
Editorial

A broad range of topics comfortably falls under the label of ‘electronic publishing’. The papers in this issue and those planned for the remainder of the volume will illustrate some of the diversity of the area.

The current issue contains papers by Habusha and Berry describing a revision of the Unix *vi* text editor to support bi-directional text and an analysis of SGML’s syntax by Kaelbling which points out ways in which the standard fails to describe a LALR(1) grammar (and hence fails to be processable by the currently-standard compiler-generation tools). Those readers who have created line drawings involving arrows, with the various software packages now available, may have noticed that the shafts of the arrows rarely, if ever, seem to bisect the arrowhead correctly. A fascinating note from Don Knuth clears up the mystery by considering the different configurations of pixels that occur when two straight lines meet. Finally, a paper by Terry and Baker describes extensions to the Tioga editor for supporting ‘active documents’, i.e., documents with an associated collection of arbitrary actions performed when a user opens, scrolls, edits, or closes the document.

As a production note, the paper by Habusha and Berry was one in which our preference for electronically-transmitted source encoded in one of the EP-odd formatter macro sets was inadequate. Since the document preparation tools used in preparation of EP-odd are uni-directional, the mixed use of English and Hebrew in this paper required us to resort to POSTSCRIPT as the means of electronic transmission (just as we did for Berry’s previous paper on *triroff* which appeared in Volume 2, Number 3). We wait with anticipation and trepidation for the submission that will make even POSTSCRIPT transmission inadequate!

The response to our special issue on hypertext and hypermedia has been so good that the next *two* issues (i.e. Volume 3, Number 3 and Volume 3, Number 4) will be devoted to this area. Unlike some journals in which a special issue represents a departure from the regular order of business, the topics just mentioned are a normal focus of this journal’s interest. We encourage the continued submission of papers in these areas, and indeed on all the other topics covered in the ‘Aims and Scope’ paragraph on the front cover.

A somewhat facetious definition of electronic publishing is ‘anything involving electrons and publishing, no matter how tenuously’. The absence, to date, of papers on a particular topic does not reflect a lack of relevance, but instead reflects that as a still-young journal, we have not yet had the opportunity to cover all of the area. Indeed, it is natural to expect that the topics of interest will shift as the area develops.

In closing, although these editorials are signed by both editors, each is primarily an individual and not a committee effort. It has been the task of the new US co-editor to create the editorial for the present issue. (Parenthetically, this same editor stands in awe of the senior editor’s careful analysis of his name in Volume 2, Number 4, and is grateful that the Ford Motor Company apparently did not market the ‘Futura’ in the UK.) In the two issues so far where the new editor has been privileged to have been involved he has

discovered that it is possible to *print* A4-sized paper in the US (although quite a bit more difficult to *obtain* A4-sized paper), has become more intimately familiar than he wished with the interactions between the Federal Express company and the customs services of the world, and has survived a complete change of all the telephone numbers on his University's campus. The potential for learning is limitless

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