

# [kde] Taskbar and system tray

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Hello,

this is my first post to this list. My name is Sam Mirshafie and I'm a happy KDE user for little more than a year.

In my opinion the system tray and taskbar are in a bad state. I don't know if there's been any discussions about this before, but I couldn't find anything about it on the web. If this has not been discussed before, I hope to initiate a discussion about the role of the systray and taskbar with this post. (And if it has been discussed before, please redirect me :)

The system tray is not intended to work as a second taskbar, yet the system tray is much smarter than the taskbar:

- Taskbar entries give you a standard context menu to manipulate the window, while system tray icons will give you an application-specific menu which is usually much more useful. For example, the Kopete systray icon will let you set status message among other things, while the Kopete taskbar entry will let you minimize and maximize the Kopete window.
- System tray icons are dynamic. They will give you a hint of what they're doing. Akregator and KMail systray icons will give you the number of unread articles, and the Amarok systray icon lets you control Amarok directly with the middle mouse button.
- Lastly, I think many users like the fact that the systray consumes MUCH less screen real estate than the taskbar. I have currently set up my KDE desktop to show most applications in the system tray, and to skip the taskbar. This is of course not an ideal solution, very much because the systray is only (to my knowledge) accessible via the mouse. My setup makes Alt+Tab useless.

I think that the taskbar needs to be redesigned to be more dynamic. Taskbar entries should be at least as smart as the current systray icons. I think that would make KDE even more useful.

It would also be great if the taskbar could be configured to only show the icons of certain applications, much like you can set special properties of certain windows in KWin.

Sam

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