

A Quick Look at L^AT_EX

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1 Introduction

L^AT_EX is a typesetting system developed by Leslie Lamport [Lamport, 1994]. It builds on foundations created by Donald Knuth's T_EX system [Knuth, 1979]. T_EX became very popular within the scientific community because it was very good at producing mathematical manuscripts. It was extremely powerful and provided the user with exceptional control of the presentation of their documents. In the 80s, Lamport began developing L^AT_EX, which was designed to add a layer of abstraction on top of T_EX which allows the user to focus more on the document structure, rather than getting too bogged down with presentation issues. L^AT_EX also added extra functionality through auxiliary programs that can generate bibliographies, tables of contents, indices, tables, cross-references and figures.

2 How to learn more

Here are some well established resources to help you learn more about this excellent system.

- General L^AT_EX resources - the excellent L^AT_EX Companion [Goossens et al., 1993] is a broad, yet in depth look at the most important aspects.
- Graphics - take a look at Rahtz's survey [Rahtz, 1989] of graphics techniques in T_EX.
- Bibliographies - the best place to start would be the BIBT_EX documentation by Patashnik [1988].
- Extras - The CTAN archives [Greenwade, 1993] contain a vast number of supplementary features, such as packages, macros, styles, etc., that can extend the potential of L^AT_EX even further.

References

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