Development of the UK TₑX FAQ

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English-speaking users of TₑX have benefited for many years from the availability of a curated set of frequently asked questions. The origins of the current set go back to the early 1990s, when the UK TₑX Users' Group (UK-TUG) published a set of questions and answers in *Baskerville*, our (now dormant) publication. The material gathered at that time was a development of regular FAQ postings to `comp.text.tex` which had been maintained by Bobby Bodenheimer.

Following the initial publication by UK-TUG, the committee took up updating the questions and answers. Whilst this task was not originally intended for a single author, for much of the past 20 years this has been undertaken by Robin Fairbairns. Indeed, the current content and structure of the FAQ is essentially Robin's work, with the contribution of UK-TUG more generally being mainly in the initial phase.

As well as providing a printable version of the FAQ on CTAN (Fairbairns, 2014) (currently over 250 pages), Robin has for many years made the information available as a searchable electronic resource: `http://www.tex.ac.uk/faq`. This online version of the FAQ is invaluable as it provides a set of stable, linkable answers to the over 400 questions in the collection.

The physical server hosting the FAQ was housed at the University of Cambridge. However, changing university practice (hosting non-official material is increasingly difficult) coupled with a change of status (Robin has retired) meant that a new home was required for the material. UK-TUG have now made arrangements to place the FAQ on a new (physical) server, maintaining the `tex.ac.uk` domain so that existing links remain valid. The committee are very grateful to Stefan Kottwitz for providing a new home for the FAQ.

At the same time as moving the current information, the committee are aware of the need to ensure that the FAQ will continue to be maintained and improved. This is too large a job to expect any one person to do it alone, and so we are seeking a small group of volunteers to help with the work. We have placed the source of the FAQ on GitHub (`https://github.com/uktug/uk-tex-faq`), to allow collaborative updating. Anyone wishing to contribute can do so, either by requesting access to the master repository, by making pull requests (experienced GitHub

users will understand what this means), or by sending contributions by email (`faq@tex.ac.uk`).

We also intend to work on the website itself, and are hoping to provide a 'responsive' search facility (search as you type) and other modern facilities in the coming months.

As UK-TUG Secretary/Webmaster, I will be coordinating these efforts on behalf not only of the UK-TUG committee but also the wider TₑX community. Assistance with any aspect of running the FAQ will be gratefully received.

References

Fairbairns, Robin. "A compilation of Frequently Asked Questions with answers". `http://ctan.org/pkg/uk-tex-faq`, 2014.

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Appendix

As an indication of the breadth and depth of the current FAQ, here are the top-level headings:

1. The background
2. Documentation and help
3. Bits and pieces of (LA)TₑX
4. Acquiring the software
5. TₑX systems
6. DVI drivers and previewers
7. Support packages for TₑX
8. Literate programming
9. Format conversions
10. Installing (LA)TₑX files
11. Fonts
12. Hypertext and PDF
13. Graphics
14. Bibliographies and citations
15. Adjusting the typesetting
16. How do I do …
17. Symbols, etc.
18. Macro programming
19. Things are going wrong …
20. Why does it *do* that?
21. The joy of TₑX errors
22. Current TₑX-related projects
23. You're still stuck?