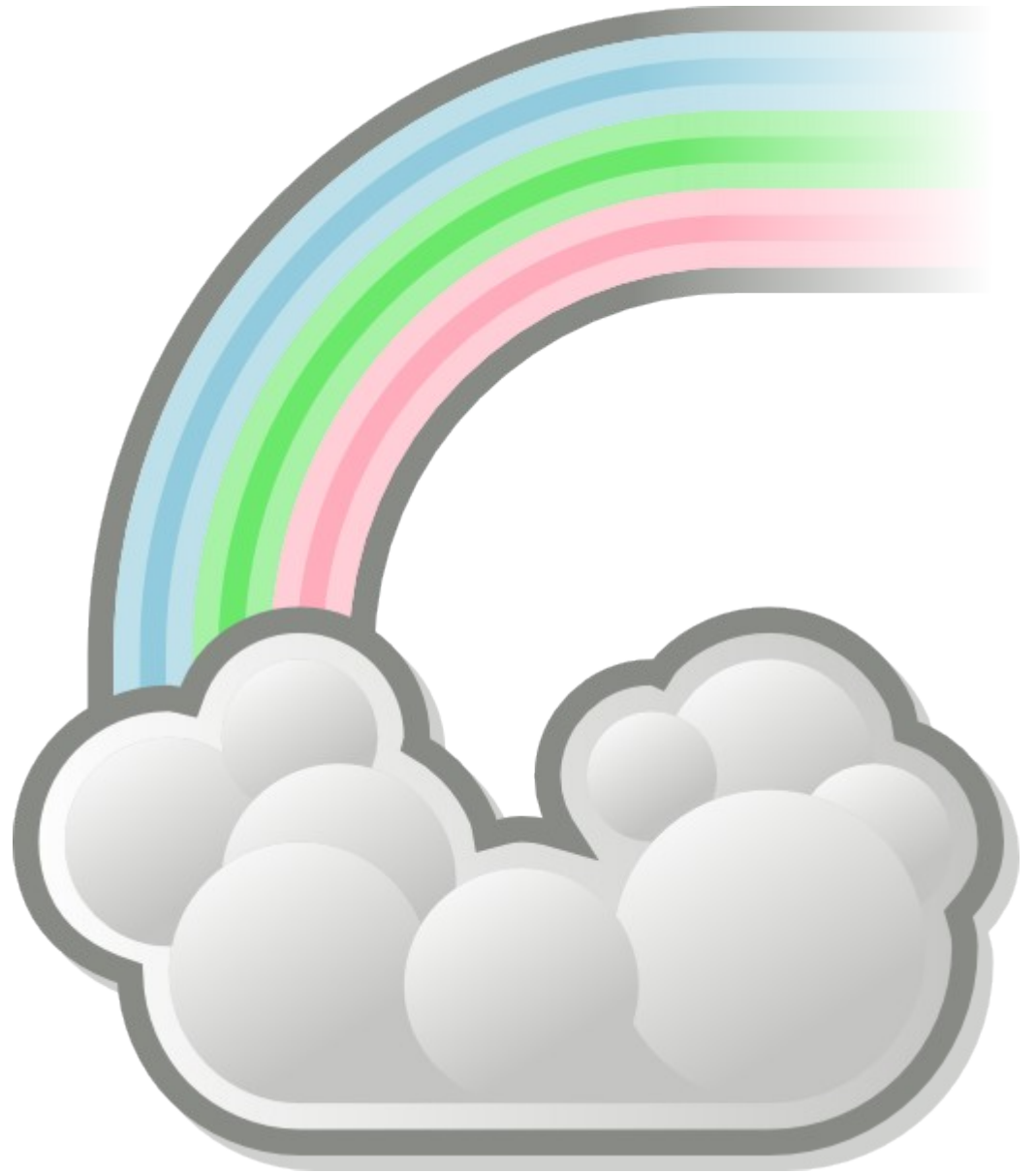


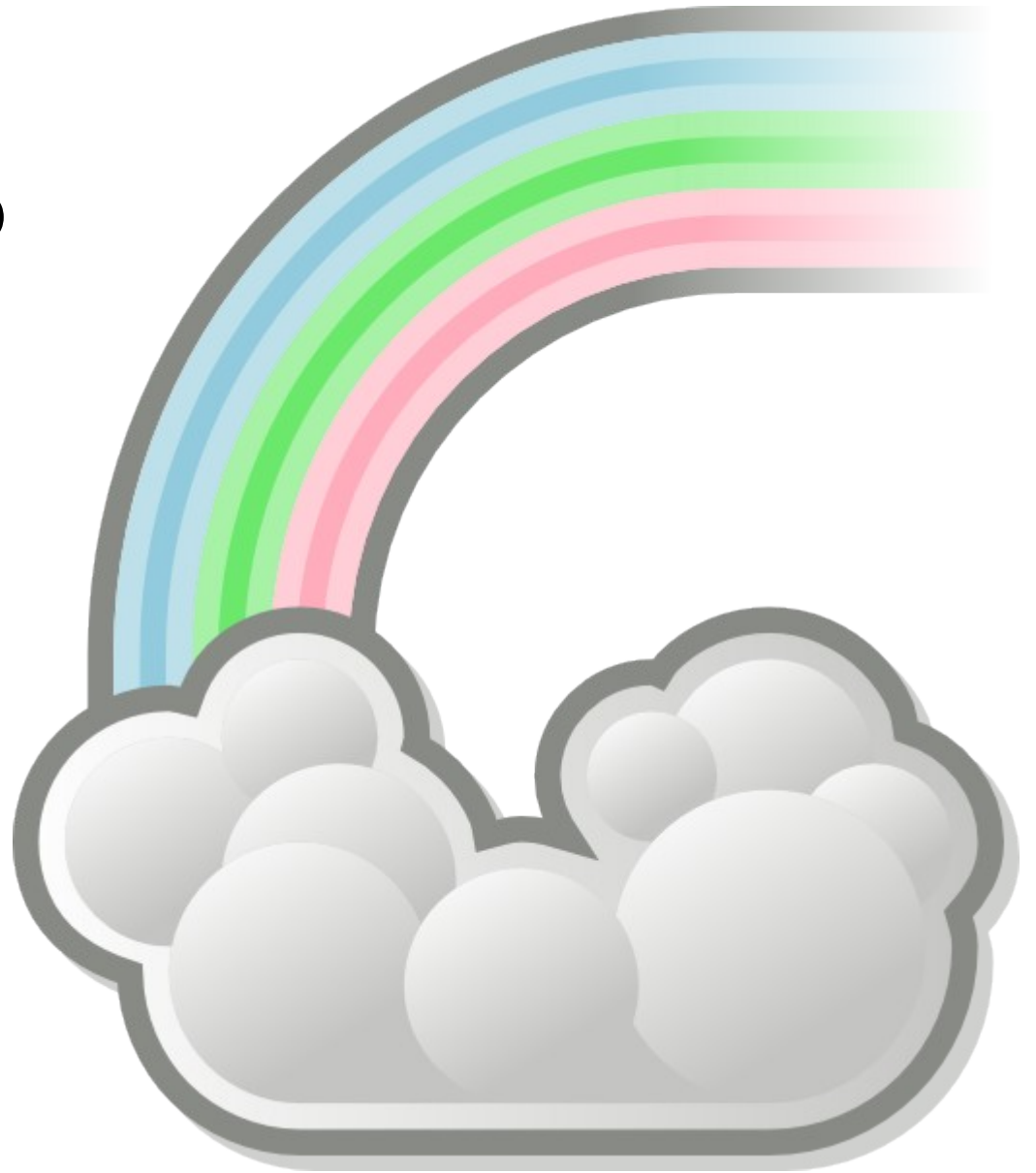
Gimmie: Panel Revisited



by Alex Graveley

Gimmie: Panel Revisited

- A new way to think about your desktop
- Simple & Obvious
- It's a Prototype!



Por Qué Gimmie?

- Easy to get lost in menu organization
- Menus aren't searchable
- Recently Used under-utilized
- Task list under-utilized
- Low-bandwidth menus
- Combine launchers and running representation

What makes a desktop today?

- Applications
- Settings
- Printers
- Email
- Email Contacts
- Chat Buddies
- Connected Devices
- Media Files
- Web Pages
- Blogs
- Office Documents
- Notes
- Remote Computers
- Trashcan
- Desktop
- Photos, etc...

Let's call these Desktop Objects

How are objects found today?

- Application and File access is streamlined
 - Constant access to browsing interfaces
 - Bookmarks
 - Recently used list
- Others use a mix of browsing interfaces
 - Printers, network devices, chat buddies, downloaded files: all use custom interfaces
 - Allows new kinds of objects to be invented

Today: Windows

Bookmarked Applications

Recently Used Applications

Application Browser

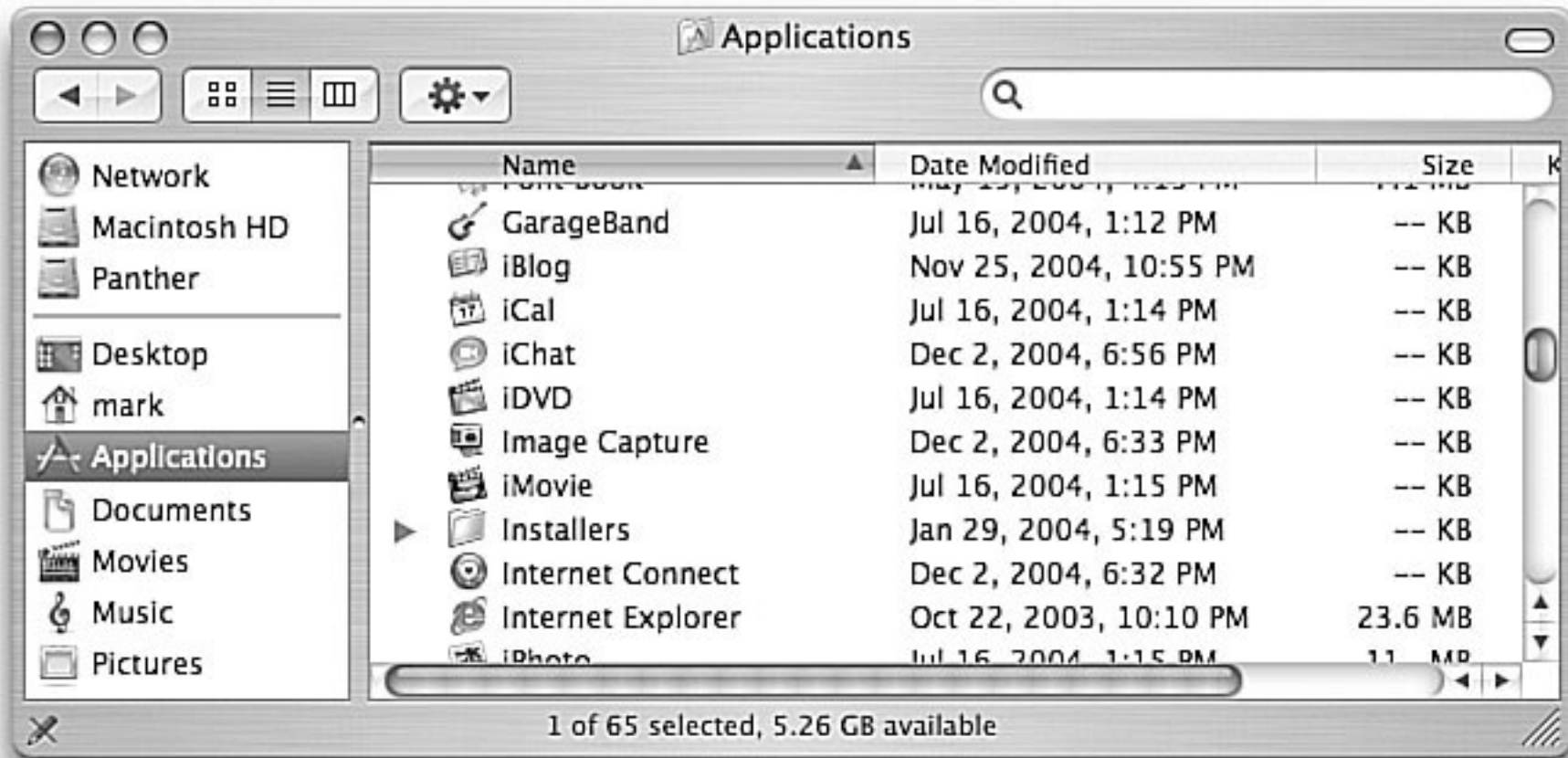


Common Folders

Browse System Objects

Common Tasks

Today: Mac OS X



Application Browser

Today: Mac OS X

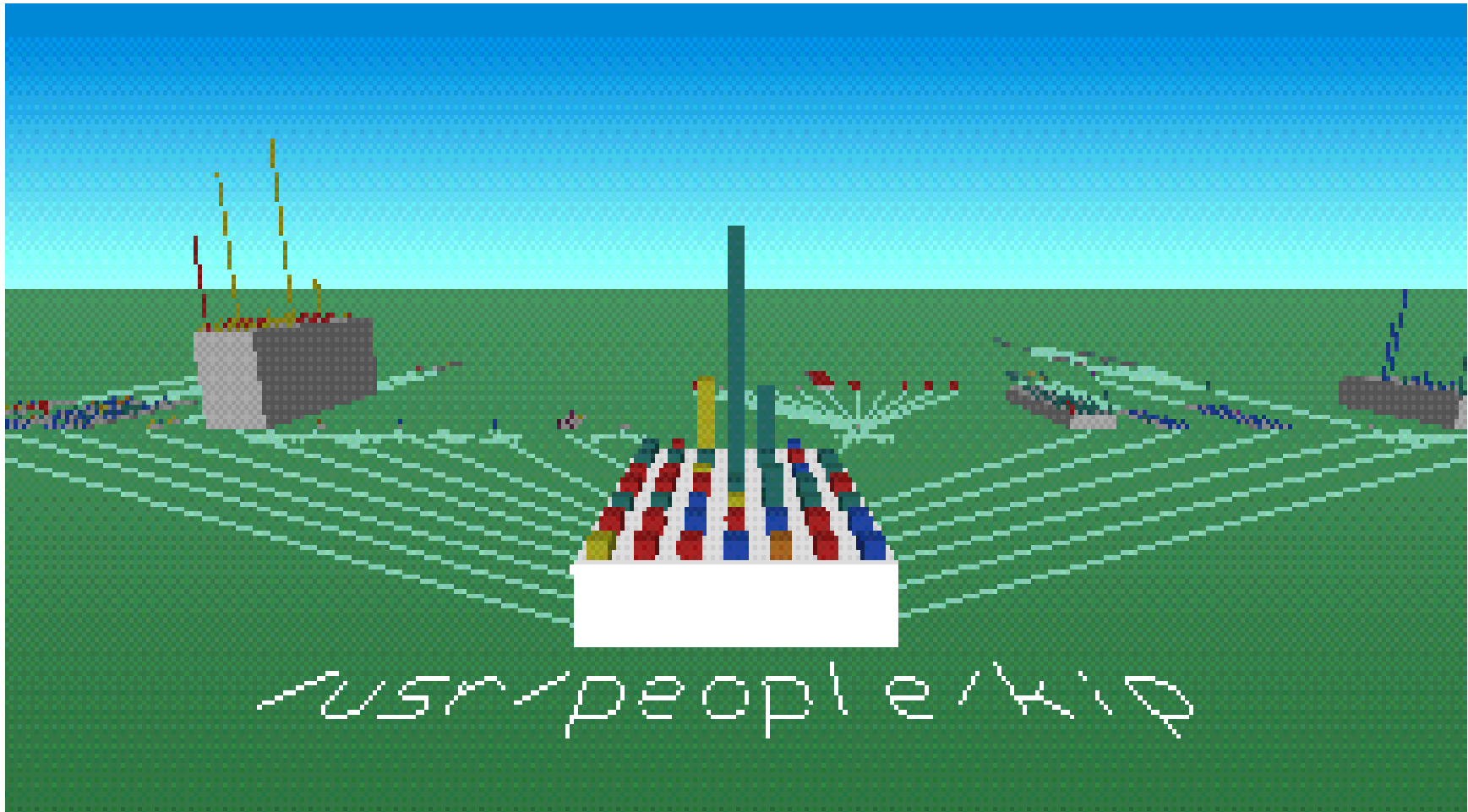


Recently Used Applications

Recently Used Documents

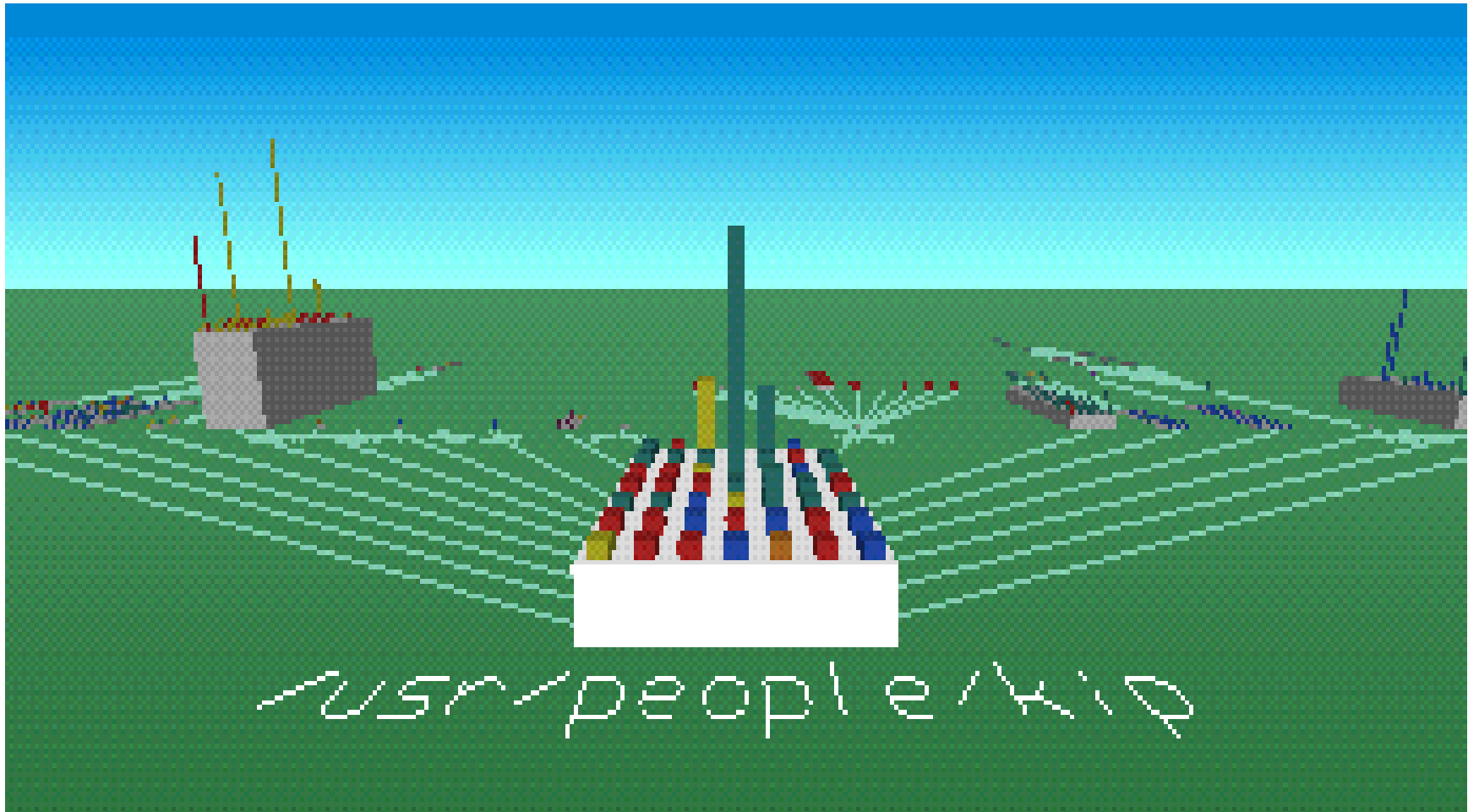
Can we do better?

- Discoverable organization
 - Group similar objects
 - Generic interface
- Streamline everything
 - Bookmarks
 - Improve Recently Used “miss”
- Aid user memory
 - Long-term history
 - Integrated search



“This is a UNIX system. I know this.”

Not so fast, sparky



“This is a UNIX system. I know this.”

Not so fast, sparky

- Fit perception of a desktop
- Allow desktop objects to evolve
- Different usage patterns
- Avoid semantic-itis

Solution: Keep it really simple

- Obvious groups of objects, called Topics
 - Avoid overlap
 - Broad in scope
- Keep an Opt-in approach
 - Don't overwhelm the user with objects they don't use or care about

Applications

Documents

People

Computer

Topics

- Common interface
 - Icon, name, description depend on content
- Windows not menus
 - Targeted searching
 - Flat categories
 - Common actions in toolbar
- Integrated recently used
 - Highlight frequently used objects
 - Easy jump to categories

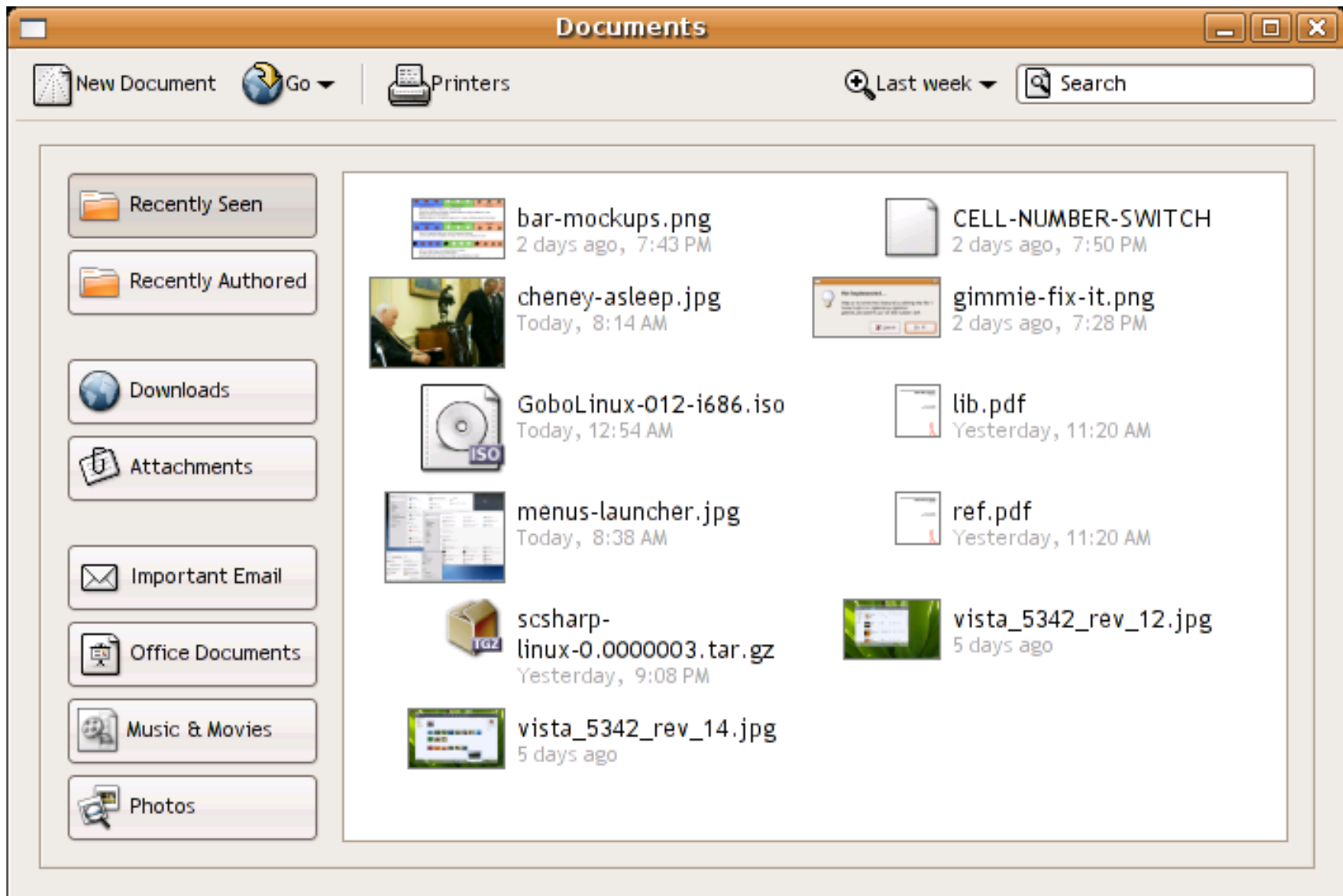
Applications

(Stick with existing menu layout)



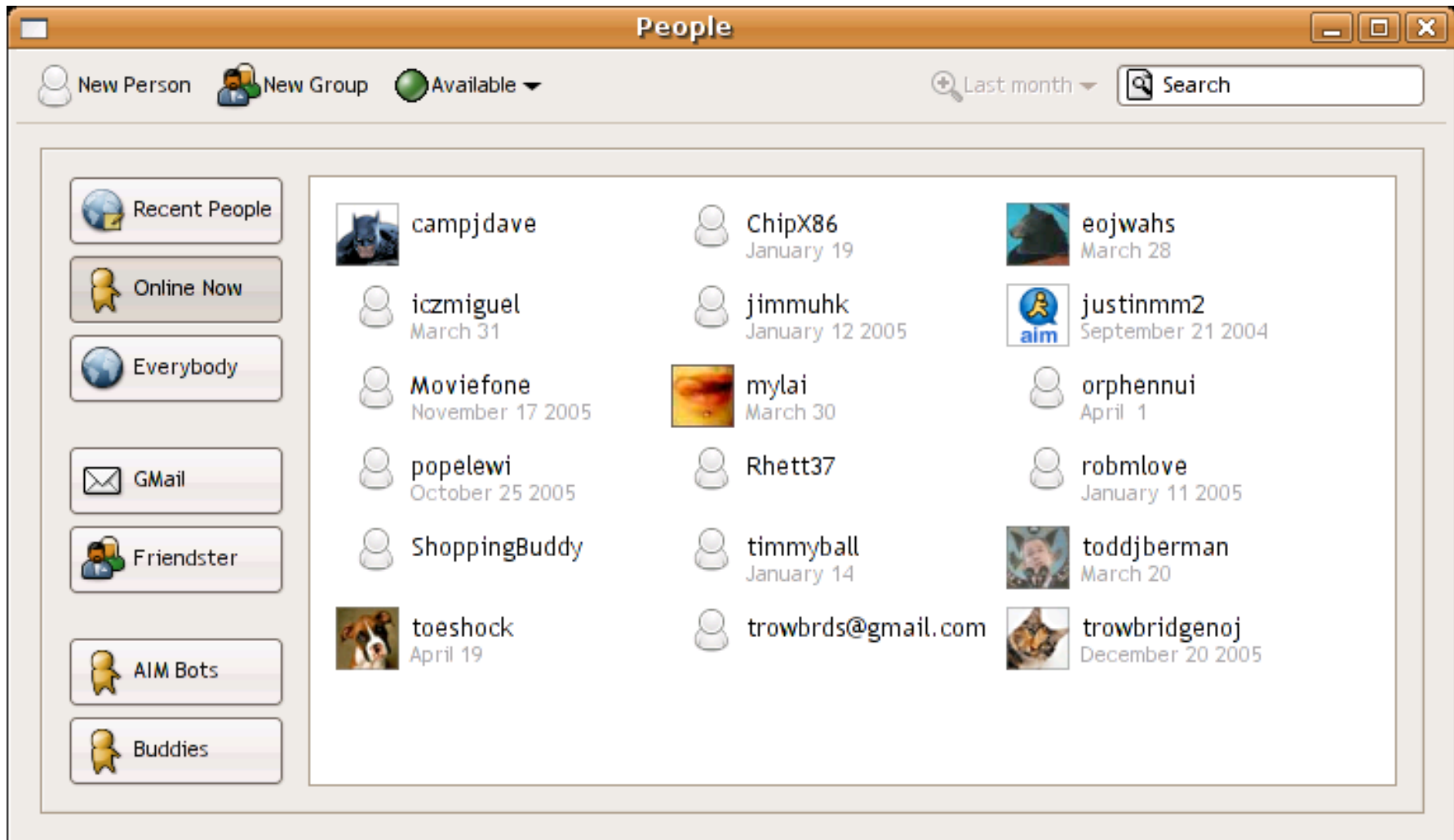
Documents

Media Files, Web Pages, Office Documents, Notes, Photos



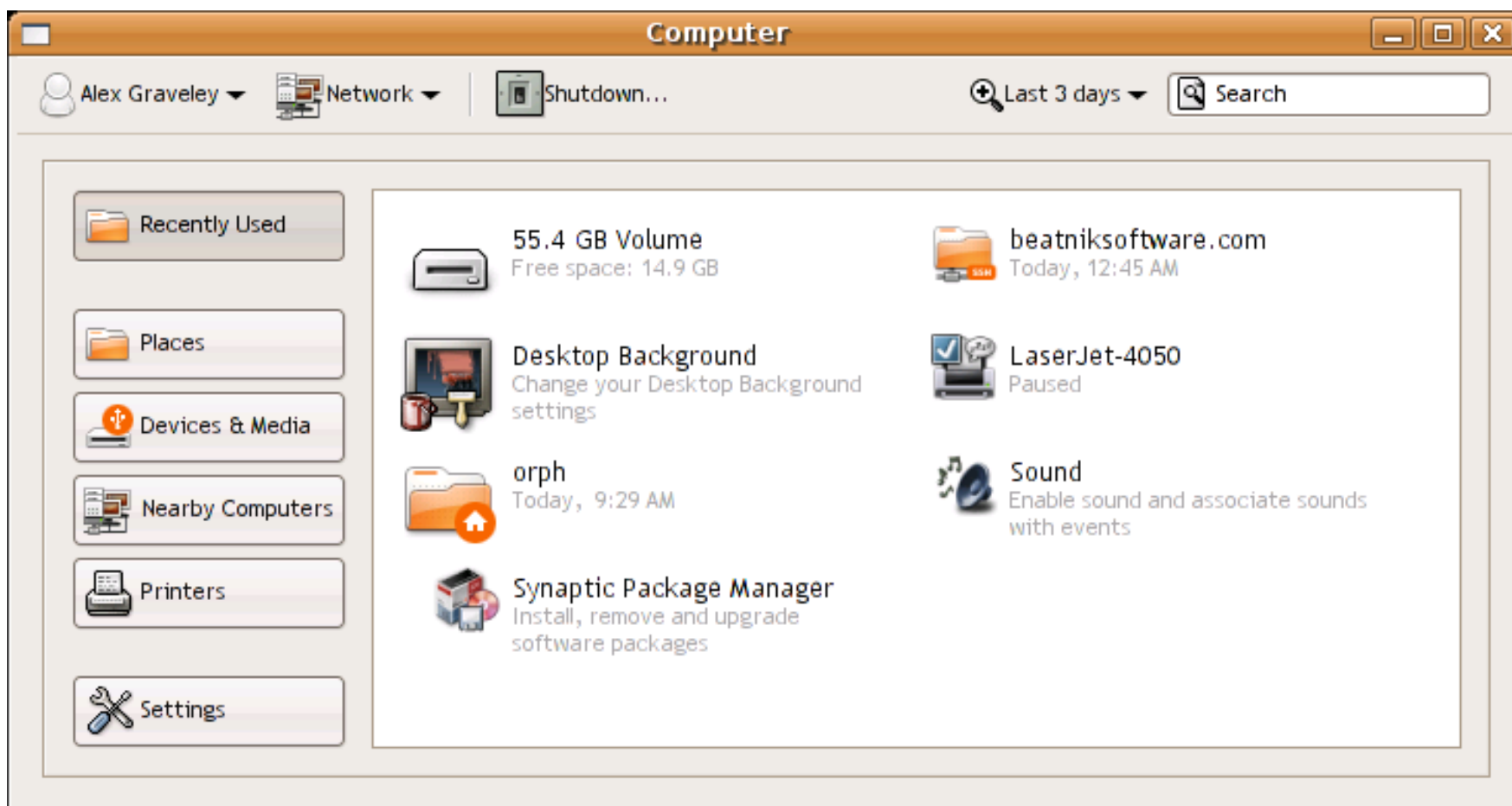
People

Email Contacts, Chat Buddies



Computer

Trashcan, Settings, Printers, Remote Computers,
Connected Devices



Room for Improvement: Topics

- Icon View too limited
 - Vista's Explorer info bar?
 - Uses precious vertical space
 - KDE's rich tooltips?
 - Not interactive
 - Finder's triple pane view?
 - Maybe...
- Need snippets, tagging
- List View to support sorting
- Adjust the number of Topics?

Okay, so they're objects.
So what?

What makes a desktop workflow?

- Running object representation
- Switching between activities
- Scale well for heavily loaded sessions
- Start new tasks

Create New Task

Bookmarks

Running Windows



Window-based Workflow

Gnome/Windows/KDE

- Windows have running representation
- Representation changes frequently
 - Title, sizing, and icon often change
- Launchers create new windows
 - Different target for launching and task switching
 - Allows easy re-launching

Application-based Workflow

OS X

- Applications have running representation
- Bookmarks represent applications, documents or folders
 - Large overhead for unbookmarked objects
 - Often see many application bookmarks
- No running representation for unbookmarked documents or folders
 - Rarely see Documents or Folders as bookmarks

Object-based Workflow in Gimmie

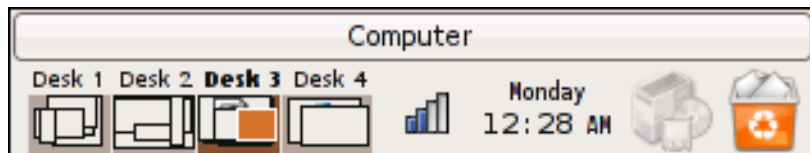
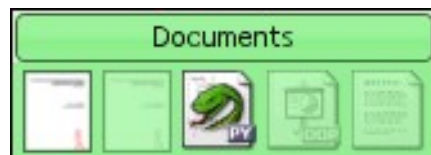
- All opened objects have running representation
- Bookmarks can represent any object
- Clicking an object raises all it's windows
 - Applications are just objects
 - Multiple clicks cycle opened windows
- Topics make browsing easier

GimmieBar

Open New Object



Bookmarks & Running Objects



- Easy to learn
- Relates objects to topics
 - Colors aide recognition
- Quickly see what's open
- Bookmarks are running representation
- Convenient DnD target & source

GimmieBar Status

- **Bookmarks**
 - Applications
 - Some settings
 - Previously opened Documents
 - Gaim buddies
- **Opened Applications**
- **Some opened Documents**
 - Need to support tabbed windows
- **Running applications**
- **Active Gaim conversations**
- **Workspace switcher**
- **Clock with calendar**
- **Trashcan**
- **Tray Icons**

GimmieBar Next Steps

- All opened documents
- In-progress Downloads
- Active printers
- Connected removable media
- Important email
- Email contacts
- Email attachments
- Tomboy Notes
- Opened web pages?

Room for Improvement: GimmieBar

- Too big
- Can't scale icons with current layout
- Hard to click Topic browsing buttons
- Non-stable locations
- Doesn't support many bookmarks
 - Maybe a good thing?
 - Recently Used helps: easy to access 2nd tier objects
- How to support minimized windows?
- Objects without thumbnails look the same

libwhatup

Advertising Opened Objects, vaporware

- Support tabbed applications
- Simple opened resource/URI listing & activation
- Basic XWindow properties and messages:
 - `_NET_WHATUP_RESOURCE_LIST` Property
 - Lists a window's opened resources
 - `_NET_WHATUP_ACTIVE_RESOURCE` Property
 - Currently active resource
 - Activate client message
 - Request resource activation, sent by Gimmie
- FDo spec needed

Future Directions

- Download scriptlets to expose what's important to a user:
 - Wikipedia: All viewed pages as Documents
 - GMail: All starred email as Important Email
 - Friendster: Show Friends as People
- Deep integration
 - libwhatup everywhere (GTK maybe?)
 - Mozilla plugin next major task
- Crazy Cairo Loving
- Lots of room to explore

Gimmie Minutia

Homepage

www.beatniksoftware.com/gimmie

Discussion

gimmie-list@beatniksoftware.com

Code

Python, 7500 LoC

Gnome CVS: gimmie

Gimmie 0.1 out today!