



The role of KDE e.V.

by Cornelius Schumacher

Dear KDE e.V. member,

"Join the game" was the motto of the second quarter of 2010. Under this motto we launched our campaign to promote the Individual Supporting Membership Program. It is a wonderful opportunity to support the KDE community in creating free desktop software for the benefit of millions of users all over the world.

The supporting membership is particularly interesting for all those friends of KDE, who don't have the time to contribute in terms of code, translations, documentation, or any of the other activities directly related to creating KDE software, but would rather give some financial help to the community to support those who can.

Along these lines the second quarter saw a record number of developer sprints. These are focused events where a small group of contributors get together a couple of days to get work done, coordinate plans, and introduce new people to the community. These sprints fuel the productivity of the community, and they wouldn't be possible without financial support.

Thanks a lot for your contributions.

Signed,

Cornelius Schumacher for the KDE e.V. Board
<kde-ev-board@kde.org>

From time to time we hear the question, what actually is KDE e.V., what's its role in the KDE community? Let me try to answer this question here.

In short, KDE e.V. is the organization, which represents, supports, and provides governance to the KDE community. It gives the community a legal body so it can participate in activities which require a legal representation, somebody handling money, or a way to legitimize individuals to speak and act for the community.

Before I go into some more details of this threefold role of representation, support, and governance, here is a brief explanation of how KDE e.V. is set up organizationally.

KDE e.V. is incorporated as a non-profit association according to German law. The e.V. actually stands for "eingetragener Verein", which means "registered association". This is a very common legal form in Germany, which is used by hundreds of thousands of associations covering all kind of different activities from sports to animal rights to free software. This organizational form provides a very solid legal framework, which makes sure that questions about who can be a member, how decisions are made, how representatives are elected, how budgets are handled, and many other things all have well-defined answers. It also ensures that members are in control of what's happening in the organization.

Many other free software organizations have foundations as representing organizations similar to how KDE e.V. represents KDE. KDE e.V. is also recognized as tax exempt by the German financial authorities as its goals and activities are targeted at the public good. This also means that at least in Germany donations and membership fees provide tax benefits for donors and members.

The membership of KDE e.V. consists of the core of the KDE community. New members are voted in by the existing membership and the goal is to have a good representation of the overall community as members. Currently there are 165 members which are eligible to vote about KDE e.V. decisions.

But now back to the three roles of KDE e.V. in the KDE community; representation, support, and governance.

Representation is the most formal aspect of KDE e.V. A community like KDE - dynamic, distributed, mostly made of volunteers - has no natural way to handle situations where it's required that someone officially speaks for the community, signs contracts, or accepts money. This gap is filled by KDE e.V. Because its members are representing the core of the community, and because KDE e.V. owns some of the central assets of the community like the trademark and the domains, it can act on behalf of the community. The legal structure of its incorporation makes sure that this is handled properly and KDE e.V.'s activities actually represent the intention of its members.

So whenever a formal representation of the KDE community is needed KDE e.V. becomes active. This can mean signing contracts in the name of the community, it can mean accepting transfer of rights, e.g. with the Fiduciary License Agreement, or it can mean providing a way to give money to the KDE community.

The second important role of KDE e.V. is supporting the KDE community in creating free software. Because KDE e.V. acts as central broker of resources, it's able to provide financial support for a lot of activities. This shows in developer sprints, the annual Akademy conference, travel support for community members to all kind of community events, and the people we employ in our office, who provide organizational and administrative capabilities to the community in all kinds of different ways. This support would not be possible without the many donors and supporting members of KDE e.V., help which is very much appreciated.

In addition to the material support, KDE e.V. also provides other support. It provides a forum for the core of the community to discuss and make decisions. It also acts as a central point of contact, and is of course also an important part of the identity of the KDE community.

Last, but not least, there is the governance part. This is dominated by one important decision KDE e.V. has made, which is the decision to not control the process of creating the KDE software. KDE e.V. explicitly leaves that to the proven open source development processes, with its focus on peer interaction, deciding by doing, and all the other meritocratic elements, which found the huge success of this model. So KDE e.V. does not decide about technical questions, release schedules, what software to include, or how the community is organized in terms of software development.

Sometimes it's still needed to have a way to legitimize individuals or groups of community members to act in some official capacity. That's where KDE e.V. takes on a

certain degree of governance. One example of this are the working groups of KDE e.V. which include, the community working group, the marketing working group, the sysadmin team, or the board. They are endorsed by KDE e.V. and so are able to act for the community and sometimes make decisions in the areas where this is needed. This mostly boils down to a question of representation of support again, which somehow closes the circle.

The value of KDE e.V. for the KDE community can't be underestimated. A community of this size couldn't work effectively without a mechanism to bring together representation, support, and governance roles. KDE e.V. has grown and is still growing together with the community from its inception in 1997 to these days of 2010, and a lot of this common growth can be attributed to the healthy and effective relationship between the KDE community and KDE e.V. as organization behind it.

Launch of "Join the Game" Campaign

KDE e.V.'s "Join the Game" campaign was officially launched at LinuxTag Berlin, which took place from 9th June to 12th June at the Berlin exhibition grounds.

Now, what exactly is this campaign all about? It promotes the idea of becoming a supporting member of KDE e.V. for individuals. The possibility to contribute to KDE e.V.'s activities was hardly used in the past. Prior to this campaign being launched, the group of supporting members basically consisted of Martin Wolters, Jeff Mitchell and Dean Meixner. So these three KDE enthusiasts were part of the campaign before it even existed and the board and the whole membership of KDE e.V. would like to take this opportunity to thank them for their long term contributions.

On the first day of LinuxTag, however, the start of "Join the Game" was officially announced at the Radio Tux stage by Frank Karlitschek (KDE e.V.'s vice president and treasurer) and Jos Poortvliet (KDE e.V. member and marketing core contributor).

The campaign almost instantly created quite some interest not only within the KDE community, but within the whole free software community.

Georg Greve (founder of the Free Software Foundation Europe and holder of the German Federal Cross of Merit) was the first to 'join the game'. He was closely followed by Vincent Untz (president of GNOME Foundation) who signed up for the program right away at the KDE booth. In return, Cornelius Schumacher (president of KDE e.V.)

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became a 'Friend of GNOME'. This "joint venture" was well perceived in both communities since it shows that despite working for rival projects, both share the same goal of making the world a better place by providing and improving free software for everyone.

Within the first few days, quite a few people decided to support KDE and as a special surprise, everyone who "joined the game" as a new supporting member during the first two days at the KDE booth had the chance to win a place at the "Join the Game" dinner at Funkturm (Berlin Radio Tower) Restaurant, located high in the sky at approximately 55 meters above the ground.



On Thursday afternoon, 4 lucky winners were drawn from the new members. Yvonne Kappler, Marcus Asshauer (both volunteers at the Kubuntu booth), Thomas Fricke (FOSS consultant and KDE user) and Ingo Ebel (working for Radio Tux) were invited to dine with some well known people from KDE and the wider free software community: Georg Greve, Matthias Ettrich (initiator of the KDE project), Till Adam (long term KDE e.V. member and PIM core contributor), Paul Adams (KDE GB member, research and statistics specialist), Frank Karlitschek and Jos Poortvliet. Torsten Thelke (intern at the KDE e.V. office) and one of the main people involved with setting up the Join the Game campaign were also invited.

The launch of the campaign was a big success in terms of creating awareness about KDE e.V.'s Individual Supporting Membership Program as well as convincing people to actually sign up and give financial support.

If you would like to financially support KDE as an individual please visit the individual supporting membership program site.

<http://jointhegame.kde.org>

By now, eight weeks after the launch announcement, 98 people have become supporting members of KDE e.V.

Their donations enable the e.V. to support the community in creating KDE software in ways such as providing travel support for volunteers to attend developer sprints, organizing community events like the annual Akademie conference or simply sending promo material to the KDE booth. All of this goes a long way towards helping to improve our software and spread the word about it.

The supporting membership is a great way to contribute to KDE for those who want to get involved but might not be able to contribute with volunteer work for some reason. Hopefully, this promising start of the "Join the Game" campaign will lead to a solid future of the Individual Supporting Membership Program of KDE e.V. and thus create a vibrant community of supporting members as an essential part of KDE.

Supported Member Activities

Developer Meetings and Sprints

KDE Finance Apps Meeting, Eschborn, Germany 23rd - 25th April 2010

The first KDE Finance sprint brought together the developers of 3 applications related to finances: KMyMoney, Kraft, and Skrooge. The meeting was kindly hosted by SyroCon in an office facing the building that will soon become the new home of the Frankfurt Stock Exchange. Of course, there's no better place to talk about KDE finance applications!

The first day consisted of presentations from the three different teams. At first glance one would expect the applications to target the same audience but the truth is that each one of them aims at a different kind of user. This was one of the main outcomes of the presentations.

For the second day, and with the different use cases in the developer's minds, the idea was to invest time on work that could benefit all the finance applications. The first being to create a list of icons that would be used by the three applications to have better integration with the KDE ecosystem and ask the Oxygen team for some help on this. The second was the creation of a component for the finance stack named Alkimia.

The third day was focused on Alkimia. Starting with a set of use cases, the preliminary architecture for this framework was created with technologies like D-Bus, Akonadi and SQLite. A Season of KDE (SOK) project was also created and now there is a student working on it. There was some more discussion about some features of

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Alkimia like online quotes and import/export until the end of the day.

The KDE Finance group is evolving into a team and results are starting to show. Alkimia is making its appearance in playground within KDE SVN, taking shape as a promising future Pillar of KDE.

KDE-Edu and Multimedia Sprint in Randa, Switzerland, 20th - 25th May 2010

The beautiful town of Randa, Switzerland was invaded by over 40 KDE enthusiasts from 17 different countries.

Excellently organized by Mario Fux and backed by many sponsors and a dedicated cook, this sprint was a great opportunity for several different KDE groups to work across the boundaries of their own projects and exchange experiences and ideas. Present were developers from KDE-Edu, Amarok, Phonon, KMix, VLC, and Gluon.

The KDE-Edu team also shared their work with Sabine from Vox Humanitatis and Bërto from the Ambaradan project. Vox Humanitatis is a not for profit organisation that works in the field of preserving and supporting less resourced cultures with a focus on their language and education. Ambaradan is a free open source dictionary which allows translations from any to any language. Besides a great deal of software improvement, people from both projects took the chance and refreshed the existing co-operation as well as planning future steps.

Furthermore, based on the idea that 'KDE-Edu makes your knowledge grow' the concept for a new logo was developed.

The Gluon developers worked with the KDE-Edu team to figure out where a game development framework would fit into the Edu framework, and also worked on the roadmap for the release of the first major version. Usability enhancements for the work flow of Gluon Creator were also implemented, as well as the beginnings of a new, more powerful scripting engine. The tentative roadmap has now been published on the Gluon website.

The KDE Multimedia people were busy with Phonon and its backends, especially Phonon-VLC, since a main VLC developer also attended the meeting. Closer co-operation with the VLC team is in the pipeline for the future, especially for the new Phonon-VLC backend.

The Amarok team held a series of workshops on various topics like integration of new technologies such as "LikeBack" as well as talks about the main issues Amarok is facing at this time and how to start addressing those.

Experimental work was also started on reducing Amarok's

startup time (which on some systems is unacceptably long).

Since Amarok is directly dependent on the KDE multimedia components, a cross-application collaboration with Phonon, VLC, KMix, and PulseAudio was also part of the focus. Jean-Baptiste Kempf from VLC, Christian Esken from KMix and Colin Guthrie from PulseAudio presented their current state of development as well as future plans for their respective projects. Also discussed was the utilization of a new QtScript binding system in Amarok, aiming at a better performance and memory profile. One of the very important items of the sprint was also a telephone conference with the Qt Multimedia developers in Brisbane, facilitated and moderated by Knut Irvin.

Akonadi Meeting, Berlin, Germany, 13th - 16th May 2010

In May, the KDE PIM team met at the KDAB office in Berlin for one of their regular sprints. But not only KDE PIM developers attended. Also Andrey Moiseenko and Alvaro Manera, who work on calendaring for the next Meego phone from Nokia, joined in because they are using KCal and working together on changes and improvements is of course useful for both sides.

During the sprint a vast variety a topics were addressed. However, the main focus was on stabilizing and planning for the upcoming 4.5 release cycle. A lot of work was done on KMail, KAddressBook and KOrganizer as KDE PIM applications are being ported to Akonadi.

Despite the recently made progress, it was decided that KMail 2 is not yet ready for a beta release and since KMail is an important part of the KDE PIM suite, the new KDE PIM package will not be released together with KDE SC 4.5.0, but a little bit later.

KDE Windows Meeting, Osnabrueck, Germany, 5th - 6th June 2010

The KDE Windows meeting took place at the Intevation office in Osnabrueck. Since the team hasn't had a "physical" meeting for a long period of time the schedule for this weekend was quite full. Besides a great deal of coding, the sprint saw some productive discussions on how to promote and market the KDE on Windows idea.

Other topics were stabilizing the Windows build-system for the KDE-Windows installer, improved build error reporting from Windows builds for the KDE community and the integration of small, standalone packages for applications like Okular or Amarok into the KDE-Windows system.

KOffice Sprint, Essen, Germany 11th - 13th June 2010

In June the KOffice team, sponsored by KDE e.V., got together in the Linux Hotel in Essen. In those wonderful surroundings, the team not only spent time hacking and socializing - there were at least four KOffice developers who had not been to any sprint before - but also discussing important issues like the uptake of KOffice.

The team agreed on a list of steps needed to increase the usability of KOffice, and also formulated a number of development policies for things like code review. It was a very harmonious, relaxing and invigorating sprint: a big success.

Tradeshows and Community Events

Akademy-BR, Praia do Forte, Brazil 9th - 11th April 2010

As a consequence of the increasing Brazilian participation in KDE projects related to code, artwork, translation, and promotion, the first Akademy Brazil took place in Praia do Forte (Fort Beach), a pleasant and small tourist village near Salvador – Bahia, from 9th to 11th April. There were thirty Brazilian participants from all over the country. The sprint was organized by the local group named LiveBlue.



This sprint was very important for the growing Brazilian KDE community to make contributing more accessible to new members, to build friendships, to make and improve KDE applications, and to plan the expectations for KDE in Brazil during 2010 (like the presence at big conferences: FISL 2010 and Latinoware 2010).

During these three days there were a lot of discussions covering items such as how to promote KDE in Brazil during 2010 and a "revamp" of the KDE-BR website. There were also a lot of hacking sessions: people hacking on card games (it was like a mini sprint of the KDE Games group), the port of KEduca to KDE4, improvements to Google Summer of Code projects (like Rocs) and better support for 3G modems in the Network Manager plasmoid,

enabling traffic statistics and connection information.

Akademy-ES, Bilbao, Spain 7th - 9th May 2010

Annually, the vibrant and fast growing Spanish KDE community meets at the Akademy España. This year's Akademy-ES was held in the beautiful town of Bilbao at the Engineering Technical School. Well organized by the Spanish KDE community and the Free Software Group of the University of the Basque Country (Itsas) the event saw approximately 80 KDE enthusiasts. Although Akademy-ES is a local Spanish event, it was great to see people from other countries, such as France or Ireland, attending as well.

The track of talks was opened by Dani Gutiérrez (professor at the University of the Basque Country) with his talk about KDE on Windows. The attendees got to enjoy two and a half days of interesting talks and intense hacking sessions, as well as social events like the nice evening boat trip on the Nervión river.

During the annual KDE España Assembly, that took place during the event, a new KDE España board was elected. The board members are:

- President: Albert Astals Cid (re-elected)
- Vice President: Rafael Fernández López (re-elected)
- Secretary: Aleix Pol (re-elected)
- Treasurer: José Millán Soto

Once again, Akademy-ES proved to be very productive. Both the the Spanish and wider KDE communities are looking forward to next year's Akedemy-ES.

Ecumenical Church Day, Munich, Germany.

12th - 16th May 2010

Together with representatives of FSFE, some KDE enthusiasts operated a booth at a rather unusual event for KDE: The Ecumenical Church Day in Munich. Irina Rempt explains the KDE presence in her Dot article as follows: "The KDE community in general is of course secular (and should be), but our philosophy that software is primarily for people and should be freely shared fits admirably well with such an event".

People visiting this event were of course rather non-technical. Therefore the booth team had to explain the idea of Free Software rather than going into details about the new KDE releases. The booth however was a pretty busy place and people were very interested in Free Software and KDE. Irina Rempt concludes: "In some ways, going to this event may have had more impact, relatively speaking, than to the usual tech events: we could reach a new audience of people who had been completely ignorant of free software, Linux or KDE before".

LinuxTag, Berlin, Germany, 9th - 12th June 2010

At LinuxTag in Berlin the KDE community had almost 20 volunteers staffing the booth and giving talks and presentations. On Wednesday morning, the Supporting Membership Program was officially launched by Frank Karlitschek and Jos Poortvliet. The first supporting member was Georg Greve, founder of the FSFE. At the booth many visitors had a chat with the volunteers and quite a few signed up for the supporting membership. There were also a couple of KDE related talks in the LinuxTag conference program, such as Milian Wolff's talk about KDevelop 4, Sebastian Sauer's KOffice2 presentation, and more. The talks were well received.



As always LinuxTag Berlin - as one of the big European Free Software events - was a good opportunity to meet the Free Software community, present KDE, foster contacts, and discuss future plans. The latter was done by Frank Karlitschek and Claudia Rauch of KDE e.V. who met up with Vincent Untz and Stormy Peters from the GNOME Foundation to talk about the organization of the 2011 Desktop Summit.

South East Linux Fest, Spartanburg, SC, USA,

11th - 13th June 2010

Justin Kirby and Celeste Paul organized a booth to spread the word about the recently announced "Join the Game" campaign as well as demo the latest features in KDE software. Celeste also presented a talk at the event entitled "KDE is everywhere" which described how the KDE community has progressed since the beginning, moving from desktop software to an experience that includes netbooks and mobile devices in addition to traditional computing environments.

KDE e.V. Board Meeting

In May, the board met at the office in Berlin, in the run up to LinuxTag and the launch of the Individual Supporting Members Program "Join the Game". The meeting was, as usual, an intense three day affair.

The infrastructure for the KDE community was a topic for discussion - see the Sysadmin report for more information. The decision was taken to self-host the Git infrastructure for the KDE project, instead of outsourcing it. Last preparations for the launch of the "Join the Game" campaign were done, such as sorting out the manufacturer for the cards, unpacking boxes of merchandise, allocating resources to promotion and support, and setting up the program for the launch at LinuxTag. "Join the Game" is the campaign to promote the Individual Supporting Membership of KDE e.V. See the report of the launch at the top of this report for more details.

The board also spent time designing the Corporate Supporting Membership Program, with the intent of expanding the options available to corporations interested in supporting KDE.

A traditionally big item was events and travel: discussing procedures for the Desktop Summit 2011, approving travel requests for Akademy 2010 and stretching the budget a little there, and evaluating the sprints held over the year.

Akademy preparations for the board include administration and planning for the General Assembly; the board reviewed the tax documents for the past year and handled some outstanding bookkeeping issues. In addition, the board added a "KDE e.V. BoF" session to the Akademy programme in order to spur discussion on the role of the association and the transparency of its dealings.

Looking towards the future, the board decided to encourage an event dubbed "K15", looking forward to KDE in 2015, with funding and logistical support. The goal of this event is to discuss KDE's strategy for the next five years and foster some forward-looking creative thinking and planning.

Welcome New Members

The KDE e.V. is happy to welcome the following new members:

- Alvaro Soliveres
- Aurelien Gateau
- John Layt

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- Justin Kirby
- Milian Wolff
- Sandro Andrade

Welcome to the KDE e.V.!

See the membership list page for more information, and instructions for how to join the e.V.

New Corporate Supporting Member

KDE e.V. is happy to announce a new corporate supporting member, **Google**, who joined us in January 2010!

If you or your company is interested in providing financial support to the KDE project on a continuing basis please visit the Supporting Members pages on the KDE e.V. website.

<http://ev.kde.org/getinvolved/supporting-members.php>

Finances

2010 April - June

Income:

- €20,970 Supporting Members
- €26,400 Akademy 2010 Sponsorship

Expenses:

- €18,600 Developer meetings
- €13,200 Akademy 2010 travel support
- €6,300 Trade shows and marketing
- €19,100 Office and employee

At the end of this reporting period (June 30th 2010) the KDE e.V. has a positive balance of €234,437

Note: The financial numbers are rounded numbers for information only. They don't constitute an accurate accounting statement

For donor and sponsorship information please see the "Supporting KDE" website.

Signed The KDE e.V. Board:

- Cornelius Schumacher <schumacher@kde.org>, President
- Frank Karlitschek <karlitschek@kde.org>, Vice President and Treasurer
- Adriaan de Groot <groot@kde.org>, Vice President
- Celeste Lyn Paul <celeste@kde.org>, Board Member
- Sebastian Kügler <sebas@kde.org>, Board Member

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Thanks to all members who contributed to this report.

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