

Blurring the Boundaries of Music

May 6, 2010

Abstract

Music is being liberated from our computers. It is migrating into the cloud, it is vanishing onto our portable media devices, and it is spread out amongst all our friends. More and more, we do not own our own music—but we do not want to lose our ability to find and play it. On top of all of this, there is more music being released every day than we could ever hope to stay on top of. How do we do find new music that we didn't know existed? How do we extend the boundaries of our playable universe to encompass more than just the bits that we have on our hard disks? And to finish it all off, how do we integrate this fuzzily bound music exploration and experience with our friends?

The technology is out there—from Playdar, the new kid on the block designed to be a *music content resolver*, finding you a way to play the tracks you want, to services like Last.fm and The Echo Nest, who trade in information about music, telling you what you want to hear that you might not know. Media players today are stuck in a rut, with all the big players focusing on local music for local consumption (iTunes, WMP) and the few that attempt to do more failing to do it well (Songbird).

There is space for innovation for a KDE media player—a player that *plays you what you want to hear*, without you having to care about where the music comes from. A player that integrates with your friends and lets you play songs from them and share songs with them. A player that blurs the boundaries of your music, bringing the knowledge of the web to you, rather than forcing you into the unforgiving arms of a web browser.

This talk will focus on ways to move Amarok towards this goal, showcasing recent work and discussing ways forward, as well as other Qt/KDE projects that are moving in this direction. A 45 minute slot with a technical paper would be ideal.