ASCIIDoctor to Blog Utility

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Over the years I have tinkered with the idea of using ASCIIDoctor documents as the basis for a blog service. The Blog would be statically delivered and as damn simple as possible.

A PDF version of this document is available at this Link

1. Introduction

I use ASCIIDoctor to do the majority of my documentation and have gotten good at it with special editor extension and snippets.

I have looked at a number of Open source solutions and most of them are either too complex or difficult to implement.

- Hugo - Based on `Go` and a defined file structure that doesn't allow the article to exist in a directory atomically.
- Gatsby - Difficult to install and is geared more towards document repository
- Antora.org - Requires GIT repositories to create a document site generator, too many unneeded features
- Vue based - Flexible but used GraphQL for access to even the filesystem, ASCIIDoc not mentioned

2. Requirements

These are the requirements for a basic utility to manage ASCIIDoctor files specifically and generate a blog automatically

- Use Blog articles as separate directories
- Use ASCIIDoctor as the primary files for articles
- Use the content of the ASCIIDoctor file to drive the indexing
  - The (=) title becomes the tile of the article
  - The preamble (The first paragraph of the document)
  - Date from the date line of the header
- index.html generated from index.adoc to all for template of index to be changed
- Blog order article is determined by a single text file in roo `order.txt` with a list of the directory name in the order they should appear in the blog
  - Delete an article by (*) it in the `'order.txt`
- Use a FTPSync command to help move (New/Updated) generated content into web server
- Auto generate HTML & PDF if the coersponding ADOC is more than 1 day old
- Auto generate (Optional) the `order.txt` file of the sub-folder of the blog

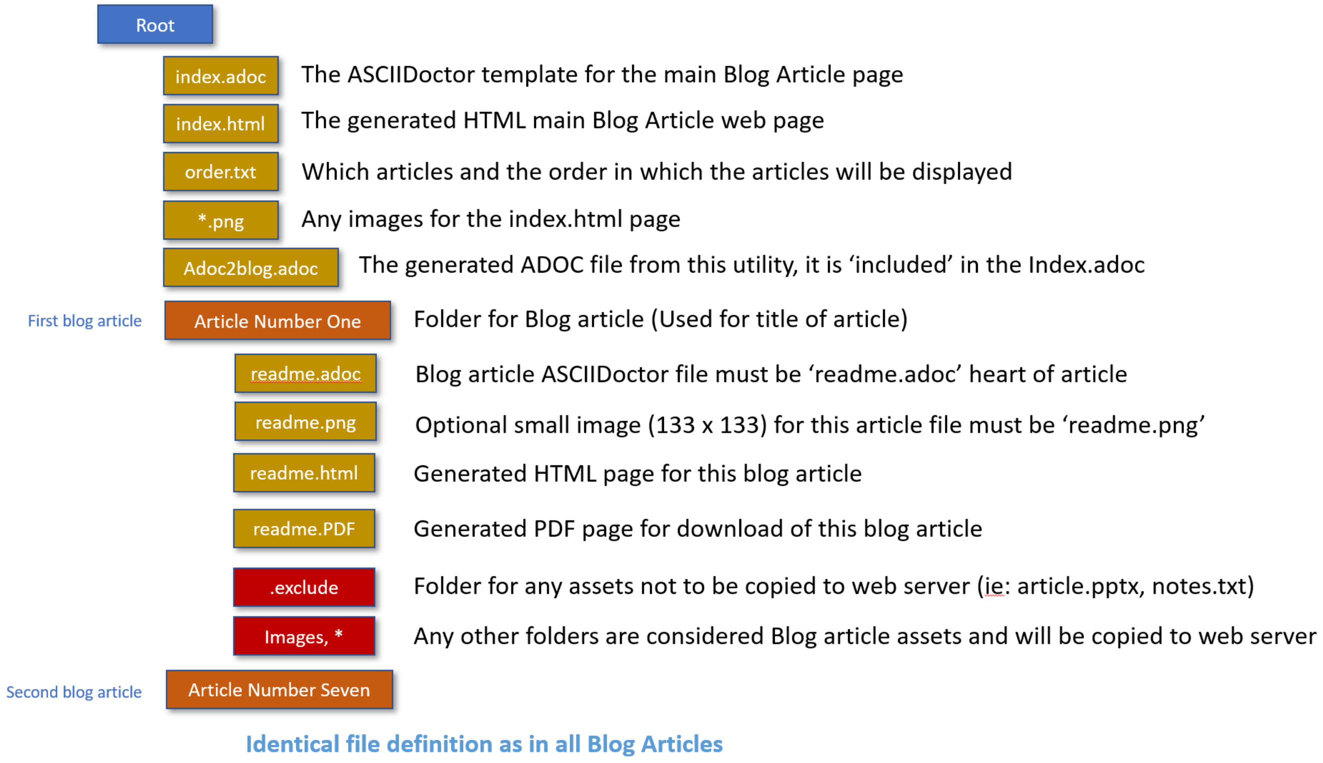
3. Prerequisites

- Definition of Blog article file naming
  - readme.adoc for main document
  - readme.png (Optional) for Blog article image
  - ALl sub-directories in Blog article directory will be transferred except for `.exclude` folder
- Node FTPSync - To manage transfer of generated updates

4. Folder / File Structure

Here is a diagram of the required file structure for ADOC2Blog to work.

Each Blog Article folder is `Atomic` which means all of the assets for that article are in the folder.



	Root	
	index.adoc	The ASCIIDoctor template for the main Blog Article page
	index.html	The generated HTML main Blog Article web page
	order.txt	Which articles and the order in which the articles will be displayed
	*.png	Any images for the index.html page
	Adoc2blog.adoc	The generated ADOC file from this utility, it is ‘included’ in the Index.adoc
First blog article	Article Number One	Folder for Blog article (Used for title of article)
	readme.adoc	Blog article ASCIIDoctor file must be ‘readme.adoc’ heart of article
	readme.png	Optional small image (133 x 133) for this article file must be ‘readme.png’
	readme.html	Generated HTML page for this blog article
	readme.PDF	Generated PDF page for download of this blog article
	.exclude	Folder for any assets not to be copied to web server (ie: article.pptx, notes.txt)
	Images, *	Any other folders are considered Blog article assets and will be copied to web server
Second blog article	Article Number Seven	

Identical file definition as in all Blog Articles

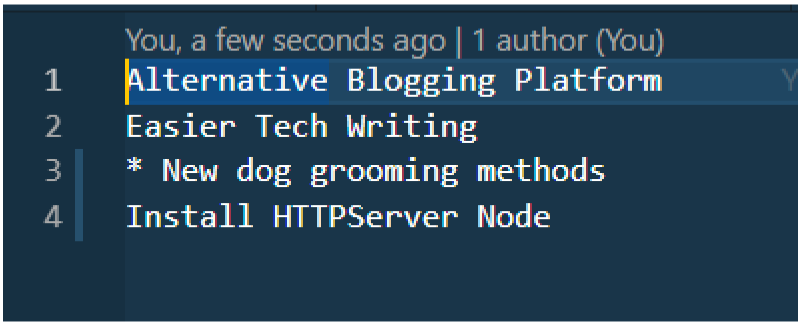
Figure 1. Folder / File Structure

5. order.txt file

This is a simple text file with the names of the Blog Article folders to be included in the generated Blog Article web site.

Folders not listed here will **NOT** be in the generated web site.

Folders staring with an * will be hidden and will **NOT** be in the generated web site. In this example `New dog grooming methods` will not be in the generated web site



```
Alternative Blogging Platform
Easier Tech Writing
* New dog grooming methods
Install HTTPServer Node
```

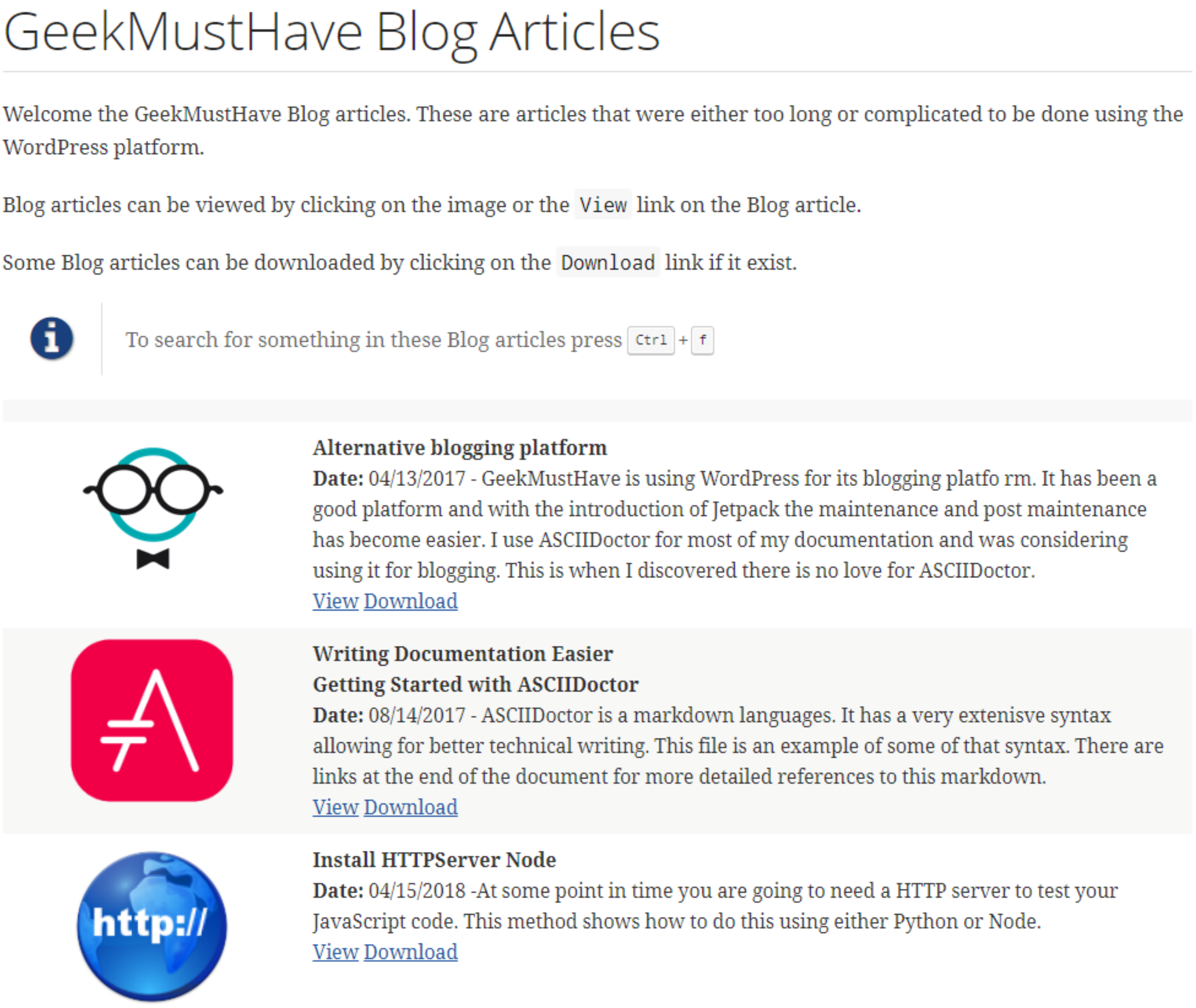
Figure 2. Example `order.txt` *file*

6. Business Rules

1. 'order.txt' file must exist, fatal if it doesn’t
2. Directory listed in `order.txt` is missing
3. Missing `readme.adoc` file in the directory being processed - Warning directory skipped
4. Missing title line (= title) warning, use directory name
5. Missing date (v2.1,07/21/2019:type) warning, use todays date

7. Web site

The web site will be generated based on the layout in the `index.adoc` template. This template can be modified for the page scaffolding. Additional content or directions could be added.



GeekMustHave Blog Articles

Welcome the GeekMustHave Blog articles. These are articles that were either too long or complicated to be done using the WordPress platform.

Blog articles can be viewed by clicking on the image or the `View` link on the Blog article.

Some Blog articles can be downloaded by clicking on the `Download` link if it exist.

To search for something in these Blog articles press Ctrl + f

Alternative blogging platform
Date: 04/13/2017 - GeekMustHave is using WordPress for its blogging platfo rm. It has been a good platform and with the introduction of Jetpack the maintenance and post maintenance has become easier. I use ASCIIDoctor for most of my documentation and was considering using it for blogging. This is when I discovered there is no love for ASCIIDoctor.
View Download

Writing Documentation Easier
Getting Started with ASCIIDoctor
Date: 08/14/2017 - ASCIIDoctor is a markdown languages. It has a very extenisve syntax allowing for better technical writing. This file is an example of some of that syntax. There are links at the end of the document for more detailed references to this markdown.
View Download

Install HTTPServer Node
Date: 04/15/2018 -At some point in time you are going to need a HTTP server to test your JavaScript code. This method shows how to do this using either Python or Node.
View Download

Figure 3. Blog Article Web Page Example

8. Developer notes

- Standard NPM Init
- Other NPM Libraries
  - Chalk - Color display in terminal window
  - Figlet - Large ASCII characters
  - Clear - Clear the terminal screen

9. Document History

Table 1. Document History

Date	Version	Author	Description
07/22/2019	V2.1c	JHRS	Business rules, thanks Deb!!
07/19/2019	V2.1b	JHRS	Initial version