SLiM (Simple Login Manager)

[SLiM](#) is an acronym for *Simple Login Manager*. If you use one of the lightweight desktop environements like Xfce, Fluxbox, Blackbox or WindowMaker, you might want to use SLiM.

Slackware ships with two login managers who could theoretically do the job but each have their shortcomings:

- KDM (heavy)
- XDM (visually unappealing)

Installation

SLiM doesn't ship with a stock Slackware installation, but you can easily install it from [SBo](#).

Basic configuration (system level)

All login managers (SLiM, GDM, KDM, XDM) are supposed to start in runlevel 4, so make sure this is actually your default runlevel. Take a peek in `/etc/inittab` and see if you have the following:

```
# Default runlevel. (Do not set to 0 or 6)
id:4:initdefault:
```

You can also check the current runlevel of your machine by typing the following command:

```
# who -r
         run-level 4  2012-07-04 21:44                        last=S
```

In the example shown above, the current runlevel of your machine is also "4".

Now edit `/etc/rc.d/rc.4` and add a few lines to start SLiM automatically on boot. The order is important here. Insert the stanza right before the one that manages GDM, like this:

```
# Tell the viewers what's going to happen...
echo "Starting up X11 session manager..."

# Start SLiM...
if [ -x /usr/bin/slim ]; then
  exec /usr/bin/slim
fi

# Try to use GNOME's gdm session manager.  This comes first because if
# gdm is on the machine then the user probably installed it and wants
# to use it by default:
if [ -x /usr/bin/gdm ]; then
  exec /usr/bin/gdm -nodaemon
```

```
fi
```

Basic configuration (user level)

There's one last thing left to do before your shiny new login manager can be put to use. Run the following command as a normal user:

```
$ xwmconfig
```

This will launch Slackware's window manager selection dialog box. Choose your window manager (Xfce, Fluxbox, Blackbox, whatever) and hit OK. This spews out a new `~/.xinitrc` file in your home directory. We won't go into the gory details of this file, since the one interesting thing about it is that it enables you to log in using SLiM.

Fine-tuning

SLiM's main configuration file is `/etc/slim.conf`. It's very clear and well commented and pretty much self-explanatory. For example, you might want to decide that you prefer activating `numlock` on boot. In that case, just uncomment the relevant line in `slim.conf` like this:

```
# Activate numlock when slim starts. Valid values: on|off
numlock             on
```

Artwork

SLiM's default theme may or may not appeal to you. If the latter is the case, then you can either install another theme, or create your own theme from scratch.

SBo's `slim` build comes with an alternate theme called `slackware-black`, created by Frank Caraballo. You can activate this theme by editing the according line in `/etc/slim.conf` and replacing `default` with `slackware-black`, like this:

```
# current theme, use comma separated list to specify a set to
# randomly choose from
current_theme       slackware-black
```

An [alternative Slackware theme](#) is available on [ngc891's blog](#).

The SLiM website has a [page with a collection of themes](#). Installing one or more of these themes is quite simple. Take a look in `/usr/share/slim/themes`. You'll see two directories: `default` and `slackware-black`. To install a theme, simply download the theme tarball and uncompress it in the `/usr/share/slim/themes` directory (as root, of course). To activate the theme, edit the `current_theme` line in `/etc/slim.conf` accordingly.

The site also sports a [nice tutorial](#) about your own theme creation.

Install a collection of ready-made themes, and then take a peek in the respective theme directories to see how it's actually done.

Sources

- Originally written by Niki Kovacs

howtos, software, slim, login manager, author kikinovak

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