

Chapter 19

Office Software

This chapter introduces the user to various Office Software applications that is available on a Linux platform.

Concepts Learned in this Chapter

- Utilizing various software application available in Linux

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19.1 Word Processors

Multiple word processors are available on Unix and Linux. These are typically included with the Linux distribution, but may be downloaded in either source or a packaged format for installation if necessary.

19.1.1 AbiWord^{1,2}

The application AbiWord is an open source word processor, originally developed by Abisource, Inc, but now maintained by an international volunteer development team. It was originally developed for the GNOME environment, but may also be used under the KDE manager. It has also been ported to the Win32 OS.

AbiWord is designed around the concept of being a simple basic word processor, supporting the basic functionality without a lot of the fills. One important feature is the ability to import MS Word97 files, but it is not able to export to MS Word.

Although not equipped with the “latest and greatest” features, it has all of the basic functions to produce a very good document, providing over 90 percent of the features of MS Word in a package that is not blotted with excess code and runs very fast.

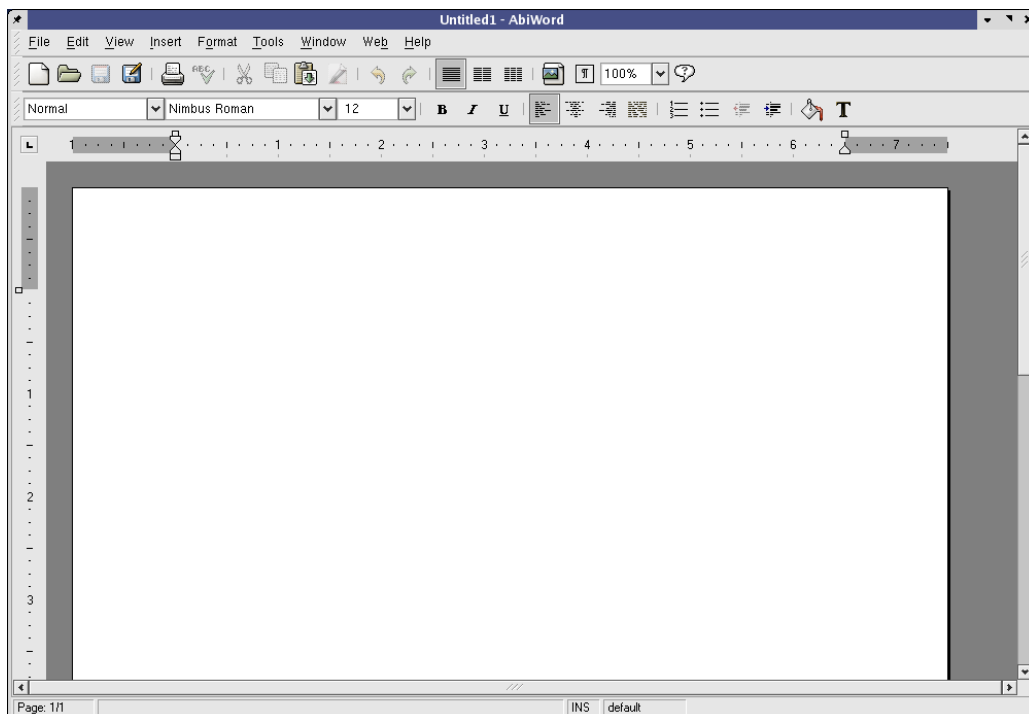


Figure 19.1: AbiWord Word Processor

¹ Linux, Patrick Regan, Pearson / Prentice Hall

² www.abisource.com

19.2 Spreadsheets

Several stand-alone spreadsheet packages have been produced to support the user using Unix and Linux. Several of these include Gnumeric and KSpread.

19.2.1 Gnumeric ^{3,4}

The application Gnumeric is an open source spreadsheet designed to have 95 percent functionality to MS Excel. Excel files may be imported to Gnumeric, and also exported to MS Excel.

If a user is familiar with Excel, then there should be no problem in using Gnumeric.

19.3 Vector Diagram

19.4 GnuCash

19.5 Database

Several database applications are available for the user to maintain data. Some of the more popular that are typically provided with Linux and Unix are MySQL and PostgreSQL. The popular Oracle commercial package is also available to run on Linux. IBM's DB2 is also supported.

In support of the SQL databases are two programs that allow the user to create tables, forms, queries, and reports. They are Knoda and ReKall.

19.5.1 MySQL

MySQL is an Sequel Query Language application that provides nearly all of the SQL language support, but does not support a screen manipulation application – an external application, such as Perl, Python, or Winadmin (php language) may be used to create various screen generators, or the commercial application ReKall may be used in support of the screen development. Because MySQL does not support all of the SQL commands, namely the more complex ones, it is a very fast database. One will often find it used with Web applications. Because MySQL is a command line interface, there is no screen function to display.

19.5.2 PostgreSQL

PostgreSQL is another Sequel Query Language application that supports the full SQL language. It too requires external applications to create screens for data manipulation. If a user is in need of a full SQL language support

³ Linux, Patrick Regan, Pearson / Prentice Hall

⁴ www.gnome.org

application, then PostgreSQL should be used. Because PostgreSQL is a command line interface, there is no screen function to display.

19.5.3 Knoda

19.5.4 ReKall

19.5.5 OpenOffice Database

19.6 Project Planner

19.7 Office Suites

Office Suites encompass multiple office applications into one package, allowing one to easily exchange data between the various applications.

19.7.1 OpenOffice / StarOffice

Open Office, a derivative of Sun's Star Office, is an Open Source suite that supports word processing (Writer), spreadsheet (Calc), paint (Draw), Presentation (Impress), and math editor (Math).

19.7.1.1 OO Writer

Open Office Writer provides an equivalent to MS Word, although some of the edges may not be as polished. Writer supports in excess of 95 percent of the features in Word and is capable of both importing and exporting to Word. Writer is dedicated to the open source standards, allowing users to easily transfer data between different applications.

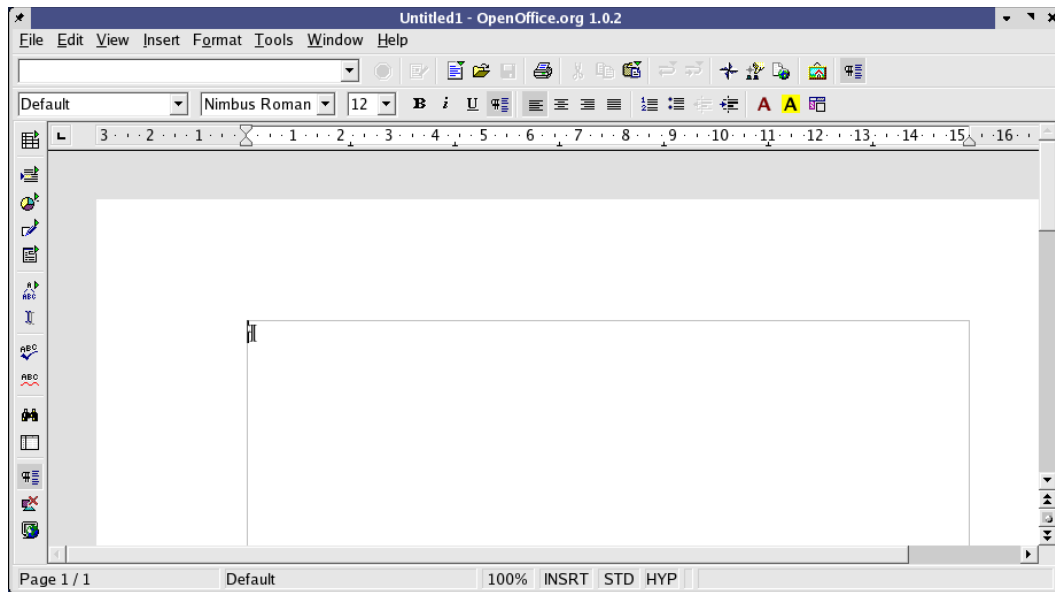


Figure 19.5: OpenOffice - Writer

19.7.1.2 OO Calc

Many advancements have been made from the original Spreadcalc originally created in the early 1980's as the first spreadsheet application. Calc allows the import and export of MS Excel files and the multitude of other formats. Anyone familiar with Excel will be able to easily pick up and use Calc.

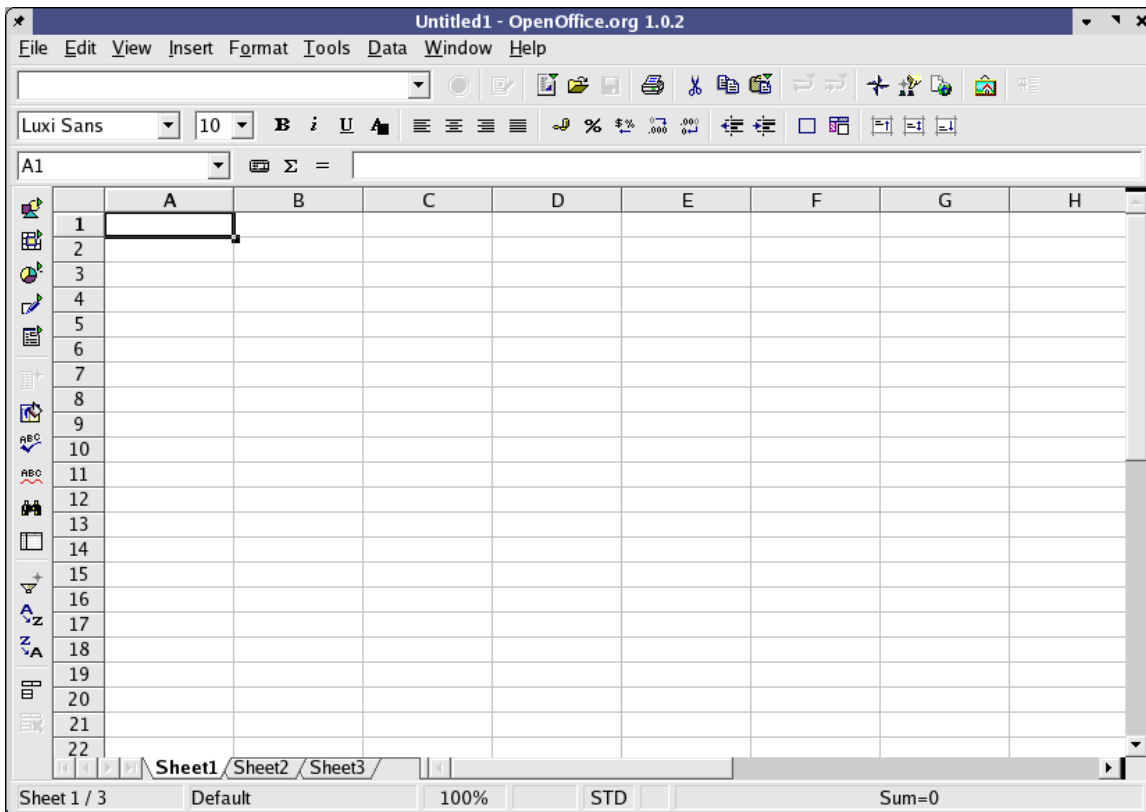


Figure 19.6: Open Office - Calc

19.7.1.3 OO Draw

Draw is a raster type drawing program, where each pixel is defined. Screens of other application may often be imported and then manipulated for other documents. This application is equivalent to MS Paint.

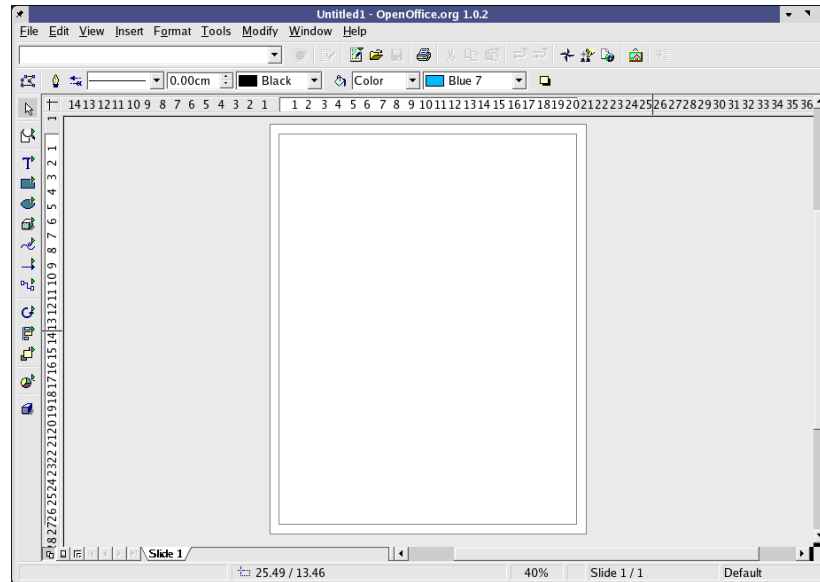


Figure 19.7: OpenOffice – Draw

19.7.1.4 OO Impress

Impress is the equivalent to MS Power Point. Although Power Point presentations may be imported and exported to from Impress, there are a few limitations as a few attributes such as fonts do not always transfer properly. A review of an import is required prior to a presentation.

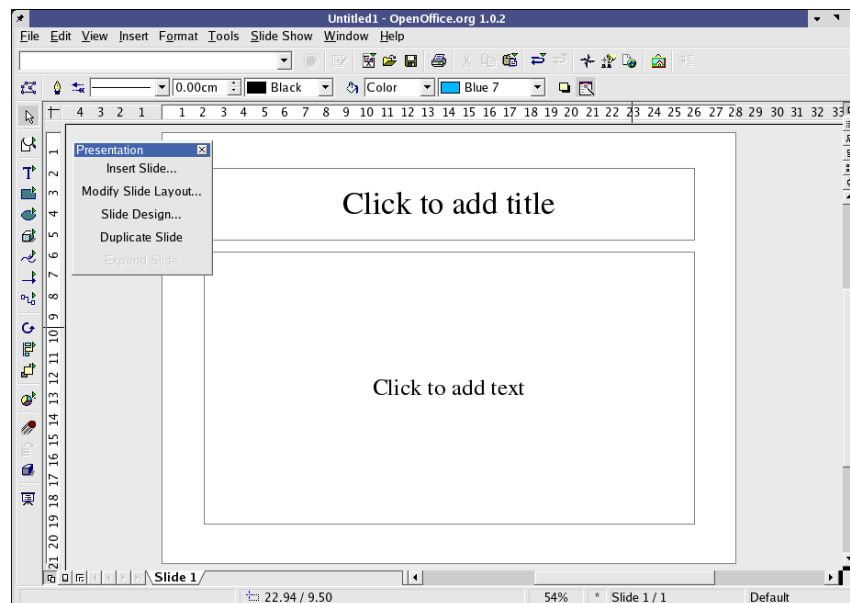


Figure 19.8: OpenOffice – Impress

19.7.1.5 OO Math

Math provides an editor for manipulating mathematical equations. They may then be imported to other documents.

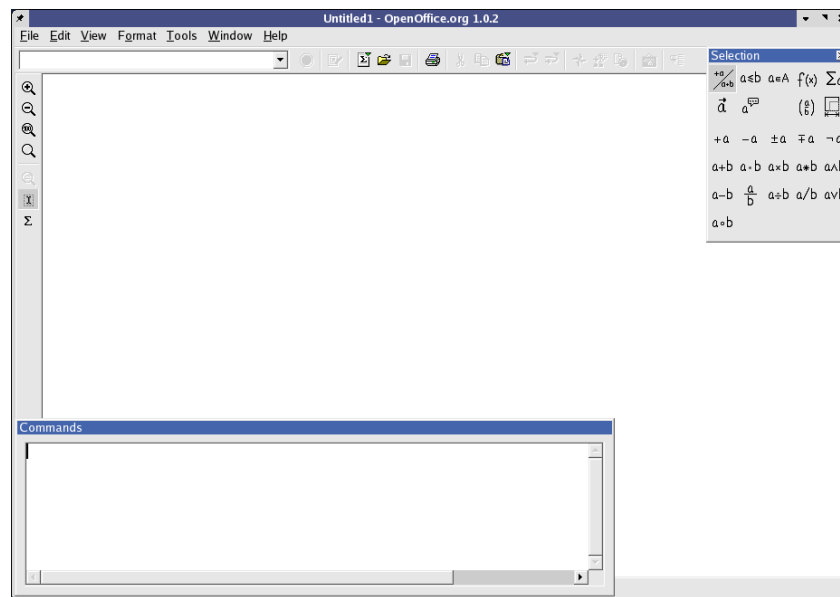


Figure 19.9: OpenOffice - Math

19.7.1.6 OO Database

19.7.1.7 Adding Fonts to Open Office ⁵

The following procedure will add additional fonts to both Open Office and other KDE or GNOME applications. These fonts will be on a per user basis, as they are maintained in the user's home directory.

1. From the main menu, click on the **Run Command** tab.
2. Enter the application **oopadmin** (Open Office Print Admin) into the window. This may take a while to bring up the Open Office print administrator tool.
3. Click on the **Fonts** button. This lists the installed fonts.
4. Click on the **Add** button to add a new font directory.
5. Click on the "... " button to open the system's directory structure.
6. The default directory is shown, typically the user's home directory. The directory is commonly called **".fonts"**, and is hidden (the dot in front).
7. Click the **Select All** button.
8. Click the **OK** button.
9. A window will open with a message specifying which fonts were added. Click **OK**.

⁵ Red Hat Linux Administration, A Beginner's Guide, Michael Turner and Steve Shah, Osborne McGraw-Hill

10. Click the **Close** button to terminate the Fonts window.
11. Click the **Close** button to terminate the print administration tool.

19.7.2 KOffice

KOffice is a front end to the other K-applications. This allows one to easily switch between the various applications with a simple mouse click. The various KOffice applications were originally built on under the KDE Desk Manager, but are available under all Desk Managers.

19.7.2.1 KWord

The application KWord is a fundamental word processor that is able to support better than 80 percent of the features found in MS Word – or virtually everything that a normal user would need to utilize.

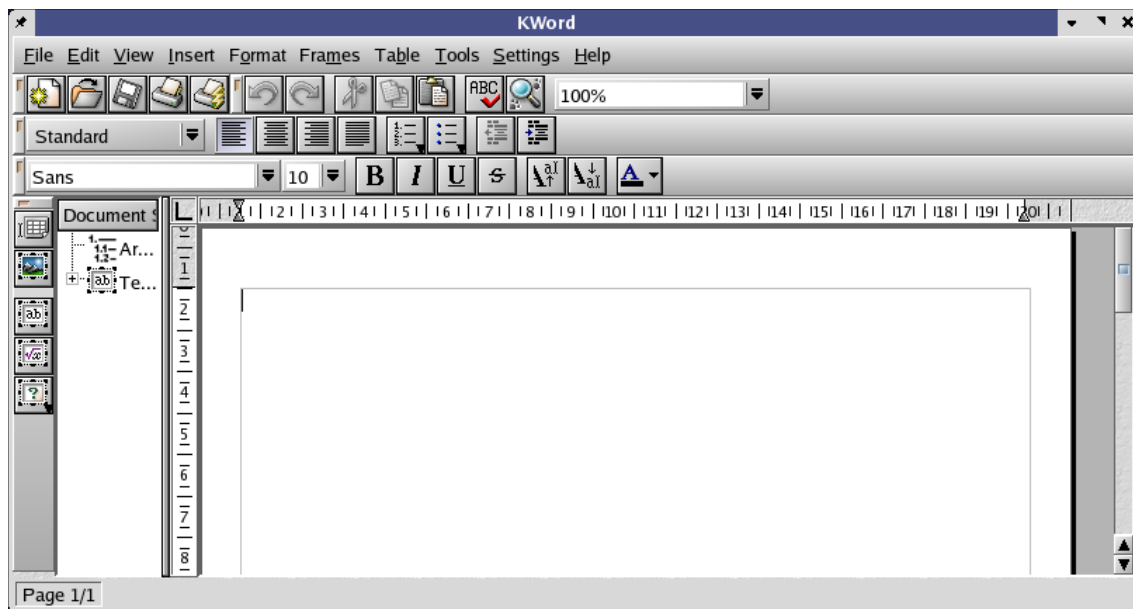


Figure 19.2: KWord word processor

19.7.2.2 KSpread

KSpread is part of the KOffice package that provides all of the fundamental features of the spreadsheet functionality. It is an open office concept, depending upon a group of volunteers to support its operation.

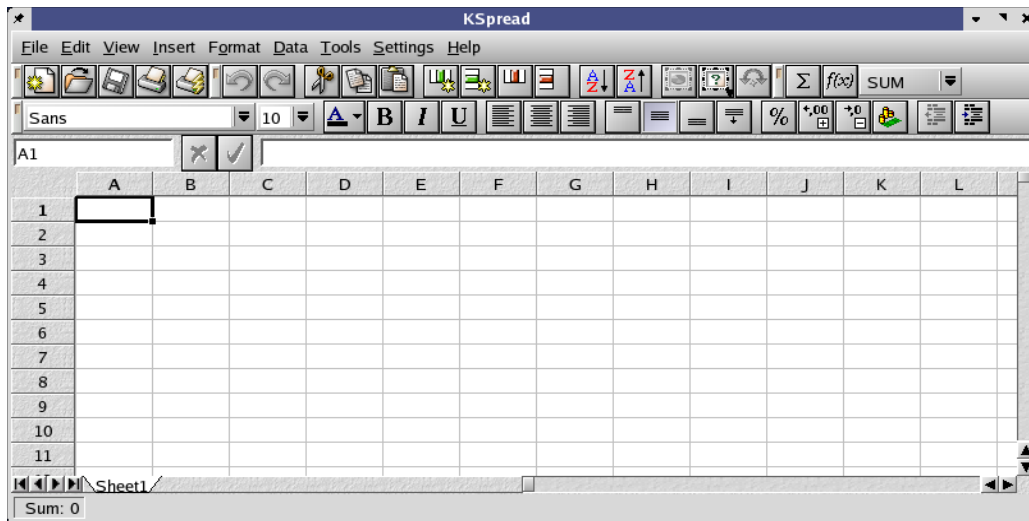


Figure 19.3: KSpread Spreadsheet

19.7.2.3 KPresenter

KPresenter is an application similar to MS Power Point, allowing the user to create and present presentations using the computer for slides.

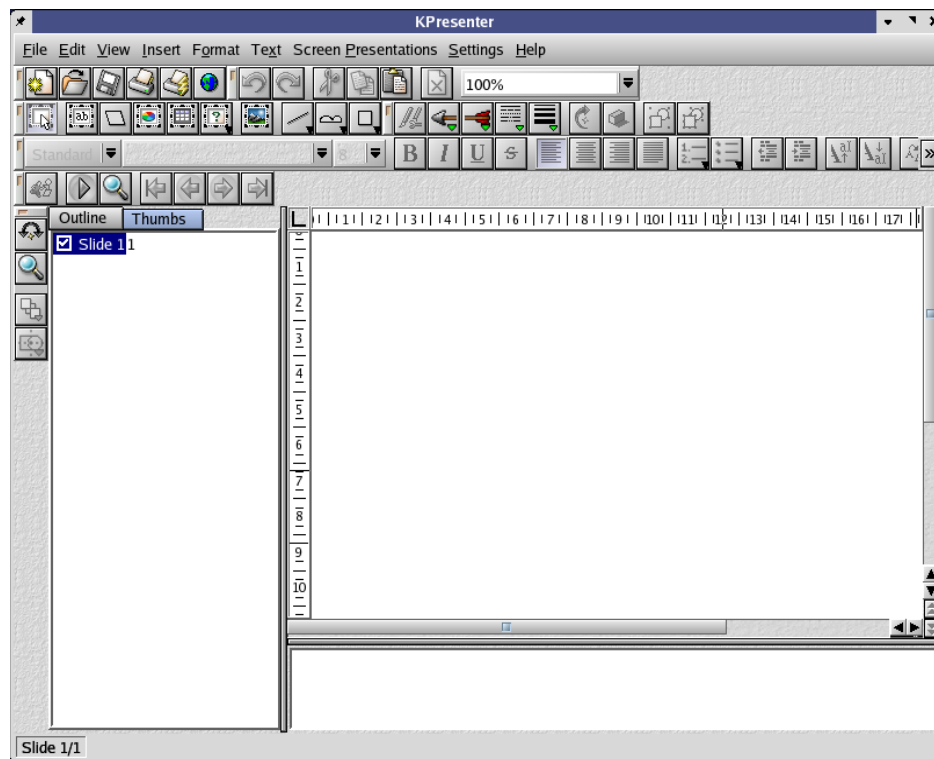


Figure 19.4: KPresenter

19.7.2.4 KOrganizer

KOrganizer is a personal time manager for the user.

korganizer01

19.7.2.5 KFormula

KFormula allows one to create complex mathematical equations, which may then be imported into KWord.

kformula01

19.7.2.6 KThesaurus

Kthesarus provides the user a thesaurus when writing documents.

kthesaurus01

19.7.2.7 KCalc Calculator

A simple and popular calculator is **KCalc**. Several different screens are available to enhance the user's use.

Kcalc01
Kcalc02
Kcalc03
Kcalc04
Kcalc05
Kcalc06
Kcalc07

19.7.2.8 KChart

Kchart allows one to create a chart, given a set of data.

kchart01

19.7.2.9 Karbon14

Karbon14 is a scalable graphics creation program.

karbon1401

19.7.2.10 Kivio

Kivo is a flow charting creation program.

kivio01

19.7.2.11 Kuger

Kuger is a report generating program. It is made up of two applications, Kuger Designer and Kuger.

kuger01

19.7.2.12 Kexi

Kexi is a basic flat database similar to Microsoft's Access.

Kexi01

19.7.2.13 Kontac

Kontac is a contact manager that support s mail, user information, calendar, to-do list, journal, notes, and feeds.

Kontac01

19.8 Desktop Publishing

There is one application available in Linux that provides for desktop publishing. It works on a completely different principle than other word processors that one is use to. Whereas typical word processors function on a “What You See is What You Get” philosophy. Lyx, the desktop publisher functions on a “What You Mean is What You Get” philosophy. Lyx allows you to type in the text, and then formats the data to the format that you specify through the use of various definable commands. The format of the screen does not appear anything like the final output, but may be viewed by producing one of several output formats, such as PDF.

The initial learning curve for Lyx is quite steep, but after mastering it one has a very capable word processor that is typesetter ready.

19.X Commands Used in this Chapter**19.X Chapter Review Questions**

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