LaTeX News

Issue 1, June 1994

Welcome to LaTeX News

An issue of *LaTeX News* will accompany every future release of LaTeX. It will tell you about important events, such as major bug fixes, newly available packages, or any other LaTeX news.

LaTeX 2_ε—the new LaTeX release

The most important news is the release of LaTeX 2_ε, the new version of the LaTeX software. This version has better support for fonts, graphics and colour, and will be actively maintained by the LaTeX3 project team. Upgrades will be issued every six months, in June and December.

Why a new LaTeX?

Over the years many extensions have been developed for LaTeX. This is, of course, a sure sign of its continuing popularity but it has had one unfortunate result: incompatible LaTeX formats came into use at different sites. Thus, to process documents from various places, a site maintainer was forced to keep LaTeX (with and without NFSS), SliTeX, AMS-LaTeX, and so on. In addition, when looking at a source file it was not always clear for which format the document was written.

To put an end to this unsatisfactory situation a new release of LaTeX was produced. It brings all such extensions back under a single format and thus prevents the proliferation of mutually incompatible dialects of LaTeX 2.09. The new release was available for several months as a test version, and the final release of 1 June officially replaces the old version.

Processing documents with LaTeX 2_ε

Documents written for LaTeX 2.09 will still be read by LaTeX 2_ε. Any such document is run in *LaTeX 2.09 compatibility mode*.

Unfortunately, compatibility mode comes with a price: it can run up to 50% slower than LaTeX 2.09 did. If you want to run your document in the faster *native mode*, you should try replacing the line:

```
\documentstyle[options,packages]{class}
```

with:

```
\documentclass[options]{class}
\usepackage{latexsym,packages}
```

Unfortunately, this will not always work, because some LaTeX 2.09 packages will only work in LaTeX 2_ε compatibility mode. You should find out if there is a LaTeX 2_ε version of the package available.

LaTeX 2_ε native mode also gives access to the new features of LaTeX 2_ε, described in *LaTeX 2_ε for authors*.

New packages

LaTeX 2_ε has much better support for graphics, colour, fonts, and multi-lingual typesetting. The following software should be available from the distributor who brought you LaTeX 2_ε:

babel, for typesetting in many languages.
color, for colour support.
graphics, for including images.
mfnfss, for using bitmap fonts.
psnfss, for using Type 1 fonts.
tools, other packages by the LaTeX3 team.

The packages come with full documentation, and are also described in *LaTeX: A Document Processing System* or *The LaTeX Companion*.

Further information

More information about LaTeX 2_ε is to be found in:

LaTeX: A Document Preparation System, Leslie Lamport, Addison Wesley, 2nd ed, 1994.
The LaTeX Companion, Goossens, Mittelbach and Samarin, Addison Wesley, 1994.

The LaTeX distribution comes with documentation on the new features of LaTeX:

LaTeX 2_ε for authors, describes the new features of LaTeX documents, in the file `usrguide.tex`.
LaTeX 2_ε for class and package writers, describes the new features of LaTeX classes and packages, in the file `clsguide.tex`.
LaTeX 2_ε font selection, describes the new features of LaTeX fonts for class and package writers, in the file `fntguide.tex`.

For more information on TeX and LaTeX, get in touch with your local TeX Users Group, or the international TeX Users Group, P. O. Box 869, Santa Barbara, CA 93102-0869, USA, Fax: +1 805 963 8358, EMail: tug@tug.org.