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By: Mihai Marinof, Linux Editor

Kid3 Review

ID3 Tagger for Linux



Most of music collection managers rely on ID3v1 and ID3v2 tags in each music file to organize them. Although these tags can be edited by most MP3 players, not many offer a comfortable and efficient way to do so. Moreover, tags in Ogg/Vorbis, FLAC and MPC aren't supported. So if you're looking for an application that can easily edit media files tags in a comfortable way, Kid3 may be what you're looking for. Kid3 doesn't grab, encode or play MP3 files but it's rather targeted to edit the ID3 tags of all files of an album with as few mouse clicks and key strokes as possible. It can also set the tags from the file names or set the file names according to the tags found in the file in arbitrary formats. The editing task is further supported by automatic replacement of substrings in order to remove illegal characters from filenames. It also offers automatic control of upper and lower case characters to make it easy to use a consisted naming scheme in all tags. Tag information for full albums are fetched from freedb.org, MusicBrainz, Discogs or other sources of track lists. Kid3 is very easy to install thanks to the binary packages available in rpm format for Fedora/RedHat and in deb format for Debian Sarge, Ubuntu Dapper and Eggy. It can also be installed through Fedora's yum or Ubuntu's apt-get package manager. For other distributions, there's a source code package that can be compiled and installed on any Unix-like system. Kid3 requires the following dependencies: Qt, id3lib, libogg, libvorbis, libvorbisfile, libFLAC++, libFLAC, TagLib, libtunepimp. It also can be run in MS Windows. I've used yum to install Kid3. It took a few seconds and it was immediately available for using. To start it, I could either run "kid3" in a terminal or click the Kid3 shortcut found in KMenu / Multimedia. Using it is pretty straightforward as you only need to select the directory with the music you want to tag. Kid3 will automatically import all the files in that directory and try to attribute the right information to the ID tag. If it doesn't work, then it's possible to check the various web databases. The process is very easy and most of the time, it is required to just insert the Album name and all the info is imported and put in the right place. It's also possible to edit the same field on all files in one step and save the file with a new generated name from the updated information. Kid3's interface is divided into five sections: at the left are the file and directory listboxes, the right side contains the Filename, Tag 1 and Tag 2 sections. The file list contains the names of all the files in the opened directory which matched the filter, which is typically *.mp3, *.ogg, *.flac, *.mpc. To the left of the file names, two icons can be displayed: a disc to show that the file has been modified and icons presenting which tags are present (V1, V2, V1V2 or NOTAG). If no icon has been displayed, it means that the file hasn't been read yet. The directory list contains the names of the directories in the current path, as well as the current (.) and parent (..) directory. It allows to quickly change the directory just like a basic file browser. Using the directory list enables you to quickly change the directory without using the Open command or drag and drop. The filename section contains the name of the file (if only a single file has been selected). If the name is changed, the file will be renamed when the save command is issued. Also, in the Filename section, there's the format box which contains the format to be used when the filename is generated from the first or second tag. To insert tag values into a filename, the following special codes are used: %s Title (Song), %a Artist, %l Album, %c Comment, %y Year, %t Track, %g Genre. This format is also used to generate the tags from the filename and if the format doesn't match this pattern, a few other commonly used formats are tried. At the bottom of this section, there is an Info line that shows information about the encoding, bitrate, sample rate, channels and the length of the file. The Tag 1 section allows you to edit widgets for Title, Artist, Album, Comment, Year, Track and Genre.

The values will be changed when the file selection is altered or before operations like Save and Quit and when the corresponding check box at the left of the field name is checked. The Tag 2 section offers the same functions to control media file tags, just that the size of the strings is not limited. **The GoodKid3** can edit the ID3v1 tags and all ID3V2 frames in MP3 files and the tags in Ogg/Vorbis and FLAC files in an easy, comfortable and efficient way. To make things even easier, for untagged albums, Kid3 will fetch the ID tags from online music encyclopedias such as MusicBrainz or freedb.org and automatically assign the right id tags to each media file. **The BadKid3**'s interface is rather simple and there are a lot of free spaces that don't look that good but can be either used for various buttons, functions or captions. **The TruthKid3** is only useful if you have a scattered, unorganized collection and want to arrange it using a media organizer application that relies on ID tag info. Anyhow, it will save you a lot of time if you use it to adjust your music collection rather than using your MP3 player. *Check out some screenshots below:*