A Journey with ConTEXt

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Autumn 2015: starting to write a long article, organising what was shown at 3 previous ConTEXt meetings.

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Excerpts given in Scheme.

Experience

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Using *Plain TEX* for some special effects.

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Using *Plain TeX* for some special effects.

Significant experience using XSL-FO.

LATEX vs ConTEXt

Basis: \begin{...} ... \end{...} in LATEX

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is \start... ... \stop... in ConTEXt,

LaTeX vs ConTeXt

Basis: \begin{...} ... \end{...} in LaTeX

is \start... ... \stop... in ConTeXt, with:

\setup... for customisation.

What is a *paragraph?*

Last year, at BachoTeX,

                                         here

we had fun! Hadn't we?

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                                   here

we had fun! Hadn't we?

1 paragraph? Or 3?

What is a paragraph? (con'd)

$$\mathrm{\LaTeX} \Longleftarrow 1$$
$$\textit{Plain } \mathrm{T\!_EX} \Longleftarrow 3$$
$$\mathrm{ConT\!_EXt} \Longleftarrow 3$$

In fact, ConTEXt is close to XSL-FO.

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Attributes control space between blocks, and conflicts between adjacent blocks.

The mark-up is always explicit in XSL-FO, whereas it may be *implicit* in ConTeXt.

Let's go back to ConTEXt

Some words here.
[\stopsomething]

[\indentation | \noindentation] continued

Let's go back to ConTEXt

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   \stopsomething can close a floating object's specification.

What I like

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Integration METAPOST/text.

Good

Table building.

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Font switching commands, including directives for tables.

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Defining *labels* and referring to it (\in).

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No section (or chapter) zero?

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In LATEX, some tricks allows users to solve problems quicky, even if results are debatable, even if these tricks may be dirty.

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Examples: `tabbing` environment, direct handling of counters, placing figures.

In ConTEXt, either a clean solution exists, or such a solution does not exist, or a workaround is difficult to implement in practice (e.g., section zero).

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Possible *manual* interventions (e.g., .bbl files).

Atomic transaction (con'd)

How to change an external program?

Atomic transaction (con'd)

How to change an external program?

How to arrange the files such a program has just built (even if we shouldn't do that).

TEX & Co.

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with TEX's language (cf.a previous talk at BachoTEX).

Players

Bernd Raichle in DANTE 200? (autumn): some hierarchy of LATEX users. . .

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little players < medium players < master players

Intermezzo

What does 'LMD' stand for? (A question for students!)

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Little   players

Master   . . . . . .

Damned   . . . . . .

Players in ConTeXt

From my point of view, no medium one.

Players in ConTEXt

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Master players $\equiv$ developers.

Players in ConTeXt

From my point of view, no medium one.

Master players $\equiv$ developers.

The rest $\ni$ little players.

The professional side

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with (archaic) version of LaTeX and (bugged) .bst styles.

How to manage an evolution towards modern tools?

In addition: working urgently.

Teaching activities

Reusing and combining parts already used.

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Updating examples and solutions.

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Reusing and combining parts already used.

Updating examples and solutions.

Quite urgently, too. Stable version.

The journey's end?

Leaving for a trip gives strength to do that again.

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(Advertisement for Nouvelles Frontières, a French travel agency.)

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I think it will take several years before 'quite-industrial' use.