile use like phones and internet tablets. Or in the direction of larger devices - a media center interface, optimized for large television screens is being developed as well. Our technology scales like no other, and it is something we're proud of. Our Pie in the Sky is allowing developers to write one single application, which 'just works' on the huge variety of devices out there: from mobile phones to media centers, from netbooks to desktop workstations.

There is a huge variety of applications and tools to suit any user's needs, from simple yet powerful text editors, to rocking audio and video players, to the most sophisticated integrated development environment. Plus, KDE applications follow a consistent look and feel across the desktop, giving you a comfortable and familiar experience when using any KDE program. They combine a high standard with strong flexibility. Every KDE application has fully adjustable keyboard shortcuts, can make use of mouse gestures, text to speech, spelling check and multimedia. Every six months a new, updated version of a set of our applications is released - which is known as the Software Compilation (SC). Other applications have separate release schedules, either because their developers prefer the flexibility this offers or because the application is not yet up to the high standard set by the Software Compilation.

# Benefits of KDE Software



KDE software has several other features that make it a top-class working environment, such as:

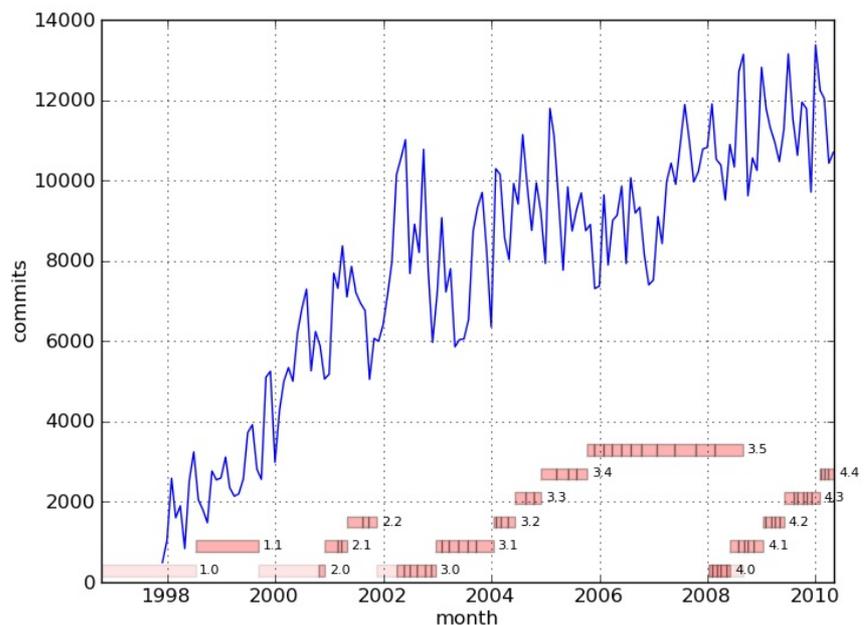
- A beautiful, flexible and modern desktop technology which scales from traditional computers to mobile or large-screen interfaces
- Highly flexible and configurable software, letting you customize application settings without modifying text files by hand or changing obscure key-value pairs in a registry-editor tool
- Network transparency allows you to easily access files on other networks and computers as if they were on your own computer
- A software ecosystem thousands of programs
- Availability in over 60 languages

## KDE in Numbers



The KDE source repository contains about 6 million lines of code, written by thousands of volunteers over the years. To an average release some 700 of our about 1500 developers contribute, over 100 of which are new to the KDE community in that cycle.

They fix anywhere between 5000 and 10000 bugs and implement 1000 to 2000 feature requests. Most other developers work on applications outside of the official KDE repository. Meanwhile huge amounts of text are written by translators and documentation writers and over 20000 bugs are reported by users and triaged by the bugsquad.



The community contributes over 3000 commits (code drops) per week to the core repository. These numbers make the KDE community the second largest after the Linux Kernel community. Many KDE applications are not developed within the 'official' KDE repository but reside on gitorious.org, sourceforge or other code hosting services.

Moreover, KDE heavily depends on and is intertwined with Qt, the Nokia supported cross-platform toolkit. Hundreds of developers work fulltime on Qt and their work benefits the KDE applications directly. KDE technology is used throughout the globe, and users are estimated to number in the tens of millions. In emerging economies Free Software and KDE applications are heavily used in schools and at government agencies and their importance in the western world is growing rapidly. Countries well known for their healthy and growing local KDE community include Indonesia, India, Iran, Nigeria, Germany, France, Spain, Brazil and Peru.

# KDE and Free Software



KDE software isn't just any software. It is **Free Software**.

As a user, this is an important fact, even without getting deep into technical or legal considerations. As free software, you are free to use KDE wherever you want and in whatever manner you want, with no activation keys and no installation limits. And you're free to share it with others, learn about the underlying technology or build custom appliances.

This freedom is taken by a variety of individuals and organizations to allow themselves and others to quickly create powerful solutions for a variety of situations. An example is the openSUSE buildservice, where anyone can quickly and easily build a custom appliance for any purpose. Mobile phone makers like Nokia take KDE technology to enable their phones to view maps, browse the web, view and edit documents or play media. So not only do you have in your hands great and powerful software giving YOU the freedom to use, modify and distribute it, but you can also take advantage of the fact others do this.

## Advanced Software from KDE



The applications and technology offered by the KDE community has grown far beyond 'basic computing needs'. We provide:

- A powerful Office and Productivity Suite capable of working with a variety of document formats and using the international ISO standard ODF natively.
- An easy to use and complete set of Personal Information Management tools like the KMail Email client, the Akregator News Reader, the KOrganizer agenda application, Blogilo the blogging tool and many more. The Kontact Suite combines many of these applications, offering seamless integration between the tools.
- The most comprehensive and powerful Free Software Application Development Framework. The KDE Platform, developed over the last 15 years, counts as the most complete set of application development libraries in the Free Software world - and few, if any, non-free platforms offer as much.
- Built in cross-platform capabilities. Applications built upon the KDE Platform will build and function natively on a variety of platforms, including Windows, Mac OS X and several mobile platforms like Symbian and MeeGo.

## Organization of KDE



Any team of substantial size requires mechanisms in place to ensure smooth operations, and KDE is no exception. The KDE community is organized around a large number of semi-independent teams, and has a few overarching groups which take care of coordination and communication.

### KDE Core

Membership to the core group, 'The KDE Core Team', is purely merit based, and its membership can be difficult to strictly define at any point in time. Anyone can become a member of this core group, the particular contributor must however have distinguished him/herself through outstanding work and dedication towards the KDE community over a

considerable period of time.

The KDE Core group decides on the overall direction of the KDE Platform. Contrary to the development of other free software projects, most notably the Linux Kernel, KDE does not have a single 'benevolent dictator' who can veto important decisions. Instead, at KDE the core team consisting of several dozen contributors takes decisions on the basis of merit and consensus building.

Primarily, this team communicates using the kde-core-devel mailing list, which is publicly archived and readable, but requires approval before joining. This ensures that the list is populated by active contributors.

## Other groups

Within the KDE community, there are many smaller teams working towards specific goals. For example, the Release Team is responsible for ensuring that the KDE Software Compilation is released on a schedule that they decide and enforce. The marketing and promotion team is responsible for ensuring timely and accurate information about KDE and its software is widely available. The web team maintains much of the content of KDE's web presence, while the system administration team ensures that the hardware and software behind KDE's infrastructure functions properly. Since membership in most of these teams is open and transient, new contributors are more than welcome.

## Development

Development is further organized alongside topical teams like education, office or network applications. While these teams work independently for the most part and do not all follow a common release schedule, there are many people working with and in several teams. We all share a common purpose and a common passion, which brings us together at least once a year at Akademy or Camp KDE, the two yearly conferences. Akademy takes place in or close to Europe while Camp KDE is a North American event. Of course there are a variety of events around the world with a strong presence of the KDE community, including several in Brazil, India and other places.

## KDE e.V.



Since any large project will need to handle legal and financial issues on occasion, KDE created a non-profit body which can protect the interests of KDE as a whole. It represents the KDE Community in legal and financial matters.

***"The Association's purpose is the promotion and distribution of free desktop software in terms of free software, and the program package 'K Desktop Environment (KDE)' in particular, to promote the free exchange of knowledge and equality of opportunity in accessing software as well as education, science and research."***

*Quote from the articles of association of KDE e.V.*

The Association aids in creating and distributing KDE by securing cash, hardware, and other donations, then using donations to aid KDE development and promotion.

The Association was originally founded to create a legal entity capable of representing the KDE Project in the KDE Free Qt Foundation. The growing popularity of KDE also made it necessary to establish a thin organizational layer that is capable of handling *all* legal and financial interests of the KDE developers. In 1997 KDE e.V. was registered as an association

under German law. The "e.V." stands for "eingetragener Verein" which means "registered association". The e.V. is a restricted membership organization with a growing list of members who have shown that they are long term, active KDE team members with a vested interest in seeing KDE everywhere. It is governed by an elected board, and exerts no technical influence over the development of KDE software, but instead is tasked with facilitating the growth of KDE.

More information can be found on [ev.kde.org](http://ev.kde.org).

## KDE and Qt



Qt (pronounced cute) is the toolkit, the technical building blocks that KDE applications are built upon. It is developed in the open by Qt Software, a Nokia group. The KDE community collaborates closely with Nokia on the development of Qt, test driving the latest technology, reporting bugs and contributing code. Many KDE developers are employed by Qt and other companies in the Qt/KDE ecosystem. Qt forms the basis of MeeGo, the collaboration between Intel and Nokia. MeeGo aims to be a flexible interface for mobile and netbook-like devices. Moreover Qt is used in a huge variety of industries, as it offers a powerful, cross-platform application and UI framework. More information about Qt Software can be found on [qt.nokia.com](http://qt.nokia.com).

## Further Information



KDE has a number of regional contacts who can provide information or assist in setting up interviews. Please visit [www.kde.org/contact](http://www.kde.org/contact) for a full up to date list.