
Opening words

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Well, we finally made it into your mailbox! The last issue for 1994! It's been a tough year for our publications. Tough year for the editors, too. With delays due to technical problems and just plain scheduling problems, it has been a difficult year for our membership to feel that they are still connected to their user group. And what's so frustrating in all these delays is that there is so much that has gone on this past year that we want to tell you about.

We've seen the introduction of the new standard L^AT_EX, no longer specifying it as '2 ϵ '; we've seen the genesis of such T_EX developments as the Omega project and NTS, the New Typesetting System; the appearance of colour on the typeset page has provoked a revitalisation in the DVI Standards Committee; the explosion of work being done to bring T_EX onto the World Wide Web via HTML — to name but a few which spring to mind.

Information from all over!

You will have noticed the great increase in the distribution of all manner of T_EX-related information, from CDs to CTAN, from meetings to publications. There is so much information now available in almost all forms of media currently in place, that it's hard to keep track of it all. Hard to know what to read or buy or attend first!

Being a member of TUG — indeed, being a member of any user group — already provides you with some 'navigating tools' — publications, meetings, information posted to archives are some of the ways in which the wealth of information and assistance can be made manageable.

TUG publications, in particular the proceedings issue of *TUGboat*, give members a permanent record of what's happening, what people are doing, information and background on new applications, advice and examples of how use T_EX better, and generally provide that sense of community which membership helps foster. Add to that the publications from other user groups, and you start to feel overwhelmed by how much information there is, how much work individuals in the T_EX community are putting into their research — and then into their writing. How to keep up with it all?

One navigating 'tool' you might not think of is the abstract, a short text which often starts off a paper. These are a required element in the

proceedings issues of *TUGboat*, but a lot of regular-issue articles also carry them. As well, *TUGboat's* editor, Barbara Beeton, makes a concerted effort to get abstracts or summaries of material which appears in publications such as DANTE's *Komödie* or the *Cahiers* from GUTenberg. This issue here also has the abstracts from the 1994 EuroT_EX meeting.

So, in a few short reading sessions, you can be on top of what's happening right now: some 37 abstracts from the 1994 TUG meeting, 3 from *Cahier* 18 and 9 from no. 19, rounded off with 19 abstracts from the 1994 EuroT_EX meeting. Even if that's all you read out of this issue of *TUGboat*, at least you'll be aware of the work being done by a broad range of members of the T_EX community, and when the time comes that you need that information in all its detail, you'll know where to look. An abstract sure is handy!

1994 also saw TUG begin to provide information and materials on-line via its subdirectory on CTAN; we hope to see frequently requested items from the office made available electronically, allowing anyone to get basic information directly, rather than mailing or phoning the TUG office. In addition to administrative items such as membership forms, we also have a slowly expanding set of 'info-sheets', short 1- or 2-page documents which can provide handy information in a summary form. Conference information for the upcoming meeting in Florida will also be found there. Use ftp to your nearest CTAN site and go to `tex-archive/usergrps/tug`.

And what about 1995?

Well, there's an election coming up! Nominations are needed for five board members — and one president. My term will come to an end with this summer's annual meeting in Florida (*another* event that's coming up fast), and after having been on the board since 1988, it's time to move over. Information on nomination procedures will appear in *TTN*.

There's just enough room left to squeeze in an advance reminder for the 1995 Annual Meeting, in Florida — where they do believe in air-conditioning! So plan now to come to the TradeWinds hotel; information will be appearing in *TTN*, on CTAN, and on the Web (see the poster for details).

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