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**KDE DVD Authoring Wizard**

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*DVD authoring was never so easy!*

When it comes to advanced software for creating multimedia content, Linux is not yet a good player. The main reason for this is that Adobe and the others don't consider Linux a platform for their software. Today I found an Adobe DVD and I remembered how cool is their software and how annoying is that Linux is not supported. DVDs are very popular these days and many people are considering creating their own DVDs. For this purpose I will present you a little software that does DVD authoring. It's called KDE DVD Authoring Wizard and it's designed to be very easy to use. In fact, you don't need to know anything about authoring; all you have to keep in mind is that the files you use are DVD compatible MPEG-2 video files. The support for MPEG-2 only is a big downside of this software, but the good news is that the developer created another wizard, called KmPg2, for encoding to MPEG-2. The DVD Authoring Wizard is built with kommander, so it will not run if it's not available. Now you open the binary file and the wizard is launched. The first screen is just general basic information. The only thing that caught my attention was the Help button. I found it an interesting asset for some of the steps that could appear at some point. It seems that Help isn't implemented yet, but I'm guessing it will be, because this software is still young. The next screen asks you for a title and a subtitle for your DVD menu. In this software you can easily skip the creation of a DVD menu and, if you don't want it, you should leave it blank. I still recommend a menu because that's a cool feature of DVDs. In the next screen you'll be asked for a storage folder, where I recommend that you have about 5GB of free space. The next step is where you select an introduction movie. I selected a short 8 seconds movie here because I didn't want to wait too much for getting in the menu. Then I reached the step where I had to create the playlist. Here you add the files in the playlist, select the order you like for playback, set if you want a pause between movies and provide a title for each file that will be displayed in the DVD menu. A very nice feature is the check compatibility option; it helps you rest assured that you have the right file format. After all the content is selected and nicely arranged in the playlist, you'll reach a point where you have to select the fonts that must be used for the menu. This feature hasn't reached its full potential though, because a lot more things can be implemented here. The wizard will now get you to setting the menu background. You can choose either the default moving chequers or you can pick an image or a video file. After background, there is sound and animations, which need to be set-up. You can easily select a soundtrack for the menu, either in ogg, mp3 and wav file formats, and the wizard will automatically add fade effects to it. Unfortunately, mp3 didn't work for me. Regarding the animation you can choose to have a fully animated menu that contains running thumbnails of the video files in the playlist or a static one that is generated a lot faster. After this you have to select the aspect ratio that you like to use for the menu and the television system that is used in your country. In the next step you'll chose a decoration for the thumbnails in the menu. At this point, only two decorations are available, and you can also choose a plain rectangle. Now we're getting near the end result. At this step we can preview how the menu will be like. If errors are detected, the program will warn you, but if all the steps are followed accordingly, a picture will be opened and it will show a screenshot of what the menu will look like. That's nice, because you can go back and change the settings until you get them right. After you're all set it will come the step where you actually build the menu. If you don't want it, just skip this step and no menu will be generated. As you can see, most of the wizard is about the menu, but after you're done with it the DVD has to be generated. At this point all files in the playlist will have to be organized into a DVD structure and stored on the HDD. One more button is

to be pressed now. The Cerate ISO one, that packs everything for easy burning. It would have been cool to have a burn DVD button too, but unfortunately we don't. **The Good**The wizard is very easy to use and has enough features to get a nice end product. The most important feature is perhaps the MPEG2 DVD compatibility checking, but the others are nice too. This software is great for creating your own DVD fast and easy. **The Bad**Menu fonts are not very configurable. MP3s didn't work as a menu soundtrack. Other aspect ratios should have been available. More thumbnail decorations would have been nice. Help hasn't been implemented yet. **The Truth**As you saw, the process was pretty straight forward and the required knowledge was minimum. The wizard is good at what it does, but it still has a lot to grow. Most probably you'll also need KmPg2 to create the MPEG-2 files, but hopefully some day the conversion will be done automatically by the DVD Authoring Wizard. *The screenshots below show a walk through DVD Authoring Wizard:*