Scenario

The computing landscape is changing in a really fast way. As every change this poses both big risks and great opportunities.
We are seeing a big change on both desktop and mobile systems, both migrating towards more organic user interfaces and strongly network (or cloud how it gets called those days ;) connected, with many tasks being accomplished on mobile devices rather than desktops like in the past.
Those changes are rising a lot the expected quality about operating systems on any target, posing the traditional Linux/X11 desktops in a difficult situation since the traditional voluntary based contribution model makes hard to dedicate the necessary energies to the most boring QA tasks. Resulting in an overall decrease of the FOSS adoption (as a side note with an increase of the adoption of projects that while being FOSS have a traditional closed corporate development model, such as Android or Chrome)

Dangers and Opportunities

In this scenario, KDE technologies (and the community itself) will have to change quite significantly to stay relevant (with the opportunity of increase significantly our relevance in the global scenario, if played well).

Several factors will play into the role: the success or not of Qt (and MeeGo) in the mobile space, the overall success and relevance of Linux in the Desktop area and the relevance KDE will achieve into other communities, both Desktop (for instance, will Ubuntu stay popular in its current form? Probably not) and Mobile (will KDE technologies be accepted in the MeeGo community and possibly other platforms? We still have problems in justifying the presence of kdelibs there, mostly a PR issue).

If Qt will have success in the mobile space, it could grow at the point of making KDE a not very relevant part of it: that's why it's important selling our technology there, besides gaining a “commercial” part of KDE even if dangerous could give access to human resources to make our workspaces more “product grade”, with the necessary hard and long QA process.

The KDE technologies if used correctly could provide a series of killer features that would make KDE felt necessary as in the desktop like in the mobile devices.

Changes in direction:

A direction of effort I propose to achieve what I talked about in this page is what in Plasma we call **device spectrum**: a coherent approach in targeting KDE technologies and applications in devices outside the desktop (mobile and not) while not shifting energies away from the desktop. This by reusing as much technologies as possible (without falling in the easy pitfall of dropping otherwise useful dependencies in the hope of raising acceptance).
The different device profiles while behaving differently on different kind of devices, due to the great differences of screen size, but yet with a very coherent look and feel.
Besides using the same underlying technologies, a device would keep itself in sync as much as possible with a desktop device, syncing things like contacts, emails and activities between devices, being two desktops or a desktop and a mobile, this would be made either directly between devices or using network services, such as Own Cloud when available: part of the technologies needed are already there.
This long effort would give KDE technologies something that no other alternative in the world has right now: a coherent experience between all the supported devices, so across everything the use could want to do regardless of the tool is using, as opposed to offerings from other companies that have deeply different systems, due to the very nature of their parent companies, closed in different divisions working on completely different products.