

Looking Back and Moving Forward
The Past, Present and Future of the
KDE Usability Project

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KDE Usability Project
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What is the KDE Usability Project?

- Promote usability
- Educate developers
- Practice usability

Past

In the beginning...
... everyone was a developer



In the beginning...

For developers, by developers

Wary of “Experts”

Mo' users mo' problems

Usamajility?

Incomplete knowledge of usability

Usability?

Kastle 2003

Usamajility?

Conferences, Blogging, Reports

Wary of “Experts”

Few “usability experts” involved



Wary of “Experts”

Usability FUD



Wary of “Experts”

Credibility/Competency



Wary of “Experts”

Signal:Noise

Present



Successes

The Word Is Out
Usability is cool



Successes: The Word Is Out

We want usability now what?



Successes

We Got Some Stuff Done
KDE PIM, KOffice, Okular, Printing...



Successes: We Got Some Stuff Done

20+ reports from 2005-2007



Failures

Where Is Everybody?
We hit critical mass...



Failures: Where is Everybody?

... and imploded



Failures

What Guidelines?
HIG development is slow



Failures: What Guidelines?

Key authors went AFK IRL



Problems

Missing the “User” in UCD
Users have minimal involvement



Problems: Missing the “User” in UCD

Ineffective avenues for user involvement



Future

KDE != Usable (yet)

Slow but steady progress



KDE != Usable (yet)

One person can only do so much

Institutionalize Usability

Attack from the top -> down



Institutionalize Usability

Usability is on the fringe



Institutionalize Usability

Global view of usability

Educate Developers

Usability goes beyond testing



Educate Developers

User Research! User Research!

Developer usability methods



How and when to integrate usability

Need More Designers

WTB Contributors PST



Need More Designers

Arsenal of methods



Need More Designers

Solve the harder problems

Get Users Involved

In a calm and orderly fashion



Get Users Involved

User Research!



Get Users Involved

Testing before release



Get Users Involved

Put the “user” back in to UCD

Transition Period



Activities

- **Become more involved in development**
- Assist and promote KDE User Research Profiles
- Work with the user community
- Blog about usability in KDE and open source
- Continue work on the Human Interface Guidelines
- Review UIs and design better ones



More Information

- KDE Usability Project
usability.kde.org
- KDE4 Human Interface Guidelines
Come to the Wednesday workshop for more information
- OpenUsability
openusability.org



KDE HCI Workshop (Wednesday)

- **Research Methods for Usability and Design**
Learn about the different research activities (some involving users) which can improve the usability of your software
- **User Groups and Personas**
Learn about the importance of user research and get help with your KDE User Research Profiles
- **Plasma and HCI**
Learn about current HCI issues and future goals of the Plasma Desktop
- **What's New in the KDE4 Human Interface Guidelines**
Review new patterns and guidelines, see some common HIG violations, and ask questions about uncommon cases and scenarios
- **KDE4 Open UI Workshop**
Bring screenshots and questions to get design help with during this interactive show-and-tell session

Questions?



About Celeste

- Open Source
 - KDE
 - KDE Usability Project and ~~HCI Working Group~~
 - Kubuntu
 - Kubuntu Council
 - OpenUsability
 - Season of Usability Mentor
- Industry
 - User-Centered Design, Inc.
 - Senior Interaction Architect
- Weblog on usability in open source software
 - weblog.obso1337.org
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Wrap Up