The $\mathcal{N}T\mathcal{S}$ project: from conception to birth

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Introduction

It is an enormous pleasure and privilege to be able to present this paper on $\mathcal{N}T\mathcal{S}$ at a TUG conference in Oxford. For almost ten years, $\mathcal{N}T\mathcal{S}$ has slowly been evolving from a concept to a reality, and I am delighted to be able to report that $\mathcal{N}T\mathcal{S}$ is virtually complete. The fact that we have reached this point is due almost entirely to the efforts of one man: my co-presenter, Karel Skoupý. Karel has work tirelessly on this project, and without his efforts I have no hesitation in saying that we would not be presenting $\mathcal{N}T\mathcal{S}$ as a success story today.

Let me start by presenting an overview of today’s talk and presentation: We will attempt to cover seven separate areas, including (of course) the mandatory questions and answers at the end. The seven areas to be covered are:

- A brief history of $\mathcal{N}T\mathcal{S}$
- $\TeX$, $\varepsilon\TeX$ & $\mathcal{N}T\mathcal{S}$ compared
- The choice of Java as the language of implementation
- An overview of the classes, object and methods of $\mathcal{N}T\mathcal{S}$
- A summary of the status quo
- A demonstration of $\mathcal{N}T\mathcal{S}$, and comparison with $\TeX$
- Questions & answers

and you will soon realize that my expertise lies very much in the earlier areas; the implementation details of $\mathcal{N}T\mathcal{S}$ are very much Karel’s area, and I will defer to him whenever any explanation of a detailed implementation issue is called for.

The present authors would like to record their grateful thanks to all members of the $\mathcal{N}T\mathcal{S}$ and $\varepsilon\TeX$ teams, past and present, without whom neither this paper nor $\mathcal{N}T\mathcal{S}$ itself could have ever come to fruition. A further debt of gratitude is owed to GUT, in whose Cahiers GUTenberg an earlier version of this article first appeared. And, most importantly of all, we would like to thank the sponsors of the $\mathcal{N}T\mathcal{S}$ project, both private and corporate, without whose financial support the project could never have succeeded.