Posters and LaTeX

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This tutorial quickly goes through several packages which can be used to make posters. Since there are a lot of ways of doing posters in LaTeX, I feel that information resources on this topic are somehow scattered and there is no one good way of making posters as almost all of them have at least several drawbacks. I will try to inform you about these drawbacks and benefits here, but you should definitely search for information yourself and decide on your own.

1 KOMA script article class - scrartcl

This way would involve heavy tweaking of the standard KOMA script article class - scrartcl. The reason behind the choice of this document class is that it provides a lot of customizability for things such as font selection and others. This mainly would involve scaling all the fonts to the right size and the fonts which should be used for this job would be Times/Helvetica/Courier combination, which will always be a conservative, but wise choice.

The concept itself might sound as not very demanding and time consuming, but I can assure you, that trying to produce a well looking document of A0 paper size might not be very comfortable as the article classes are suited for paper sizes comparable with A4. A solution would be to produce the poster as a A4 page size document and then scale it up to the required size. However, might cause different problems as 1 cm on the paper will not be equal to 1 cm on the poster and this might make the poster production very cumbersome.

Since there are a lot of issues involved with making posters with standard document classes, one should reconsider the idea before trying it out.

2 The a0poster document class

This is probably the main package for LaTeX posters and there are many other posters, which have been inspired or are based on this package. There is a really extensive tutorial if you follow this link[1] and there is even another website, which uses this document class and TikZ package to create quite impressive graphics.

[1] The URL is http://theoval.cmp.uea.ac.uk/~nlct/latex/posters/index.html

3 The `baposter` package

This package seems to be a good alternative to the `a0poster` and the project's homepage contains a lot of example posters, which were presumably made by the author of the package. The results seem to be good and this might be really worth looking at. However, I should warn you, that this package doesn't seem to be accepted to the CTAN website, which might not make people happy, who are very much concerned with the out-of-the-box experience once they install their TEX distribution.

The website can be found by following this link[2].

4 The `beamer` document class and the `beamerposter` package

The `beamer` document class is very useful in making presentation slides, but its flexibility allows it to be a good solution for poster production Since `beamer` uses the `TikZ` package a lot, it can draw those fancy frames for blocks of text in the poster. However, the `beamer` class itself still might lack some functionality which would make poster making much more convenient, but luckily Philippe Dreuw and Thomas Deselaers have created the `beamerposter` package, which is just an extension of `beamer` and `a0poster` classes.

One can find examples and more information on their website[3]. For most people there should be no need to install the `beamerposter` package separately as it is included in the latest TEX distributions (TEX Live, MacTEX and MiKTEX). However, the CTAN folder for this package can be found here[4].

Other useful links for this package:

- Rob J Hyndman blog "Research Tips"[5];
- Beamerposter Google Group[6];

5 Other packages

Of course there are several other packages and it probably would be a good idea just to be aware of them so that when you *need* an alternative, you have a choice. If you find the list incomplete, please let me know, and I will update the document accordingly or please submit a patch to the git repository.

- The `sciposter` package CTAN directory[7] shows, that the last update to this package was in 2006. Therefore, I guess, that it would be wiser to go with the alternative `beamerposter` package. On the other hand, for people who are searching for some solutions, the source code of the package might prove to be very valuable and it might be able to adapt it to get even more functionality.

[2]The URL is http://www.brian-amberg.de/uni/poster/
[3]The URL is http://www-i6.informatik.rwth-aachen.de/~dreuw/latexbeamerposter.php
[4]The URL is http://www.ctan.org/tex-archive/macros/latex/contrib/beamerposter
[5]The URL is http://robjhyndman.com/researchtips/beamer-poster/
[6]The URL is http://robjhyndman.com/researchtips/beamer-poster/
[7]The URL is http://www.ctan.org/tex-archive/macros/latex/contrib/sciposter/