Database Publishing with JAVA and TeX*

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Abstract

Sun Computer intends its JAVA programming language to be the lingua franca of the World Wide Web. Sun may get their wish: dozens of books about JAVA are published every year, and there is even a conference about JAVA, JavaOne, being held in San Francisco at the same time as this TUG meeting.

If you wanted to publish a book documenting and cross-referencing all the JAVA class libraries (running to 1,000 pages and covering over 1,500 classes, organized into about 70 "packages") what would you do? If you are Patrick Chan and Rosanna Lee, you would use JAVA itself to manage the data (about 40Mb of it) and you would use TeX to format your pages.

In my talk, I will describe the criteria for selecting the formatter (i.e., TeX plus macros) for a database typesetting project, the best way of interfacing between TeX and a database engine, and some interesting (perhaps even challenging) features of the formatting work. I will also show how the success of the project enabled the author to make last-minute revisions to the book (changes necessitated by late developments in the JAVA class libraries themselves) even though this involved the reprocessing of all 40Mb of data, in less than 24 hours.

Ode to a special

Oh what a tangled web we get
When first we find `\def` *and* `\futurelet`*.*
We turn to eTeX, we turn to Omega,
They both look good, we start to get eager.
But no, whats this, a misplaced `\omit`*?*
Did we miss a brace, does `\vbox` *still not fit?*
Help me fix my macros, bracket heroes all!
But Pierre's font is calling, Lamport's left the hall
Barbara says use `\downcase`*, Downes just strokes his beard.*
Erik sells me 4TeX, pretends he never heard.
David's hacking tables, Frank is fixing floats,
Ogawa's talking slowly, Kacvinsky wants his oats.
Will Kaveh help me out? no, his dhoti's dirty,
Nelson's feeding awks, Mimi's feeling flirty.
Flynn says use a rubber, Wendy needs a hug,
Kath has got the answer, no it's just another mug.
Young Ross is such a hoot, he says use xypic
Why not turn to Sojka, he's sure to know the trick.
Anita, a Hoover, what use to me's a dam?
Send me out with Kiren, we'll both go on the lam.
Irina claims 'for us in Mir is no problem',
TRIUMF uses `\mathcode` *but* `\hspaces` *just one em.*
TrueTeX does it both ways, and you can trust the Blue Sky
but hyperref the backend, oh why oh why oh why?

ActiveTeX, PassiveTeX, what a great to do,
Can there be yet some way through?
MathML has pointies, XSL can claim its templates
ExerQuiz is **so** *cute — so screw you Billy Gates.*

—Sebastian Rahtz

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* [No paper submitted. – Ed.]