

Book reviews: *Tout ce que vous avez toujours voulu savoir sur L^AT_EX sans jamais oser le demander* by Vincent Lozano

Charles Thomas

Vincent Lozano, *Tout ce que vous avez toujours voulu savoir sur L^AT_EX sans jamais oser le demander. Ou comment utiliser L^AT_EX quand on n’y connaît goutte*. Framasoft; 2013, 304pp, ill. Seconde édition. €15.00. ISBN 9791092674002. <http://framabook.org/tout-sur-latex>.



In regards to reviewing and judging books about L^AT_EX, the following was mentioned in [1]:

The way one can judge introductory L^AT_EX textbooks is similar to how figure skating is judged. There are several “required elements” which must be present in any book, like the explanation of L^AT_EX macros and workflow. There are also several “free elements” like additional packages or tricks the author chooses to include. The book can be evaluated by the pedagogical skill with which the author performed the “required elements”, introducing the fundamentals of L^AT_EX, and by his choice of the “free” ones.

This book, *All You Always Wanted to Know about L^AT_EX but Never Dared to Ask*, by Vincent Lozano, does well in both categories mentioned above. This book is in French and is divided into three parts.

The book’s layout is nicely designed and clean. The author sprinkles in some humor throughout the book to make it an enjoyable read.

The first part deals with introductory information concerning L^AT_EX. It starts off with the installation of L^AT_EX and goes on from there. One caveat: the installation information is most useful to those readers who are familiar with Unix. The rest of the first part tackles such things as creating documents, boxes, working with graphics and B^IB^TE_X, and given the francophone audience, the peculiarities of L^AT_EX documents in the French language. Though most of the information can be readily found in other introductory L^AT_EX books, for a French audience this is a very good starting point. The beginner is not inundated with so much information as to become overwhelmed. The author does a good job in striking the fine balance between “coolness” and usefulness for the beginner.

The material that makes the book of great worth to many readers is in the second part of the book. This part walks the reader through the process of creating the book itself. This section deals entirely with customizing the look of L^AT_EX documents. I highly recommend going through the examples and following the explanations. It will be a beneficial exercise for the reader.

The final part of the book contains appendices on generating pdfs and a listing of L^AT_EX symbols, which makes for a good reference.

Throughout the book, the author gives ample suggestions about packages that would be of benefit to the readers. These suggestions will be of great value to readers, especially those new to L^AT_EX as it gives them a good starting point to delve even deeper into L^AT_EX and reap the full extent of the benefits L^AT_EX has to offer.

I recommend this book and though it might not be of great value to an experienced L^AT_EX user, it is a good resource for the beginning and intermediate user. Given that it is in French, this book’s usefulness is amplified even more. The book is available under the Libre Art License, so anyone who wishes to can read and benefit from it. Finally, 10% of sales of the print edition are donated to TUG.

References

- [1] Boris Veytsman, *Book Review: L^AT_EX and Friends*, *TUGboat*, Vol. 32 (2011), No. 3. <http://tug.org/TUGboat/tb32-3/tb102reviews-ltxfriends.pdf>

◇ Charles Thomas
Harris Corporation
sleonais (at) gmail dot com