Smuxi - Feature # 913: restore old tab based chat layout (instead of the new chat list)

Status:	New	**Priority:**	Normal
Author:	Aramati x	**Category:**	Frontend GNOME
Created:	12/18/2013	**Assigned to:**	
Updated:	02/24/2014	**Due date:**	
Complexity:			
Subject:	restore old tab based chat layout (instead of the new chat list)		
Description:	Hi, the PPA just updated smuxi to 0.10. The interface looks very different now. The server list is on the left instead of on top, and the user list is on the right instead of on the left. I do not like this new layout. Is there an option to restore the previous interface? I did not find anything.		

History

12/18/2013 05:20 PM - Aramati x

Additionally, the server / channel list being a list instead of a tab interface makes it no longer possible to use the scroll wheel to switch between them. :/

12/18/2013 05:39 PM - Georgi Karavasilev

- Assigned to deleted (Mirco Bauer)

Hello there.

Firstly - no there isn't a way to revert back to the old layout as it's now history.

Secondly - "I do not like this new layout." is not an argument that can convince us to revert back to the old one. Actually, it is not an argument at all, to be honest.

Thirdly - "No longer possible to scroll with the wheel between the server/channel list." is an argument, but it can not convince us to revert back to the old (or implement it as an option) as option as it is:

a)very easy to switch between servers/channels even without scrolling now

b)scrolling can be implemented (I think so, Mirco correct me if I'm wrong) in the new treeview interface

And even if b) turns to be impossible a) is still there.

I hope my response has been useful.

Cheers, Mecho!

12/18/2013 05:46 PM - Aramati x

This is not so much an actual usability issue, as an IRC application isn't particularly hard to use. I'm just going with what makes sense here.

My main argument is that using tabs makes sense logically. Each IRC server and channel represents a document that can be modified individually.

A list, on the other hand, doesn't imply that: It is not obvious from the look of the UI if clicking on a list item will switch to a document or if the list item is just there to have contextual actions performed on it.

One use case where I can see a List being more useful is when having LOTS of different servers / channels. But this depends on the user. I only ever have 3 channels open. That is why an option would be nice.

A more practical concern is that having the user list on the right is harder to access. Most other applications (and OSes, desktop environments, etc) when using a side bar, have a single side bar on the Left.

12/18/2013 05:51 PM - Aramati x

> A more practical concern is that having the user list on the right is harder to access. Most other applications (and OSes, desktop environments, etc) when using a side bar, have a single side bar on the Left.

It also unnecessarily increases the distance from the user list in the chat log to the list of logged in users. Especially in a big window.

Let's say I read a user's chat message after coming back after a period of inactivity and want to check if that user is still online.

With the new design, I need to move my eyes completely over to the other side of the screen. With the old one, those are immediately next to each other conveniently.

12/18/2013 06:20 PM - Georgi Karavasilev

Actually, one of the reasons why we switched to the list view is exactly because we wanted to have a clear separation between <server> and <room>. From the list view it is evident what is a server and what is a room.

Secondly - if you're worried about whitespace created by a sidebar which isn't full with servers/rooms, don't be for monitors nowdays are wide and one can afford a few pixels on the side.

I made a quick google images search on mac irc clients (as you know most OS X apps are well known to be properly designed) and most use the same approach as Smuxi so there is that.

And lastly - it is a good policy to have one and the same layout for your app. Thre list view works when it comes to having multiple servers/rooms and works even if you have a few (albeit it creates a few pixels of whitespace, but that is affordable for monitors nowdays are wide). The tab view works when you have a few servers/rooms, but if you have a bundle of them you get the horror of it all situation in which the room you are looking for maybe outside the monitor width. Adding an option to switch between them is like putting a big banner saying: "Hey, we couldn't settle for a layout for we didn't have the guts to take a decision, so we gave the users the ability to make the decision we must have taken.", which isn't the brightest idea out there. :)

12/18/2013 06:22 PM - Mirco Bauer

- Subject changed from Restore previous layout to restore old tab based chat layout (instead of the new chat list)

12/18/2013 06:22 PM - Aramati x

I know that "most irc clients" do this. Actually smuxi being different made me switch to it. I guess I'll just be stuck with the older version then.

12/18/2013 06:29 PM - Georgi Karavasilev

You know, being different is good in some cases, but when the rest of the world follow <trend x> and you don't, there is a good 99.99% chance you're wrong and the rest of the world is correct. :P

Anyways, if someone implements it, it will land in internal settings (dconf like pane for heavy power users that is not in the normal settings pane), but Mirco has no plans of implementing the old layout.

01/26/2014 11:50 AM - Kalle Kaitala

Going to stay with the old version and tabs as well. I believe both Xchat and mIRC support both list and tab styles with user choice. Jannik's comments are also accurate in my use case.

02/20/2014 01:41 PM - Christian Lohmaier

Both ways have problems, especially on "smaller" screens (1280x800 now is small, used to be very different a couple of years ago :-)))

* tab layout has the problem of not being notified of new messages, since there just isn't enough room to show all tabs at once, so it is easy to miss "unread pings"
* tab layout also has the problem of not being able to scroll the list without actually switching tabs, so you cannot jump to one that doesn't fit without resetting the indicator of the tabs in between.

* list layout has the big drawback of further reducing the valuable screen estate that is used for the actual chat, especially since the "feature" of aligning the text after the nick was introduced (see bug #739 for that), and also because it is not resizable to a smaller width (bug #956)
* list layout has the slight drawback of longer mouse travel (not so much of an issue for me)

02/24/2014 05:46 PM - Mirco Bauer

Christian Lohmaier wrote:

> * list layout has the big drawback of further reducing the valuable screen estate that is used for the actual chat, especially since the "feature" of aligning the text after the nick was introduced (see bug #739 for that), and also because it is not resizable to a smaller width (bug #956)

The chat list can now be reduced in size and automatically cuts of the label where needed while still showing the highlight counter correctly, see #956

02/24/2014 05:49 PM - Mirco Bauer

Christian Lohmaier wrote:

> Both ways have problems, especially on "smaller" screens (1280x800 now is small, used to be very different a couple of years ago :-)))

Please provide a screenshot. Pictures often say more than thousand words :) The vertical monitor screenshot of #914 was very enlightening for example...

02/24/2014 05:53 PM - Mirco Bauer

The wasted vertical space when a chat list usually only has a small number of items will be addressed by using the empty space for the user list, see #948