

Working with Konqueror 3.4

KONQUERORING WORLDS

Following in the tracks of previous invaders such as Navigator and the Internet Explorer, Konqueror is on a mission to conquer the Internet. The KDE 3.4 version of Konqueror is a truly versatile tool that feels at home on the web.

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Many have criticized the fact that Internet Explorer is inseparably linked with the Windows system. KDE has its own native browser, and though Konqueror's position in the world of Linux is not quite as dominant as IE's is in Windows, the latest version of Konqueror provides new features for integrating Konqueror with user experience. This article examines some practical and lesser known features of Konqueror on the KDE 3.4 desktop.

Setting Up

Installing KDE automatically puts Konqueror on your hard disk. The KDE desk-

top command headquarters is part of the *kdebase* package, and the version number for the package reflects the KDE version you have installed. The major distributors all have matching numbers, even though they may not have the latest offerings. So if you are interested in checking out the latest KDE 3.4 version, be prepared for some manual steps.



has KDE-3.4 packages for version 8.2 or newer of their distribution [2]. Users with Gentoo Linux first need to enable the new KDE version, which is not yet tagged as stable, before running *emerge* to install the current desktop environment.

Starting Up

There are numerous ways of starting Konqueror. The icon and the *Home* entry in the KDE start menu take you to Konqueror in its filesystem browser guise. You can also pop up a quick launch window (*Alt + F2*), and type an Internet address, to launch Konqueror in web browsing mode. The *Internet | Web Browser (Konqueror)* entry, or the *konqueror* command prompt, both take you to Konqueror's new start-up screen (Figure 1). When Konqueror comes up, it gives you links to important places and



Figure 1: Konqueror after launching without a view profile.

While I was writing this article, the KDE Project FTP server at [1] had binaries for Fedora Core3 and Connectiva. Experienced users who have a day to spare for building the packages may be interested in the KDE source code, which is available from the same address. Suse Linux now



Figure 2: Konqueror in its tabbed web browsing guise.

tasks, allowing you to access both your home directory and the individual KDE Control Center modules.

View Profiles

The option of using multiple view profiles is extremely useful. The *Settings* menu has three items titled *Load view profile*, *Save view profile "xyz"*, and *Configure view profiles*. *xyz* represents the name of the current profile. The KDE 3.4 default configuration has six pre-configured view profiles. For example, *Tabbed Browsing* (Figure 2) gives you a Konqueror web surfing session with tabs.

Compare this with the traditional filesystem browsing window the *File Management* view profile gives. You can also display an embedded command line window in this mode by selecting *Window | Show Terminal Emulator* (Figure 3).

The *KDE development* view is a variant of the tabbed browsing view that automatically takes you to the KDE developer documentation tool. And fans of the legacy Norton Commander tool might like to check out *Settings | Load*

view profile | Midnight Commander for a Konqueror session with a split panel filesystem tree view.

The default setting is less than intuitive, as both panels show you the same directory, and if you change directory, you do so for both panels. To change this, you need to click on one of the check boxes below and to the right of the views.

If the predefined profiles are not to your liking, you can easily save your preferred settings in an additional profile. To do so, first set the view to reflect your preferences – you might like to add a terminal window, for example. Then select *Configure view profiles* and type a name for your profile. The name is then added to the submenu for *Load view profile*. To ensure that Konqueror launches with your favorite profile when you click the desktop icon, you now need to set the file manager's *--profile* parameter. To do so, change the command line for the icon to *konqueror --profile my_view*; the

Table 2: Kioslaves for Accessing Filesystems

kioslave	Task
audiocd	Displays the tracks on an audio CD
camera	Accesses images on a digital camera with <i>gphoto2</i> support; this assumes that <i>gphoto2</i> is installed
floppy	Access floppies using <i>mtools</i>
mac	Access HFS formatted partitions using the <i>hfsplus</i> tools
tar	Navigate tar archives just like normal directories; this kioslave automatically uses the compression slaves listed in Table 4 if necessary

next time you click the icon, Konqueror will come up in your preferred view mode.

Kioslaves

Special modules called kioslaves extend the functionality of Konqueror. Konqueror's kioslaves let you access networks, packed archives, audio CDs [3], and cameras with *gphoto2* [4] support. Kioslaves are the *kio* input/output modules. Each kioslave is responsible for a single protocol, which does not need to be a network protocol. The *kio* library has the advantage of allowing any KDE program to access the individual modules, removing the need for developers to concern themselves with the intricacies of the various protocols and the headache of integrating the protocols in their applications.

To find out which of these friendly helpers Konqueror knows, type *help:kioslave* in the location bar of the program. Konqueror will display a list with all the kioslaves it recognizes. In fact, you are

Table 1: Displaying Information

kioslave	Task
finger	Displays information on individual users; you need to have the <i>finger</i> installed and the <i>fingerd</i> running
help	Calls the KDE help system
info	Accesses the system's infopage in the Konqueror location bar
man	Displays the manpage for a command

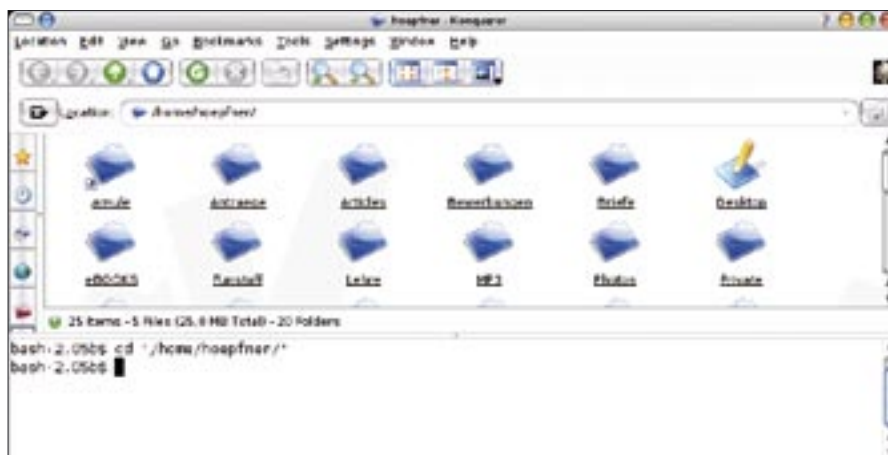


Figure 3: Konqueror as a file manager with terminal emulator.



Figure 4: Konqueror as a help center.

actually using one of them right now – *help:*, which gives you direct access to the KDE Help System. *help:ksnapshot* takes you to the help files for the KDE screenshot tool. If you are not looking for help on a KDE application, but need the manpage of an infopage for another Unix command instead, there is a kio-slave to handle this task. Type *man:/su* in the Konqueror location bar to access the HTML version of the manpage for the *su* command (Figure 4). If the search for a keyword locates multiple manpage entries, Konqueror first shows you a list of possible alternatives. Table 1 has a list

of kioslaves that give users access to generic information. For this feature to work, you do need to have the *hfsplus tools* on your system, as the kio-slave leverages the *hfsplus* functionality.

You can type *audiocd:/* in the location bar to view the tracks on an audio CD. Depending on the codecs and tools you have installed, this will give you a series of folders with virtual files in *flac*, *mp3*, or *ogg* format. The files in these subfolders are not really on the CD, but if you drag a file from the MP3 directory to your disk, Konqueror actually creates the MP3 file on-the-fly. To do so, it first reads the track and converts it to the

compressed format. By default, the file manager will access *freedb*, an Internet database with information on artist and track names for audio CDs. This allows Konqueror to add accurate and descriptive ID3 tags. As Fedora does not have MP3 support by default, users with the Fedora distribution will not see an MP3 folder.

Konquering the Filesystem

Konqueror can display content formatted for partitions, audio CDs, and cameras. For example, there is a *mac kio-slave* for accessing media formatted with Apple’s HFS +

filesystems. Among others, the list includes a kio-slave that gives you easy access to any cameras with *gphoto2* support. Typing *camera:/* in the Konqueror location bar first auto-detects the device before going on to display the folders and the image files they contain.

Network Specialist

Konqueror also gives you easy access to network resources. The program not only understands the *http* and *ftp* protocols, but also provides access to a mailbox on an IMAP server if you type *imap://username@server* in the location bar. If you have an IMAP account, simply replace *username* with your own user ID and *server* with the name of your IMAP server (Figure 5).

You can delete messages directly using Konqueror, just as you would with your mail program.

If you are more security conscious and wish to use an encrypted session to

Table 3: Network Protocols with Kio-slave Support	
kio-slave	Task
fish	Uses SSH to access other machines. For example, fish:/hoepfner@nero would open a connection for user <i>hoepfner</i> to a machine called <i>nero</i>
ftp	The legacy File Transfer Protocol
imap	Uses the Internet Message Access Protocol to access an IMAP server
imaps	Encrypted access to an IMAP server
ldap	Accesses an X.500 directory or LDAP server
nfs	Accesses NFS export on a network
nntp	Accesses a News server. The documentation rightly warns users that NNTP access is time-consuming and heavy on network resources – displaying all the groups on a <i>leafnode</i> installed locally took almost quarter of an hour on a Pentium M running at 1300 MHz
pop3	Uses the POP protocol to access a mail account
pop3s	Encrypted access to a POP mailbox
TL:login	Remote login to host
sftp	Secure FTP
smbground	Access Windows shares via Samba; Konqueror calls <i>smbclient</i> in the background
telnet	Log in on a remote machine running <i>telnetd</i> . As passwords are transmitted in the clear across telnet connections, you should use a secure <i>fish:/connection</i> instead.
webdav	Access an HTTP server using the WWW Distributed Authoring and Versioning protocol
webdavs	The encrypted variant of the WebDAV protocol

Table 4: Internal Kio-slaves	
kio-slave	Task
bzip	Access <i>bzip</i> compressed archives
bzip2	Access <i>bzip2</i> compressed files
gzip	Access <i>gzip</i> compressed files
cgi	Runs CGI programs without an active web server
file	Displays local files and directories
mailto	Launches your default mail editor
print	Printer information and settings
thumbnail	Runs KDE to create thumbnails.

INFO	
[1] KDE 3.4:	ftp://ftp.kde.org/pub/kde/stable/3.4/
[2] KDE 3.4 for Suse Linux:	ftp://ftp.suse.com/pub/suse/i386/supplementary/KDE/
[3] More information on the audio CD kio-slave:	http://docs.kde.org/en/3.3/kdebase/kio-slave/audiocd.html
[4] gphoto2:	http://www.gphoto.org/

access your IMAP account, you will need the *imaps kioslave* to display your mailbox contents. Table 3 shows you the other network protocols for which Konqueror has kioslave support.

Internal Kioslaves

KDE programs draw heavily on kioslaves internally. For example, clicking on a mail address in the control center opens your preferred mail program, which is KMail by default. KDE applications that do this use the *mailto* kioslave. And of

course, you can do the same thing by typing *mailto:user@domain* in the Konqueror location bar. This opens the KMail editor with the target address already typed into the address field for the message. You can type *print:/* to access yet another internal KDE *kioslave*. Doing so takes you straight to the KDE printer management tool (Figure 6).

Table 4 gives you a list of internal *Kioslaves*.

Conclusion

Konqueror is a highly-focused and successful attempt by the KDE developers to implement a universal tool that can handle almost any file-related task. One problem with Kon-

queror is that the program has become so enormous that it might take a busy user several months to discover some of the extremely practical features the Konqueror developers have included with this innovative application.

The Konqueror users manual is a good starting point for your own adventures with Konqueror. Reading through the manual and the online help will give you a head start on learning some of the more interesting and useful features of this powerful tool. You can access the manual either via the help menu or by typing *help:konqueror* in the Konqueror location bar. ■



Figure 6: Typing "print:/" in the Konqueror location bar takes you to the KDE printer manager.



Figure 5: The *imap* kioslave lets you remove a mailbox as you would a local directory.