Beyond Our Comfort Zone
Spreading KDE Software to Non-Free Platforms

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- I'm Stuart Jarvis. Since you might not have heard of me:
    - I write Dot articles (and articles for other places too)
    - Am one of the Dot Editors
    - Try and help with release announcements
    - Get involved in anything that is going in KDE-Promo land
- My day job is some combination of paeleolimnologist, x-ray phycisist and geochemist in the UK

Things To Explore

> ## Who am I?
> ## Why are we here?
> ## What are we doing?
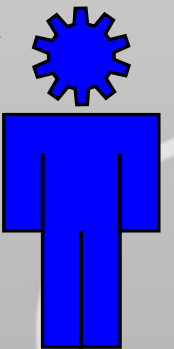
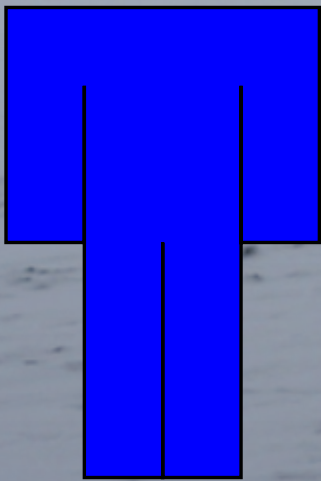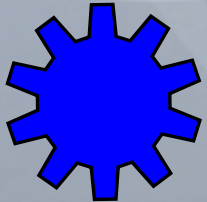**Introduction**   **Justification**   **Strategy**   **Conclusions**

- Hopefully the first point is answered
- We have now the ability to deploy our applications on Windows and Mac
    - Do we want to?
    - How do we get people to care?
    - What can the KDE Promo team do for you?
- We are not (yet) marketing effectively to people on non-free platforms who don't already know us
    - This talk is about how, when and whether we should change that

The Good Old Days

KDE has software for you

It all used to be so simple:
- We made software for Linux and other X11 systems
- We are one of the big players there so people know about us already. We just have to say what we're up to and what we offer and people listen
- We could more or less ignore Windows and Mac users - deploying our software there was not simple and likely to only be of interest to people already using our software
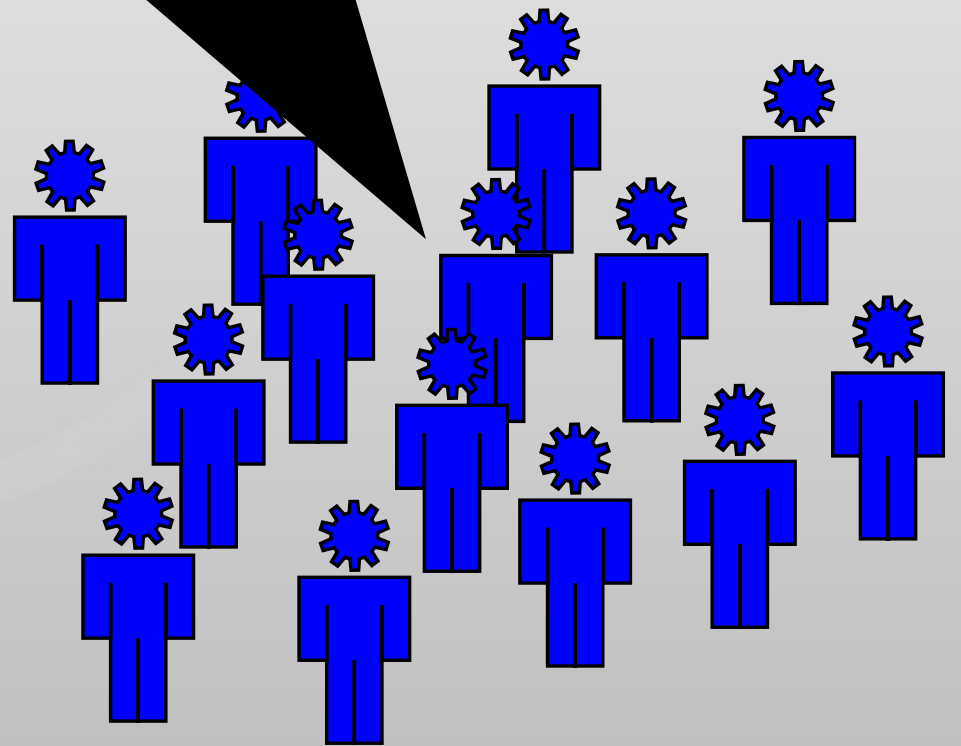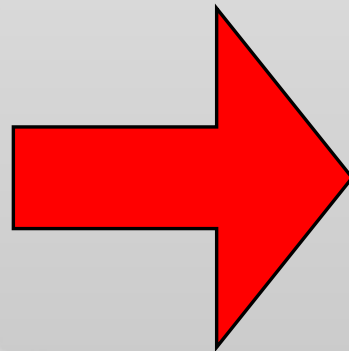
Today

KDE...

Now things are a bit different
- (In theory) our software can be deployed on to Windows and Mac
    - These markets dwarf Linux etc
    - But we still only really talk to people on free platforms
    - We have to decide whether to engage with the new markets
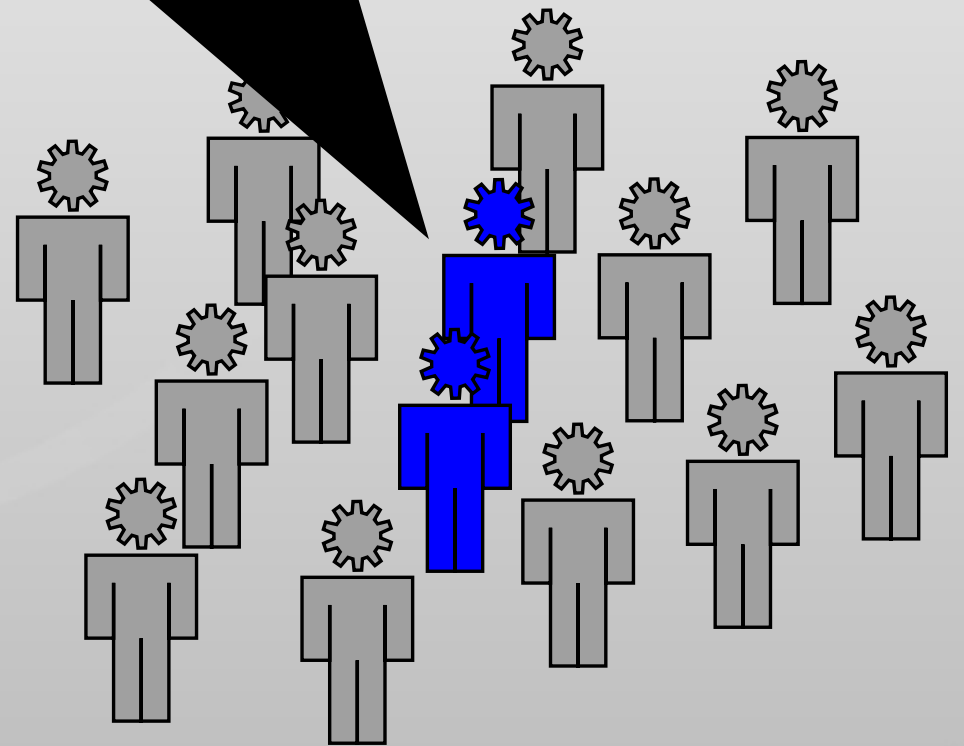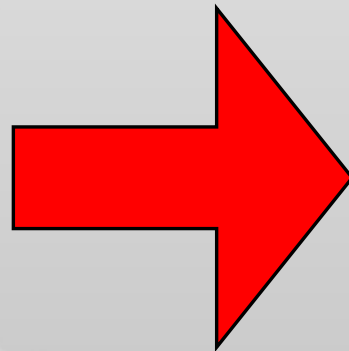- What are the risks and benefits for KDE?

Benefits

Yay! New gearheads

- An obvious benefit is that we can reach out to more users
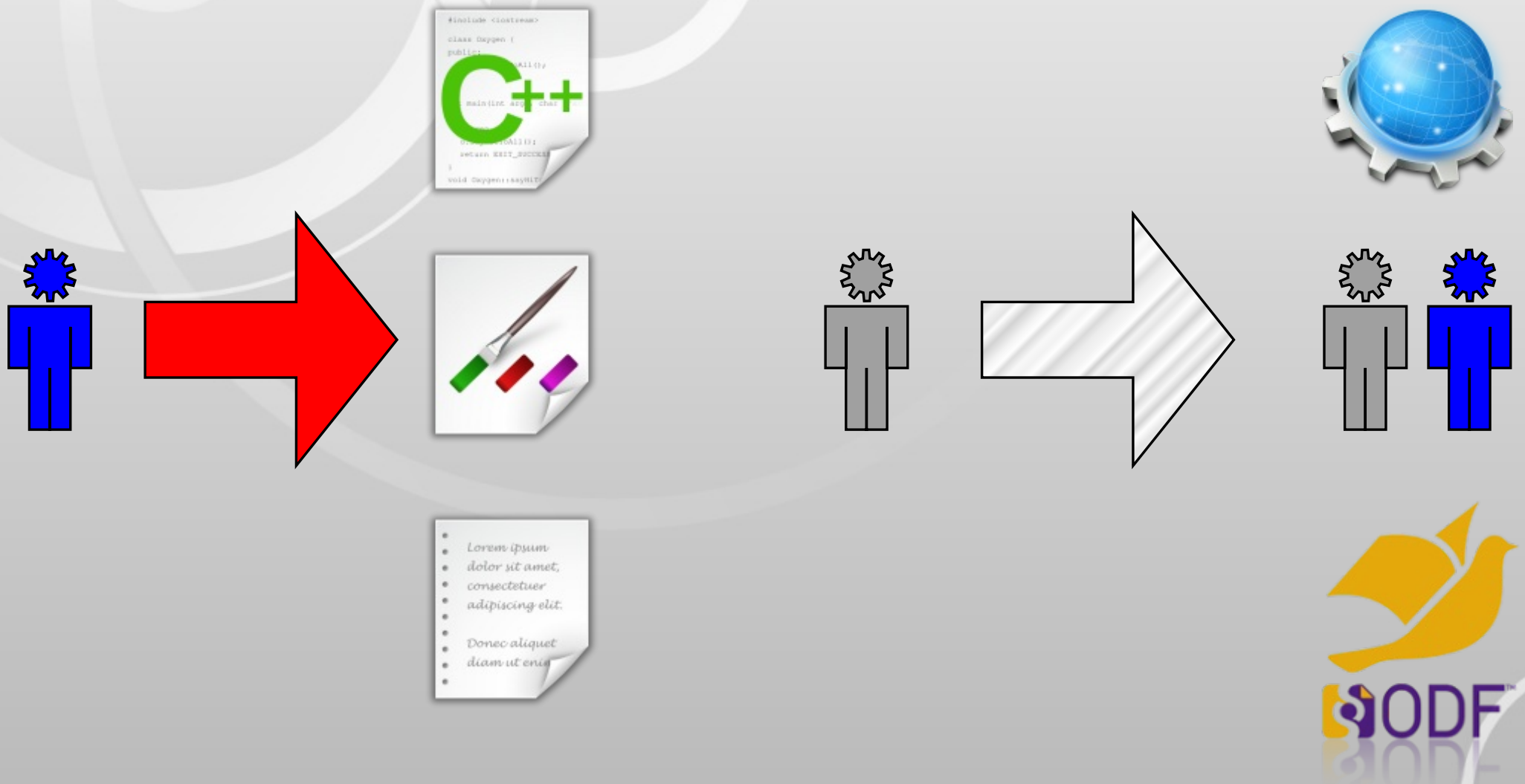   - Lots of new contributors?

Benefits?

Er.. 1 new gearhead

- But more users does not necessarily imply more contributors
    - Does the conversion rate of users -> contributors differ for non-free platofrms?
    - I don't know

Are Users Useful?

So, what if we only get new users?
- Contributors are useful because
    - They write our code
    - They do our artwork and design
    - They write,, promote and translate for us - and many other things
- Users are useful too
    - If Konqueror had 20% market share then websites would work with KHTML
    - They talk to people and, even passively, can bring us new users and contributors
    - They help us to spread open formats such as ODF

Dangers
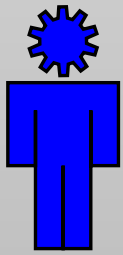
What if we get too many new users?
- Might we lose our focus on free platforms?
    - Firefox is better on Windows
    - Songbird has ditched Linux entirely
    - But KDE has its origins firmly in free software

Dangers

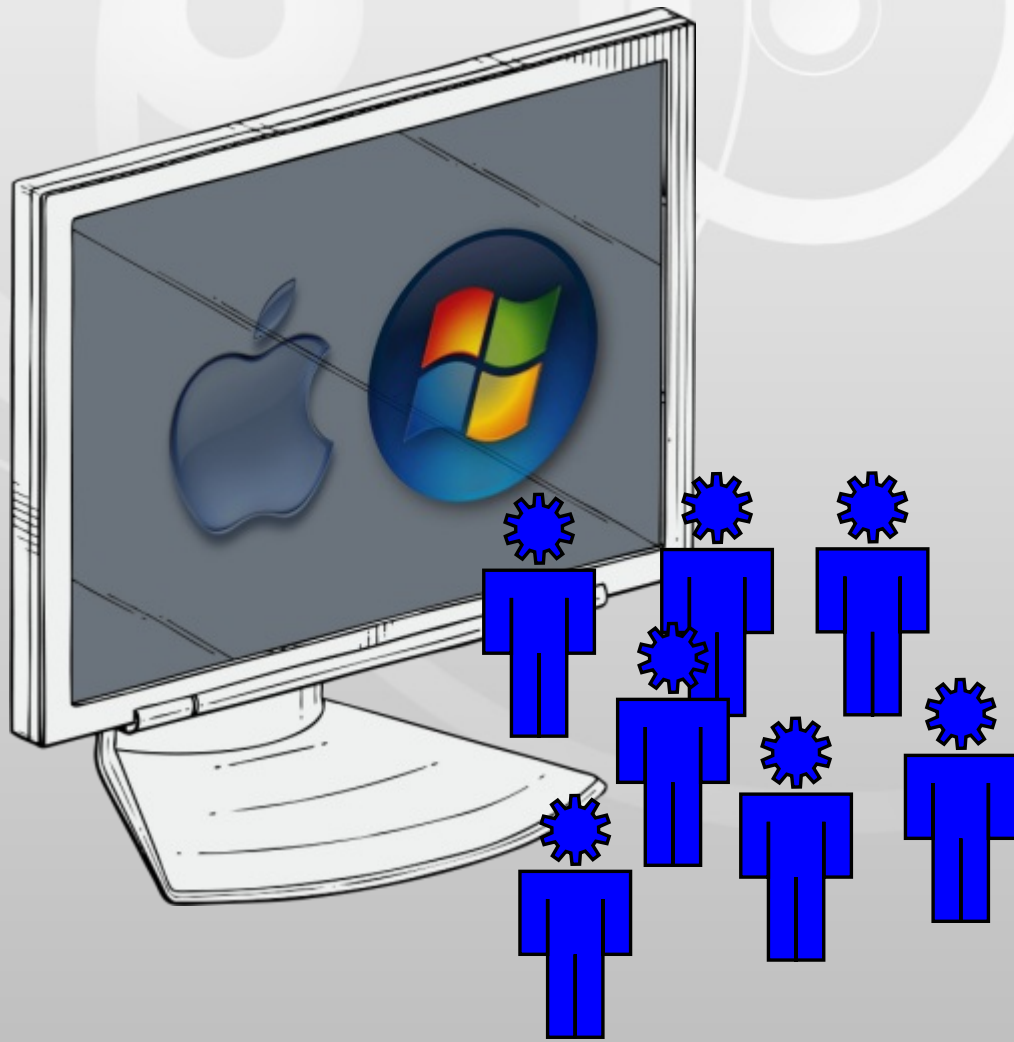BOOMM

What if we screw this up?
- Our potential new audience doesn't know us
    - It's going to be hard enough to attract attention anyway
    - It is worse to become associated with software that doesn't work than remain unknown a bit longer
    - We need to pick the right moment and the right battles

Two Audiences

There are fundamentally two different audiences
- KDE users who would also like to use our software on non-free platforms
    - They know us
    - They like us
    - They already listen to us
    - They can use package managers -current KDE Windows approach is fine for them
- Windows and Mac users who might like some KDE software
    - They don't know us or have an opinion on us
    - They might try our software if we make it easy enough
    - Easy enough includes making it just like installing any other app on their platform
It's the second audience that I want to address
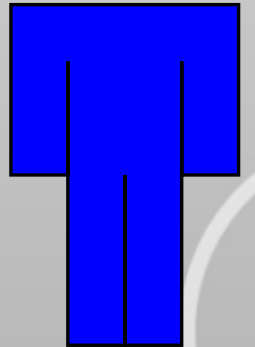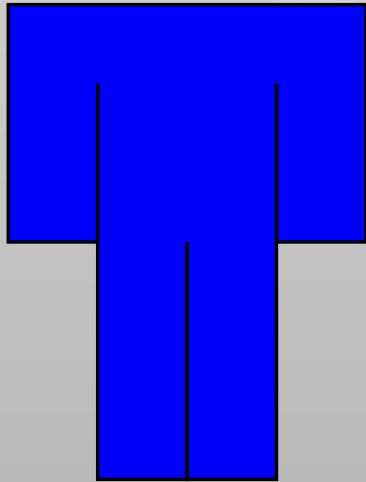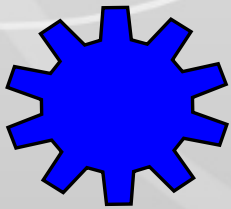
Less is More

- Few users are going to trust us with their desktop shell
    - At least not to start with
    - Plasma is irrelevant
- Similarly, the software compilation is not relevant
    - Not all of our apps are the best on any platform
    - Users won't change their software wholesale, they might try us with one app

Freedom Is Not Enough

It needs to be easy to try

And needs to be the best

- Leading with the idea that it's better because it is free will not work
    - If it was that simple we could convert them straight to Linux
    - It needs to be easy
    - It neeeds to be the best (at least among free as in beer apps)
    - We should concentrate on features (and by all means, note that freedom is a feature)

World Beating Apps...

- There are some battles we can win now (or very soon)
    - My parents are complete technophobes
    - Their first PC is one my brother no longer needed, loaded up with Picassa
    - Their kinda understood how to use Picassa
    - I installed Digikam, to see how it looked on Windows and gave them a quick tour
    - I concluded Digikam wasn't ready yet (on Windows) so showed them what I know of Picassa
    - Next time I visited they showed me some photos - and used Digikam
    - Why? "It's easier to use"

...Can Be 'Gateway Drugs'

- A few good apps can make us known for the right reasons and change peoples ideas
    - I'd used some non-commercial apps in 2003
    - I didn't know the difference between free (freedom) and free (beer)
    - Free could mean useful (Irfanview) but not user friendly or polished
    - Firefox changed my perceptions - it was demonstrably better than Internet Explorer
    - I realised free software could be better then proprietary
    - I dropped Outlook for Thunderbird...
    - And then, Windows for L:inux
    - If there had been a Mozilla distro I would have used that because I'd had good experiences with Mozilla software
    - Building KDE as a brand on non-free platforms could help KDE on free platforms too

Targeted Approach

- So, what can we push?
    - Application and Windows/Mac teams need to decide the moment
    - Amarok and Digikam are as good as any alternatives on any platform
    - The ports to non-free platforms may not be ready yet
    - KOffice, Kontact, Okular, Kopete and various apps from KDE Edu could also be early things to push

Outside the Comfort Zone

- To reach the secomd audicence we need to do some new things
    - Keep going to religious (and secular) events
    - Talk directly to potential audiences such as photographers and artists (target articles at websites and magazines)
    - Look at spreading stuff in universities and to school kids (where free as in beer can help us)
    - Target more computer magazines for the non-free platforms - websites too
    - Make business alliances to improve our projects - more music stores in Amarok, upload to prinitng services from Digikam

digiKam as an example

- There are many photogrpahy magazines online and in print and most deal with software
    - We can write reviews
    - Offer tutorials
- Everyone uses cameras so there is potential general interest in
    - Mainstream computer magazines
    - Gadget magazines
    - General interest publications
- What if we persuaded a camera manufacturer to distribute digiKam with new cameras?

Masterplan ;-)
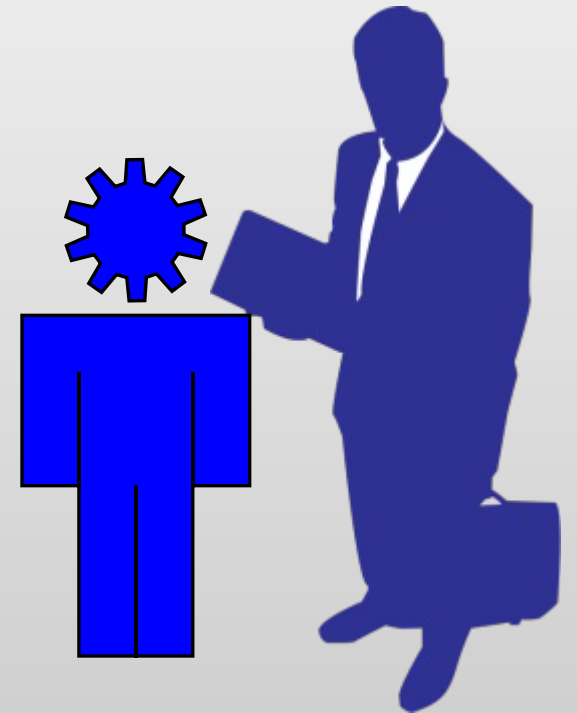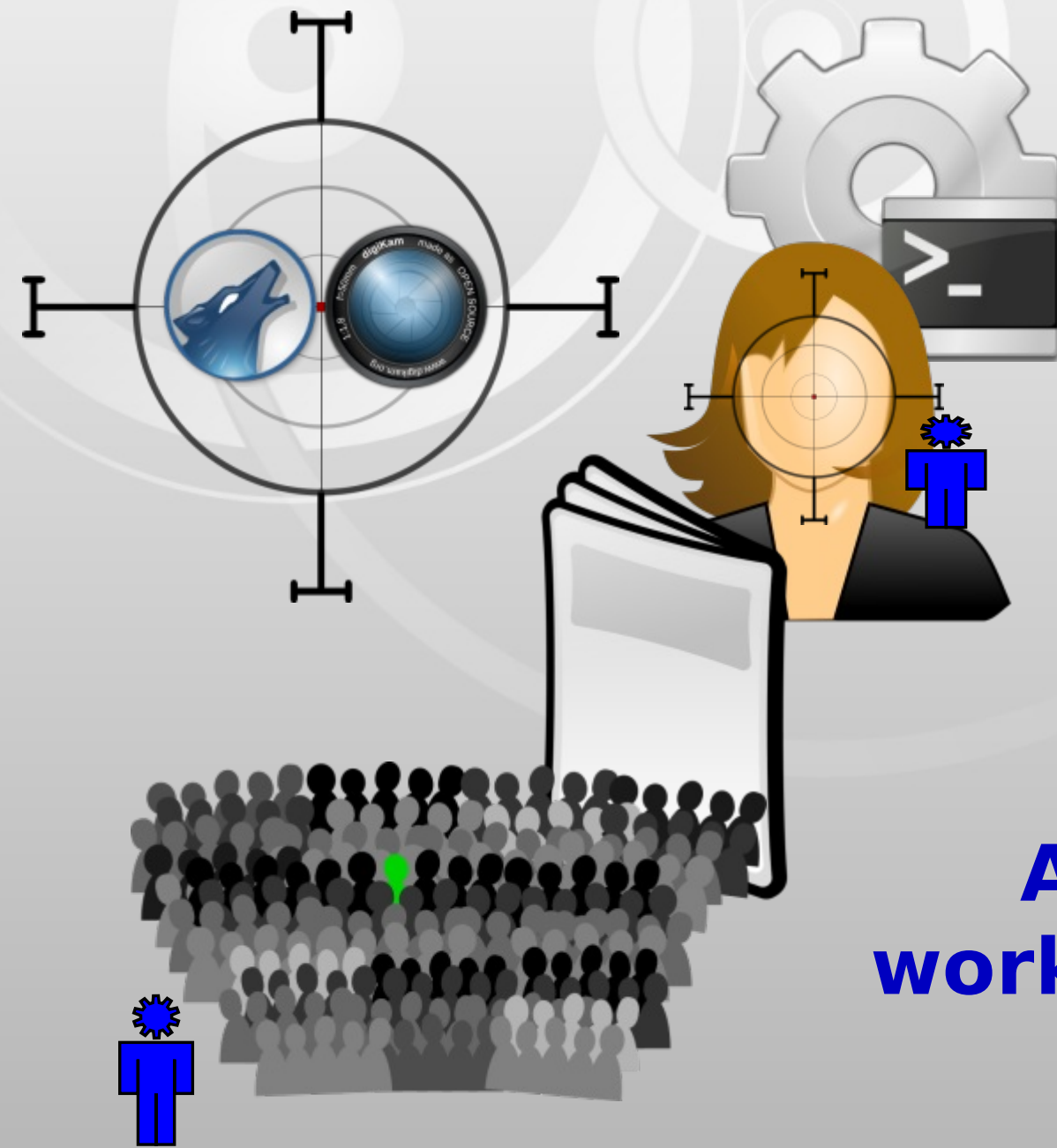
A lot of time and hard work from a lot of people

We must:
- Target a few apps (we don't have enough resources to push everything at once)
    - Make dedicated installers - "easy" includes making it look like a normal Windows/Mac install
    - Define the target user group(s) so we don't waste efforts in the wrong places
    - Work out unique selling points - freedom is one but is not enough
    - Target forums and publications: Digikam can fix your photos for you
    - Use our contacts in the communities
- Build relationships with businesses (e.g. photo printing, music vendors)
- Continue to attend non-techie events
- Not forget why we are KDE - if succeeding on non-free platforms requires compromising our core values then it is not worth it

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