

Re: [SLE] Skype, mic and artsd

Source: <http://linux.derkeiler.com/Mailing-Lists/SuSE/2005-04/0509.html>

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To: suse-linux-e@suse.com

>>> *Have been scratching my head due to this, for several nights now:*

>>> *I have tried to record sound in KDE (Krecord, Audacity, even
>>> Qarecord) and also did try out Skype, but the microphone
>>> seems to be a problem – it records on a very very low level,
>>> like a whisper really, and in Skype the fellow in the other
>>> end barely hears me.*

>>> *While I can hear myself in the headphones just fine, loud
>>> and clear, a recording ends up useless "whisper".*

>>> *Have played with various mic settings, mic boost is on, have
>>> played with etc/asound.state settings based on an usenet msg,
>>> and with sound related permissions. In Skype I tried starting
>>> Skype with "artsd something" parameter based on a newsgroup
>.article; no help.*

>>> *As I see it here and there in usenet messages that other people
>>> too do have this problem in Suse 9.2, and as someone else –
>>> apart from Jake Sallee – wrote something about Suse (artsd?)
>>> packages being broken, could this be due to some Suse (artsd
>>> or other) RPM's being "bad".*

>>> *If so, which packages should one download and rebuild,
>>> to get a consistent upgrade to the sound system?*

>>> *I use a Terratec Aureon Fun 5.1 card, but earlier I had
>>> Creative Live Player 5.1 and if I remember correct, it
>>> did not perform too well either. (Did not try Skype with it,
>>> though.) There's an integrated sound chip on my PC,
>>> but it is disabled in the BIOS settings. The mic/headphone
>>> set is a good quality Labtec one and should be working just
>>> fine.*

>>> *Test sound in Control Centre / Sound System works
>>> o.k. but test midi produces no sound whatsoever.*

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>>>MP3's and Wav's play ok. Alsa mixer looks like the
>>>recording level settings etc. would be as they should.

>>>Thanks for any input, especially for instructions on
>>>getting and rebuilding the relevant RPM's.

>>>2.6.8-24.11-smp / artsd (whatever it is..) version is 1.3.0
>>>dw / Mike

>>Are there any jumpers on the sound card?

>>Not all microphones are necessarily compatible with all soundcards. Most PC
>>microphones are of the electret condenser kind which requires power to be
>>sent to the microphone. Some soundcards have a jumper you have to set to
>>send power to the mike, because they're designed to work with either
>>electret or standard dynamic microphones, and are changed in hardware rather
>>than software.

>>Certainly the symptoms you describe would happen if you were either (a) using
>>an electret microphone without power, or (b) using a dynamic microphone on a
>>soundcard which expected an electret mike.

>>First thing I'd do is borrow a couple of microphones from friends and see if
>>you get any better results -- it may be that you're bashing your head
>>against a wall by playing around with the software.

>>Cheers,

>>Matt

> I had same problems with Skype and SUSE 9.2. When I try to call people, they
>barely hear me. I have tired some better mics but no improvement.
>Then I loaded PCLinuxOS Live, and there is Skype app. With my low quality mic
>people hear me quite fine. So, problem is with some software.
>What should I upgrade to resolve this issue? arts?

>Mirko

After having tried three different mikes (and a preamplifier box,
too), and removing
the soundcard + enabling the onboard chip, and the mic/Skype stuff still not
working, I happened upon the Open sound site:

<http://www.opensound.com/linux.html>

...and installed their free OSS drivers for my Suse 9.2 smp kernel.

Had to boot once or twice, to get rid of some previous drivers or
somesuch thing,
before the installation went through, all the way.

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Being a dimwit – in Linux and out of it – I had some trouble getting sounds to work (kept enabling and disabling the sound system in KDE control centre, as some instructions/newsgroup articles were very vague, even contradictory), but finally I got it working, and now the mic records just fine, without any preamplifier; I use the Labtec headphones/mic set.

It took a while before I found out that typing "ossmixer" in console window gave me the parameters I could change with a respective command; there was no GUI mixer for OSS that I could find.

In KDE control Centre I have the sound system enabled, "Run with highest priority" ticked, and on next page the [Hardware] the audio device selected is Open Sound System, plus the "Full duplex" thingie is ticked.

According to OSS instructions whenever I downlaod a new kernel, I've got to re–install the OSS drivers, lest the system crash. (And the free drivers need a re–installation once in four months; the "paid" drivers do not, and the paid ones cover some cards that the free ones don't, I reckon.)

The card I use now is SoundBlaster Live! 5.1 and the on–board sound chip is disabled.

In Rosegarden, I can play midi files via some free soundfonts I have down–loaded (merlin_pro.sf2 –– have to use it as I cannot find my Creative sf disk), or by using the free Aeolus virtual organ thing for the midi soundsin Rosegarden, but in KDE control centre the test "Midi" sound does NOT work. Test "Sound", on the other hand works o.k.

Skype works rather fine – the only problem is that there is a nearly regular scratch sound (not from the mike, more like some buffer or processor thing, or something like that) that is a bit irritable, and the volume has to be turned rather high so that I can hear the other fellow – and turned low again so that I won't soil my pants when I put the speakers on and a wav plays.

In KDE Control Centre / sound the skip prevention sound buffer is 232 millisecs and auto–suspend after idle is 10 secs.

Audacity records fine, but there's a bit of humming from my other electronic equipment. Recording level is excellent though.

Good luck with Skype & your mic!

Hope this helps you some.

dw / m

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Also check the archives at <http://lists.suse.com>
Please read the FAQs: suse-linux-e-faq@suse.com

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