
Editorial

We begin with an apology for the delay in producing this issue of EP-odd. It would be tempting to blame certain natural disasters (the recent earthquake in San Francisco; the non-availability of Californian green chillies in Nottingham) for this temporary lapse but the truth is more straightforward. We have found out the hard way that running EP-odd in the manner we do (with the editors being closely involved in the production process) demands a fully automated system for tracking papers through the various stages of refereeing, editing and production. The inadequacy of the existing *ad hoc* mechanisms was shown up this summer when both editors faced other deadlines and found themselves floundering as authors responded to the plea in our last editorial to send in more papers.

However, we now have enough accepted papers to fill issues 2(3) and 2(4), though the usual exhortations still apply about the need to keep the papers flowing in. The two editors met in mid-October at a slightly-shaken-but-mostly-undamaged Xerox PARC to agree new procedures for easing the flow of papers through the various stages of acceptance and production. We shall endeavour to get our next two issues out very soon — hard on the heels of this one — and to have fully caught up with our production schedule by early next year.

We have never doubted that EP is more than just the ‘hot topic’ of the moment but it has been gratifying to observe how quickly it is being accepted as part of the mainstream of Computer Science and Information Technology. Already we see that hypertext and hyperobjects are becoming part of database thinking; typesetting capability is being added to a host of word processors for personal computers; font scaling schemes, previously confined to the insides of laser printers, are now being seen as part and parcel of any self-respecting windowing software and, all too soon, colour will be with us, bringing with it a host of new problems of quality and control.

It was inevitable, perhaps, that all this activity should produce some over-reactions and histrionics, though it would have been hard to foresee a few years ago that fonts and font technologies would be the flashpoint. In the event, the Californian earthquake of 17 October was but a mere aftershock in the EP world compared to the ructions at the recent Seybold meeting, where it was revealed that Apple was selling its stock in Adobe Systems and would henceforth be adopting a cloned version of PostScript, with hinted fonts in a new technology called Royal. The response to this from Adobe has been an undertaking to put their own Type 1 hinting techniques into the public domain during the first quarter of 1990. Meanwhile, SUN Microsystems have released the intelligent font scaling systems from its own subsidiary company, Folio, which will interlock nicely with SUN’s PostScript-in-windows (NeWS) software. Add all of this to the font systems already available from companies such as Imagen, Compugraphic, Bitstream and URW and it is hard to avoid the conclusion that the whole of the Bay Area peninsula will be playing ‘font wars’ on personal computers for weeks to come, with contestants aiming to promote their own scheme while simultaneously rubbishing all the others. We hope to restore some objectivity to this battlefield by featuring a survey article, some time next

year, on the whole area of fonts, type design and scaling algorithms. Moreover, once we have built up a suitable buffer of papers ready for publication, we hope that each issue of EP-odd will have at least four contributions rather than the three which we have in the present issue.

We shall rush away now and apply ourselves to getting Volume 2 Issue 3 to the production staff as quickly as we can. We leave you to enjoy the present issue which contains an article by Jos Warmer and Sylvia van Egmond on the construction of an SGML parser (a most useful follow-up to David Barron's survey article in our previous issue). Peter Brown returns to the theme of hypertext and the problems of getting irretrievably lost therein, while Anne Brüggemann-Klein and Derrick Wood present a most elegant pre-processor for drawing trees within \TeX .

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