The latest Plasma release dropped a few desktop effects: the cube family, CoverSwitch and FlipSwitch. All of those effects were written back in 2008, the early days of KDE 4.x and the early days of desktop effects in KWin. The effects were implemented by me and when Vlad asked about removing them I saw the need for this and supported this step for technical reasons. With this blog post I want to share a little bit of why it was needed to remove them and why this means that they can come back in better ways than ever before.

To really understand this we need to time travel back to 2008 and the years before when desktop effects were introduced. This can help to understand how the hardware architecture changed and how that influenced design decisions in the effects API which are nowadays problematic. First of all CPUs. The Intel Core 2 Duo architecture was launched in 2006 as the brand new thing which had multiple (namely 2) cores which slowly replaced the NetBurst architecture which dominated Desktop computing for the beginning of that decade.

KDE