Die TExnische Komödie 4/2020–1/2021

Die TExnische Komödie ist die journal of DANTE e.V., the German-language TeX user group (dante.de). Non-technical items are omitted.

Die TExnische Komödie 4/2020

HARALD KÖNIG, ConTeXt meeting 2020: 6.–12. September in Sibřina nahe Prag [ConTeXt meeting 2020: 6–12 September in Sibřina near Prague]; pp. 12–19

The conference took place, as in 2018, at the former and beautifully renovated farmhouse of the Škoda family. It is a wonderful place of peace, where we could be alone and pursue TExniques and other thoughts completely undisturbed.

CHRISTOPH GRÜNINGER, Grafische Darstellung dünnbesetzter Matrizen [Graphical visualisation of sparse matrices]; pp. 20–26

Large, sparsely populated matrices occur in different fields of mathematics and their applications, for example in describing linear systems of equations. The matrices are too large to be printed or to be grasped by people in this form. Individual values are not relevant; instead, what matters are the structure and size of nonzero entries. With a few lines of Ti\textit{k}\textit{Z} code, graphical representations of large, sparse matrices can be derived from external files.

WOLFGANG BEINERT, Kolumnentitel [Column headings]; pp. 27–34

“Column heading” is a technical term in German typography for a page (page number) with or without associated text above, below or to the side of a column (type column), or within a design grid, or in classical handbooks and books of tables, outside a type area.

ALEXANDER KRUMEICH, Biber für Alpine Linux – ein Docker-basiertes Buildsystem [Biber for Alpine Linux — a Docker-based build system]; pp. 34–38

In March 2019 I started the attempt to create a Docker image with TeX Live under Alpine Linux. For the documentation platform n-doc we create an environment in which the required programs and installed TeX packages are linked. A particular challenge was to determine the size of the image, to keep it small. Alpine Linux has proven to be a good choice for this in the past, since the base image is comparatively small: it is just under 5 MB in size, whereas the common Ubuntu image at this time has a size of over 80 MB.

CHRISTINE RÖMER, Neues in \LaTeX\ [News in \LaTeX\]; pp. 39–42

The article gives a summary of current \LaTeX\ developments which are relevant for users. Updates for developers are omitted.

Die TExnische Komödie 1/2021

AXEL KIELHORN, Änderungsdokumentation mit ConTeXt [Change documentation with ConTeXt]; pp. 6–11

There are documents that have been finalized and — after being printed — do not change anymore. But there are also documents that are constantly changing, e.g., a specification document run through several iteration steps. When a new version appears, two questions arise: 1) What has changed? 2) What is the current status?

Ideally, a change index provides information here and refers to the changed passages. Unfortunately, the change index often says “Various changes” and you have to hold the printouts up to the light to find the changes. The commands presented here are intended to make it easier for the author to find a good change index and also give the reader a quick overview of the given old and new versions.

MANFRED KRAFT, Interlinearüersetzung mit \LaTeX\ [Interlinear translations with \LaTeX\]; pp. 12–16

For a number of years I have been translating Latin chemical and alchemical texts. For the translation and its documentation I use \LaTeX\ with Creutzig’s method of interlinear translation, for which a table-like structure for the bilingual presentation of a text is used. The foreign language and the German text are written on a pair of lines. The top line contains the foreign language text in normal type, the bottom line contains the German word-for-word translation in sans serif type. The words are set left-justified on top of each other in both lines.

UWE ZIEGENHAGEN, Ordnerücken gestalten mit ticket.sty [Creating folder backs with ticket.sty]; pp. 17–19

In this article I would like to briefly introduce you to an easy way to design folder spines and other labels with ticket.sty.

UWE ZIEGENHAGEN, Ornamente in \LaTeX-Dokumenten mit pgfornament [Ornaments in \LaTeX\ documents with pgfornament]; pp. 20–22

I wanted nice looking certificates of attendance for a \LaTeX\ course I held, and used ornaments from the pgfornament package to achieve this.

doi.org/10.47397/tb/42-1/tb130komo
Wolfgang Beinert, Giessbach; pp. 23–25

“Giessbach’ is a German typographical term for a sketchy, poorly executed justification that results in whitespaces placed one below another, thus generating a small “river” of blank space. In a figurative sense, it looks like a pouring stream in the form of a “mountain stream with a waterfall”.

[Received from Luzia Dietsche and Uwe Ziegenhagen.]

Zpravodaj 2020/3–4

Zpravodaj is the journal of ČSTUG, the TeX user group oriented mainly but not entirely to the Czech and Slovak languages. The full issue can be downloaded at cstug.cz/bulletin.

Petr Sojka, Úvodnìk [Introductory word]; pp. 105–107

In addition to introducing the content of this Zpravodaj issue, the author talks about changes to the ČSTUG bylaws, about the Zpravodaj digitization project, and about the former ČSTUG president Karel Horáček.

Pavel Stržíz, Sbohem, drahy Karle, sbohem! [Adieu, Monsieur Karel, adieu!]; pp. 108–117

Karel Horáček departed from us on August 22, 2020 at the early age of 66.

Petr Sojka, Ondřej Sojka, Towards new Czechoslovak hyphenation patterns; pp. 118–126

Space- and time-effective segmentation and hyphenation of natural languages stay at the core of every document preparation system, web browser, or mobile rendering system. Recently, the unreasonable effectiveness of pattern generation has been shown—it is possible to use hyphenation patterns to solve the dictionary problem for a single language without compromise.

In this article, we will show how we applied the marvelous effectiveness of patgen for the generation of the new Czechoslovak hyphenation patterns that cover two languages. We show that the development of more universal hyphenation patterns is feasible, allows for significant quality improvements and space savings. We evaluate the new approach and the new Czechoslovak hyphenation patterns.

Keywords: hyphenation, hyphenation patterns, patgen, syllabification, syllabic hyphenation, Czech, Slovak, Czechoslovak patterns


The article describes OpTeX—a LuaTeX format based on plain TeX and OPmac. This macro package was introduced in TUGboat and now it is presented for Czech and Slovak users. The presentation is slightly different than in the cited article. For example, the comparison with LATEX and ConTeXt is mentioned here including benchmarks in tables 1 and 2.

Keywords: OpTeX, LuaTeX, TeX format

Jano Kula, ConTeXt Meeting 2020; pp. 139–146

This is a short report about the ConTeXt Meeting 2020 in Sibírina near Prague.

Keywords: ConTeXt meeting

Taco Hoekwater, MetaPost definitions; pp. 147–167

The paper presents all syntactic rules for definitions in MetaPost. It contains many good and bad examples of definitions.

Keywords: MetaPost, definitions

Peter Wilson, It Might Work X; pp. 168–176

This paper shows an example how to use a Lua program to find the number of particular characters in a given text file. The second part of the paper shows ways to change the page layout in LATEX, with applications for typesetting a multi-page list of figures.

Keywords: Word counting, character frequency, Lua, text file, page layout, quote environment, quotation environment, changepage package, memoir class, list of figures

Keywords: hyphenation, hyphenation patterns, patgen, syllabification, syllabic hyphenation, Czech, Slovak, Czechoslovak patterns