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Editorial

We open this sixth volume of EP-odd with three papers each located in a distinctly separate part of the electronic publishing world. While each represents a technical contribution of interest to a different sub-community of scholars, the three papers considered together provide illustration of the meta-principle that the study of electronic publishing systems requires the synthesis of knowledge taken from a wide variety of areas and sources.

Our first paper is the long-awaited English-language translation of Ladislas Mandel's invited paper from EP88, the 1988 International Conference on Electronic Publishing, Document Manipulation and Typography, which was held in Nice, France. The presentation, delivered in French, elicited a strong, fervent response from the audience. To that point in the program the conference had provided simultaneous translation from French into English (and vice versa) with a staff of highly competent technical language translators, but Mandel's passionate delivery outstripped the translators' ability to keep up. We trust, therefore, that those of our readers who attended EP88 will welcome the opportunity to examine Mandel's argument more closely, and that all of our readers will find the paper's thesis not only provocative but also one of relevance for current discussion despite the five year lag between its first presentation and its appearance today.

The second paper in the issue, that by Lamb and Lamb, very nicely brings together two separate threads previously discussed in these pages. Earlier, we have seen interesting and significant work concerning the management of multi-level indexes in electronic publishing environments. We have also seen the quite effective application of the computer science 'separation of concerns' principle, reviewed by Lamb and Lamb in their paper, in the domain of structured documents. This issue's paper discusses a partitioning of the indexing problem and shows how separating concerns can lead to a flexible design.

As a parenthetical remark, one of the fascinating aspects of the journal editor's job is the management of the refereeing process that papers undergo before publication. The reviewers for the Lamb and Lamb paper had an especially wide range of experiences because of the paper's topic — it was read critically both by systems designers and also by professional indexers. We appreciate the efforts of the reviewers in this process and also appreciate the willingness of the authors to take on the difficult task of casting their paper to appeal to a wider audience than might be encountered in many of the more narrowly-defined areas of research.

The third paper in the issue, by Schnase, *et al.*, examines the requirements for a *hyperbase* system — in other words a system designed to meet the storage needs of very-large-scale hypermedia systems. Many current-day information storage and management applications are marked by extraordinarily large volumes of dynamically-changing data — terabytes of data — and by the need to provide widespread network access to the data. These applications range from handling the large mass of documentation required for an aircraft or naval vessel, to coping with the huge volume of data arriving from scientific satellites, to managing the requirements generated by widely differing media representations in a digital library.

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Like other electronic publishing applications, hyperbase system designs can usefully borrow ideas from existing areas of study but also require the specification of new functionality. In this instance, Schnase, *et al*., argue that conventional database management systems (DBMS) do not support adequately the special needs of hypermedia applications and provide a detailed, concrete description of one implementation that expands the DBMS capabilities.

Turning our attention from the technical to the administrative, readers will be interested to know that for production reasons, we have shuffled the order of some of our forthcoming special issues. The proceedings of the Raster Imaging and Digital Typography (RIDT'94) and the Electronic Publishing (EP'94) international conferences will now be appearing as the last two issues of the current volume. Readers should look forward to a special treat, as these are the pre-eminent research conferences in their respective areas.

Finally, the careful reader of the inside front cover may have noticed that the U.S. Editor's address and affiliation have changed. Authors are asked to take note of the new contact information for correspondence. The editors have yet to determine whether College Station and Nottingham represent the extremes of the English-speaking world.

RICHARD FURUTA AND DAVID BRAILSFORD