

An overview of T_EX, its children and their friends ...

Arno Trautmann
arno.trautmann@gmx.de

[Link for the impatient.](#)

In the world of T_EX, there are many developments and ambiguous names. This paper tries to give an overview of the development of T_EX and related programs. Contributions are very welcome!¹

Introduction

This document is for people that have stumbled upon different terms including something related to T_EX and are confused by the many different terms – at least I was, so maybe others are, too ...

The base frame and main idea for this overview was taken from the article *A brief history of T_EX, volume II* by Arthur Reutenauer in the proceedings of EuroBachTeX2007 and his talk there (see references on page 35). Additional information is taken from original documentations and some review articles. For old, historic information, the historic archive maintained by Ulrik Vieth and hosted on ftp.tug.org (see refs) was very useful, especially in the reconstruction of L^AT_EX versions. Many thanks for that great archive!

All information is up to the date of this generated PDF and up to the information I found. Everything here is without guarantee – this is just to get an overview. Consult the references for further (and/or correct) information!

In the tree views, every node has a tooltip that shows up when you hover the mouse over it. For the case that your PDF viewer does not support this, there is a list of all the descriptions on page 23.

¹The current source code of this document is available at <http://github.com/alt/tex-overview>. Please feel free to patch there or mail me any suggestions and comments. I'll be happy to extend and correct this document!

Contents

1. The Difference Between Engine, Format and Distribution	3
2. How to read this document	3
3. How to contribute	4
4. Problems with PDF viewers	5
I. Tree Views	6
5. T _E X	8
6. plainT _E X	9
7. L ^A T _E X	11
8. ConT _E Xt	13
9. Other Formats	14
9.1. A _M S-T _E X	14
9.2. BLUe	14
9.3. HPT _E X	14
9.4. JadeT _E X	14
9.5. Lollipop	14
9.6. MacroT _E X	14
9.7. MeX	14
9.8. PHYS(E)	15
9.9. PHYZZX	15
9.10. StarT _E X	15
9.11. Texinfo	15
9.12. XMLT _E X	15
9.13. Y _T E _X	15
9.14. ZzT _E X	15
10. Distributions	16
10.1. T _E X live	16
10.2. MiKT _E X	17
10.3. T _E X collection	17
10.4. standalone ConT _E Xt	17
10.5. W32T _E X	17
10.6. OzTeX	17
10.7. For Amiga	17
10.8. NT _E X	17
11. Pandora's Box	18
11.1. META*	19
11.2. BibT _E X	19
11.3. (x)dvipdf(m)(x)	20
11.4. Fonts	20
11.5. Work Flow	21
II. Text Views	22
4. T _E X	23
5. plainT _E X	24
6. L ^A T _E X	24
7. ConT _E Xt	26
8. Other Formats	26
8.1. A _M S-T _E X	26
8.2. BLUe	27
8.3. HPT _E X	27
8.4. JadeT _E X	27
8.5. Lollipop	27
8.6. MacroT _E X	27
8.7. MeX	27
8.8. PHYS(E)	27
8.9. PHYZZX	27
8.10. StarT _E X	27
8.11. Texinfo	27
8.12. XMLT _E X	27
8.13. Y _T E _X	27
8.14. ZzT _E X	27
9. Distributions	28
9.1. T _E X live	28
9.2. MiKT _E X	28
9.3. T _E X collection	29
9.4. standalone ConT _E Xt	29
9.5. W32T _E X	29
9.6. OzTeX	29
9.7. For Amiga	29
9.8. NT _E X	29
10. Pandora's Box	29
10.1. META*	29

10.2. BibTeX	30	10.4. Fonts	31
10.3. (x)dvipdf(m)(x)	30	10.5. Work Flow	31
11. Program Names			32
III. Appendix			34
A. References			35
B. List of Contributors			41

1. The Difference Between Engine, Format and Distribution

There are three kinds of terms that are often confused especially by new users. This will try to explain them very shortly:

engine This is the program that does all the actual work. The original program is T_EX, a famous development is pdfT_EX, while LuaT_EX is the latest successor.

format A format is a (large) collection of abbreviations (macros) that make the life easy when working with T_EX. The most commonly used formats are L^AT_EX, ConT_EXt and plainT_EX. The latter one is a minimal set of macros provided by Don Knuth. Formats can be combined with different engines, exploiting the special abilities of these engines. A format is first a collection of text files, but can be compiled into a binary format that can be read in faster by the engine.

distribution In addition to formats, a large set of supplementary files can be used to work with T_EX, called *packages* for L^AT_EX, *modules* for ConT_EXt, and many external programs have proven useful for the work with T_EX. Distributions such as T_EX live and MiK_T_EX strive to provide a full set of such programs and macros by using a package manager to take care of package dependencies and updating. Many Linux distributions, as well as cygwin for Windows, repackage a T_EX distribution (mostly T_EX live) using the Linux distribution's package system.

2. How to read this document

This document consists of several graphs showing the development of software more or less directly related to T_EX. The graphs try to show the time development (downwards), as well as dependencies, changes, etc.

I tried to make the graphs more readable by using colors for different categories. The decisions about what is important and what is “normal” reflect my personal opinion only.

normal That is, not very important in my opinion, no huge user group, but still maybe important for special needs. Was used by a major community at least some time back, but is not of great impact nowadays.

important Engines or formats that had or have a great impact on (everyday) typesetting for a large community.

experimental Developments that might still be under construction or were never used by a large community. Nevertheless, these might be very important to the development of other engines or for use of special typesetting.

planned Things that are planned to raise one day and are in the phase of preparation, i. e. there may be some code but not in the final form yet.

package L^AT_EX-packages or single T_EX-files (useable as packages or modules) that seemed worth mentioning. There won't be many of this; most very important packages won't be mentioned.

distribution Software bundles that bring T_EX and friends to the normal user.

hist. dist. Historical distributions that have no use today but were important for bringing TeX to older computer systems.

program Programs that are not directly connected to T_EX (but interesting in the context of using T_EX) or are separate helper programs.

font Something related to a font. Neither a program nor libraries that provide access to fonts nor the actual files, but rather the abstract definition or specification.

Some of the graphs are quite complex, which is the reason why there are two versions of them: A short one mentioning only the most important things and a full version with everything I could find.

In most cases I did not mention the authors of the programs/packages. This is not to diminish their effort but only for brevity (long names make things harder to read). I did not write any of the below-mentioned programs or packages. The authors are given in the documents linked in the references.

3. How to contribute

I hope one day this document would become the standard reference for questions like "What program do I need for ...?", "What's the difference between ...T_EX and ...T_EX?", "Why is it called ...?" etc.

To get to this point, I need some help of people who know more about the \TeX world than I do. At the moment, special help is needed for:

- font technologies
- METAFONT and succesors
- Bib \TeX and successors/alternatives

It is up to you to contribute texts, references, links, descriptions, hints etc. I'll be happy about anything I can add here. Also, if you have suggestions about the layout, let me know.

4. Problems with PDF viewers

As this document makes heavy use of PDF-features, some PDF viewers are not able to show everything correct and as intended. My experiences with viewers are as follows, where the number is the version which I tested:

evince 3.0.2 Shows the document correct and complete. Tested using Linux.

Adobe Reader 9 will show all the information but might hide some text of very long tooltips (at least that's the case on my machine). Also, it draws annoying green boxes around the tooltips which do not belong there.

\TeX works 0.5 r869 The built-in PDF viewer of the \TeX works editor does not break lines of tooltips, therefore long annotations are not shown completely.

okular 0.13 also does not break the lines.

xpdf 3.03 shows only very short tooltips. Most of the information is not visible in the graphs.

gv 3.7.2 shows no tooltips, but the annoying green boxes. (Linux)

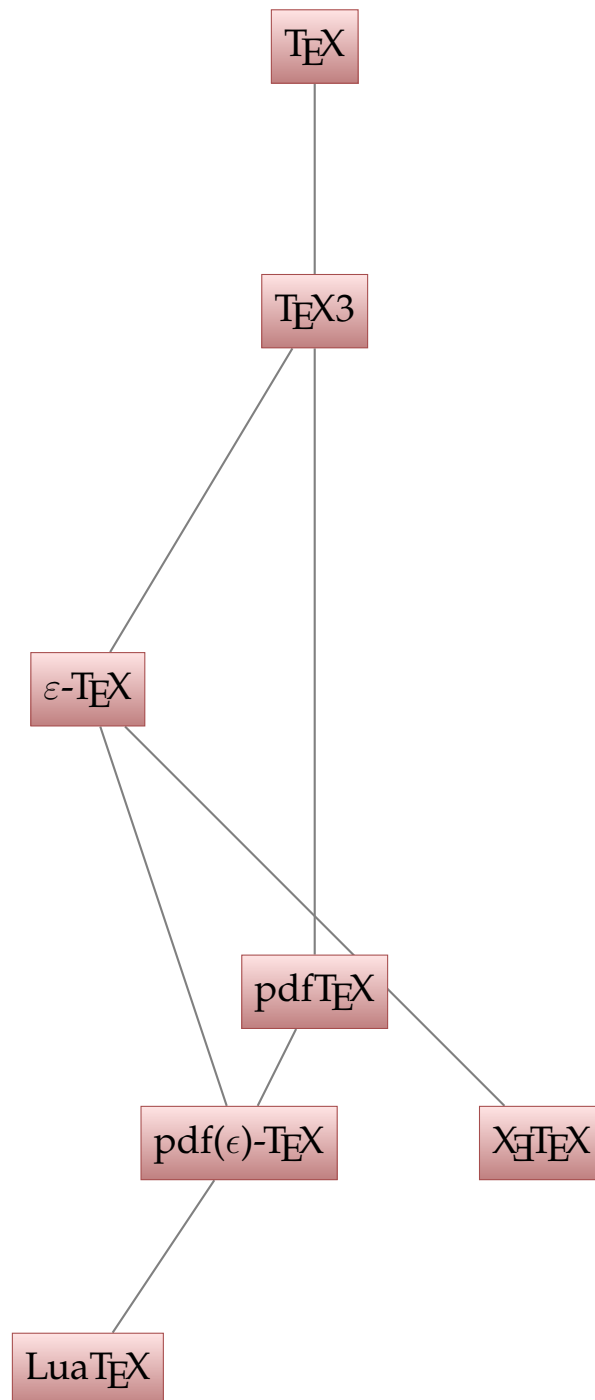
About this document

This document is typeset in the \TeX Gyre Pagella font using the Lua \LaTeX 2 ϵ format with `expl3` and `xpackages` based on Lua \TeX 0.70.1.

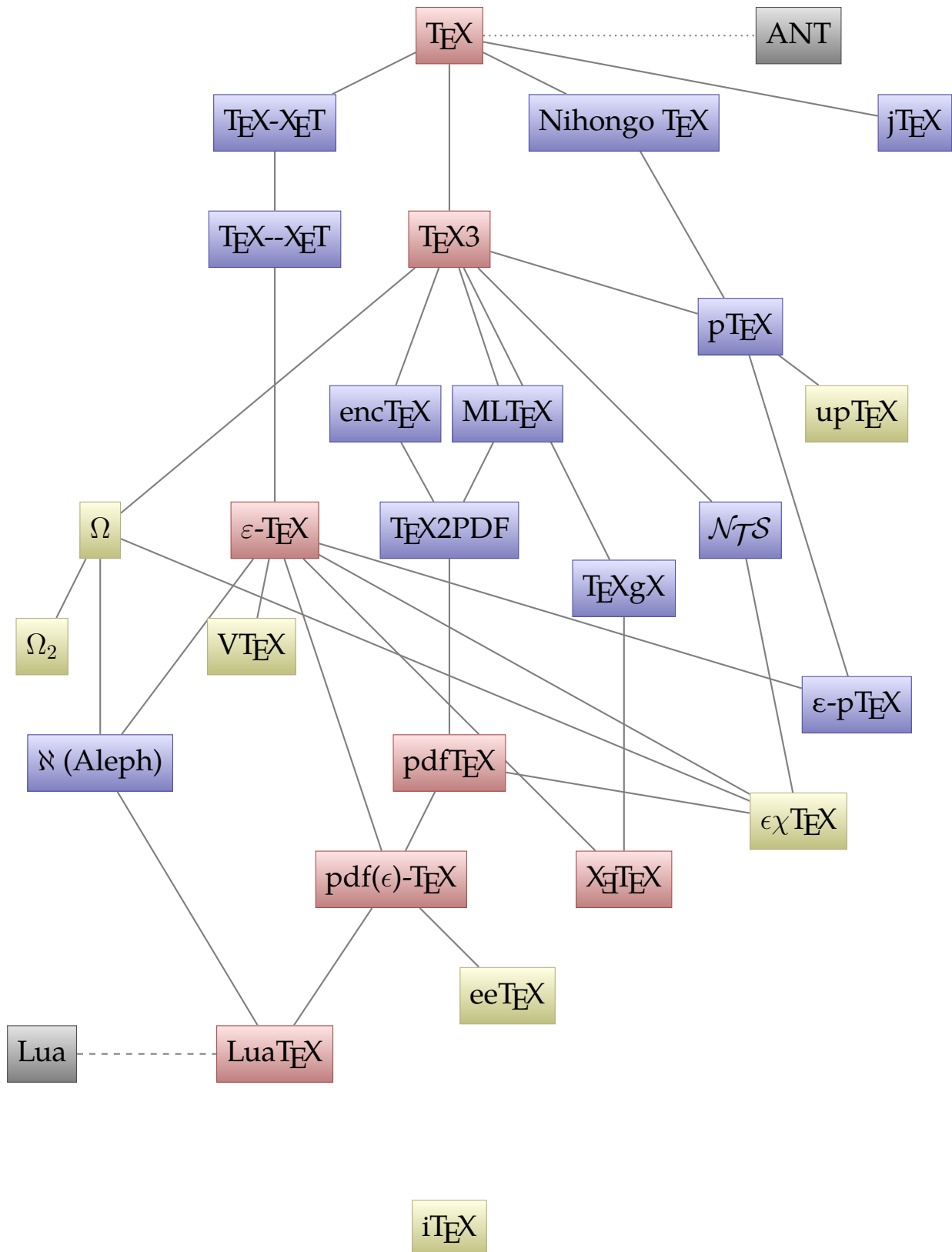
Part I.

Tree Views

5. T_EX – the program short view

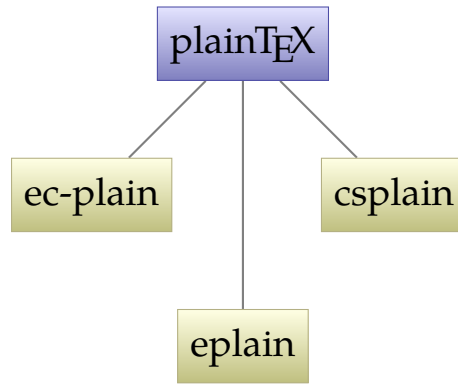


5. T_EX – the program

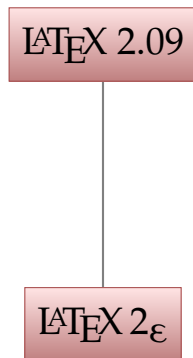


The chronological order may not be exact in this graph. I have to work hard on the arrangement to show both chronological order and code dependence, and for now only the code dependence is more-or-less correct.

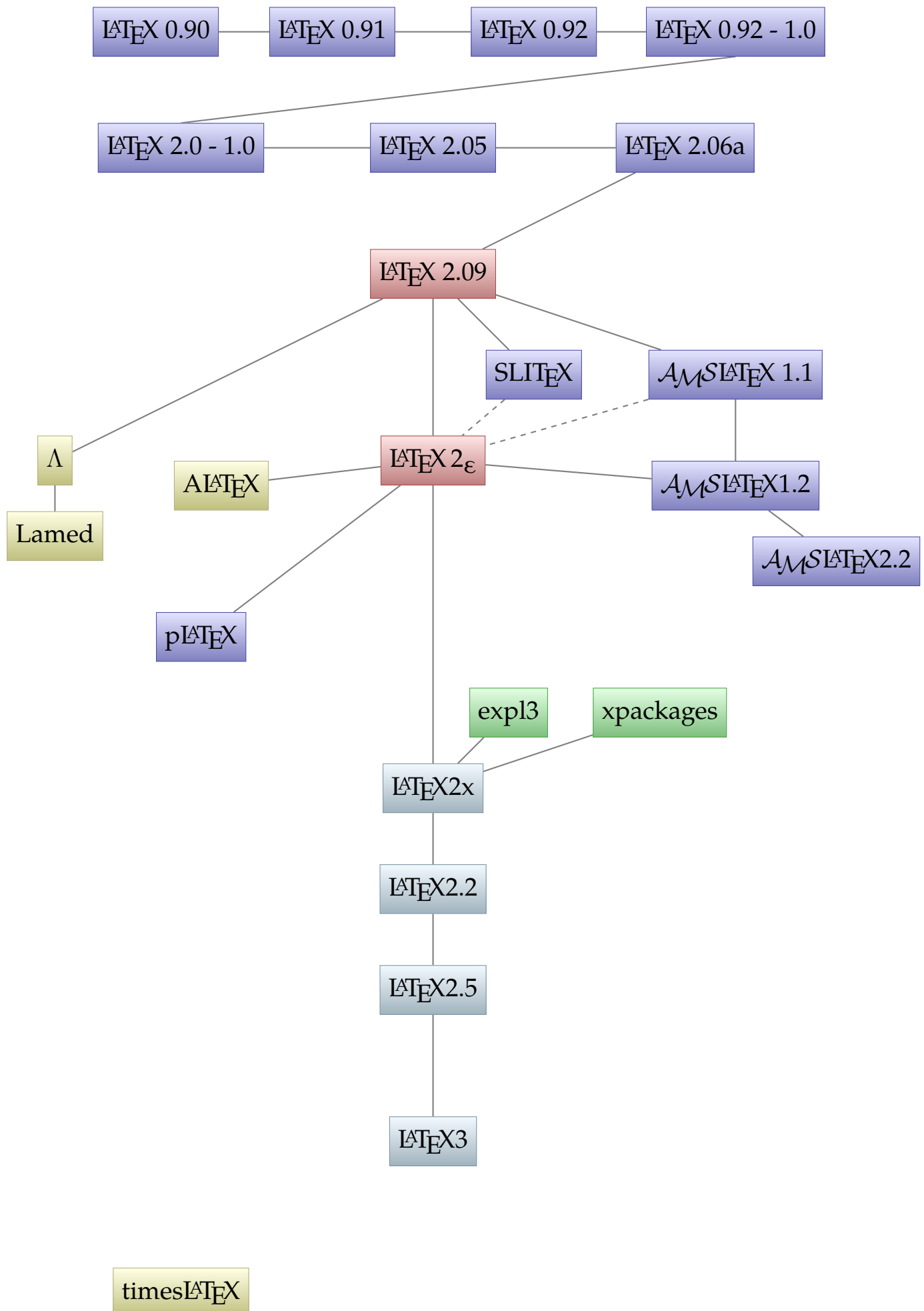
6. plainT_EX – the first format



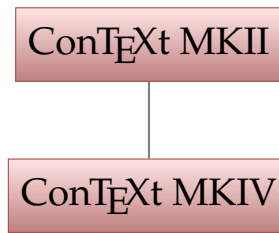
7. L^AT_EX – Lamport's T_EX format short view



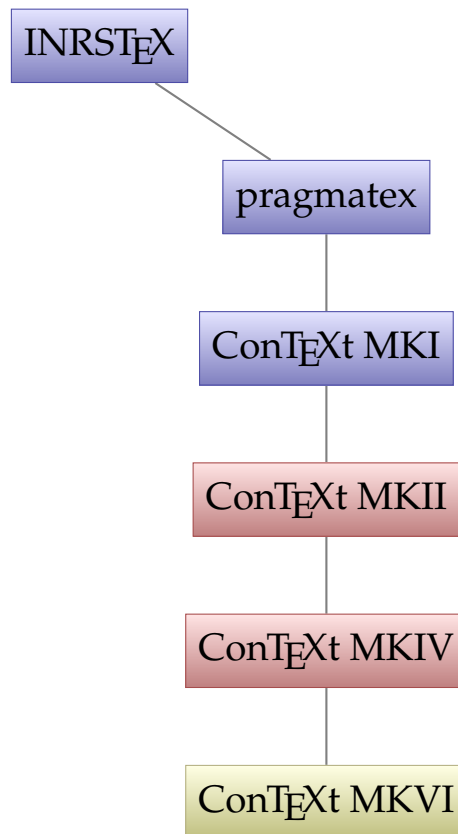
7. L^AT_EX – L^Ampport's T_EX format



8. ConT_EXt: con tex t – text with tex short view

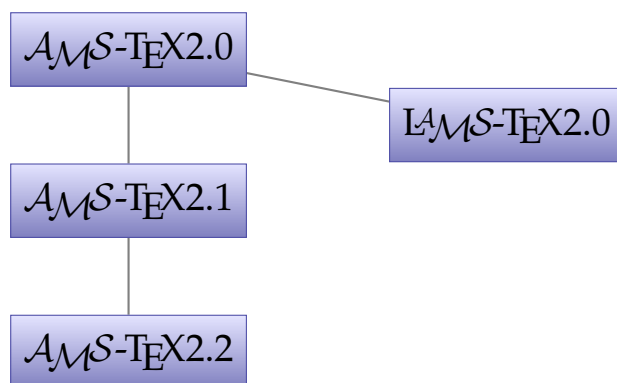


8. ConT_EXt: con tex t – text with tex



9. Other Formats

9.1. $\mathcal{A}\mathcal{M}\mathcal{S}\text{-}\text{T}_{\text{E}}\text{X}$



9.2. BLUe

BLUe

9.3. $\text{HP}\text{T}_{\text{E}}\text{X}$

HP $\text{T}_{\text{E}}\text{X}$

9.4. Jade $\text{T}_{\text{E}}\text{X}$

Jade $\text{T}_{\text{E}}\text{X}$

9.5. Lollipop

Lollipop 0.95

9.6. Macro $\text{T}_{\text{E}}\text{X}$

Macro $\text{T}_{\text{E}}\text{X}$

9.7. MeX

MeX

9.8. PHYS(E)

PHYS(E)

9.9. PHYZZX

PHYZZX

9.10. StarT_EX – Starter's T_EX

StarT_EX

9.11. Texinfo

Texinfo

9.12. XMLT_EX

XMLT_EX

9.13. YT_EX

YT_EX

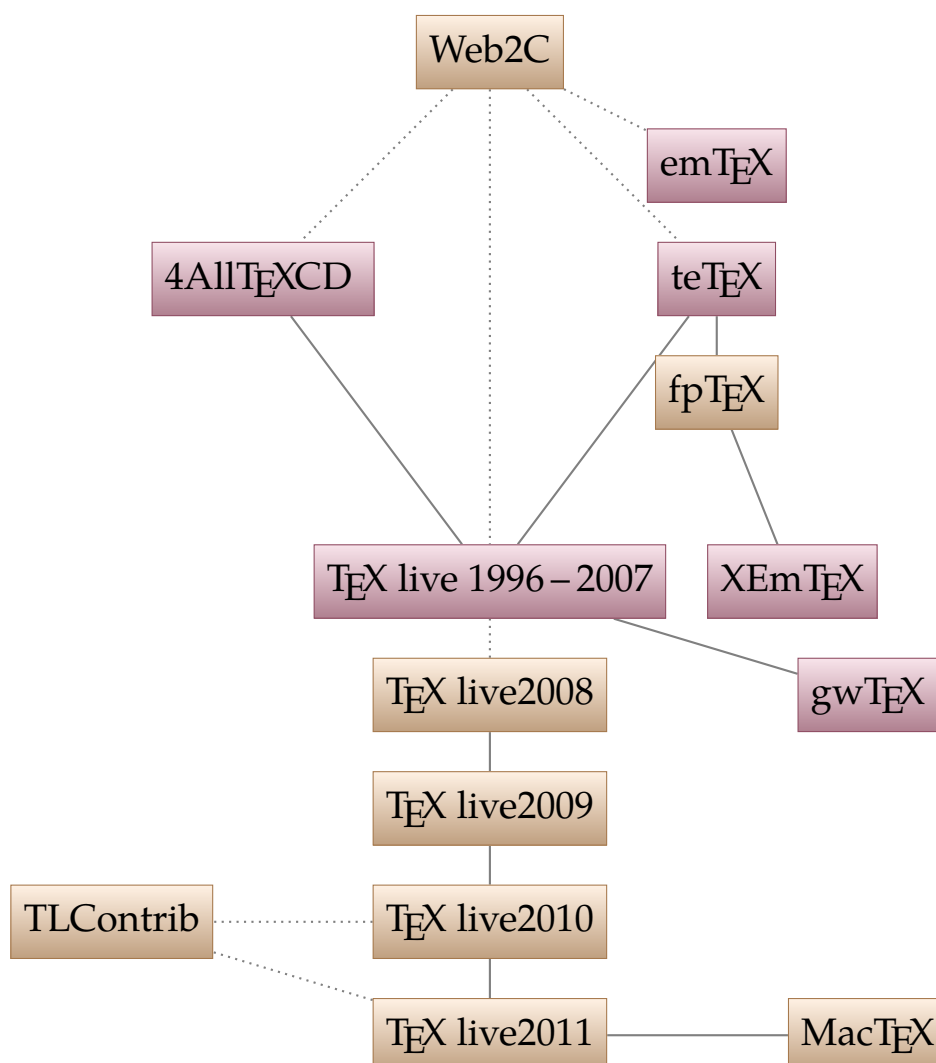
9.14. ZzT_EX

ZzT_EX

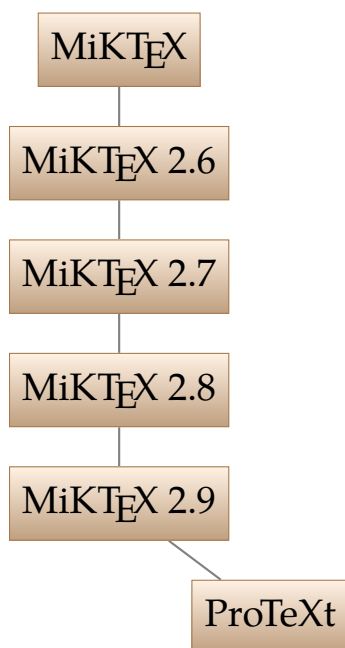
10. Distributions

This section will feature the main distributions of \TeX and related programs. Of course, not every Linux Distribution's \TeX package can be listed here, but only official upstream distributions.

10.1. \TeX live



10.2. MiKTeX



10.3. T_EX collection



10.4. standalone ConT_EXt



10.5. W32T_EX



10.6. OzTeX



10.7. For Amiga



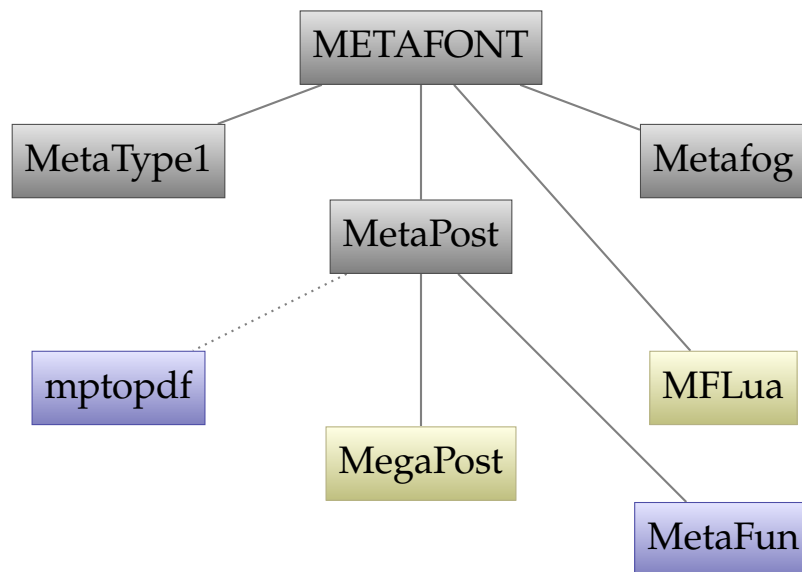
10.8. N_TE_X



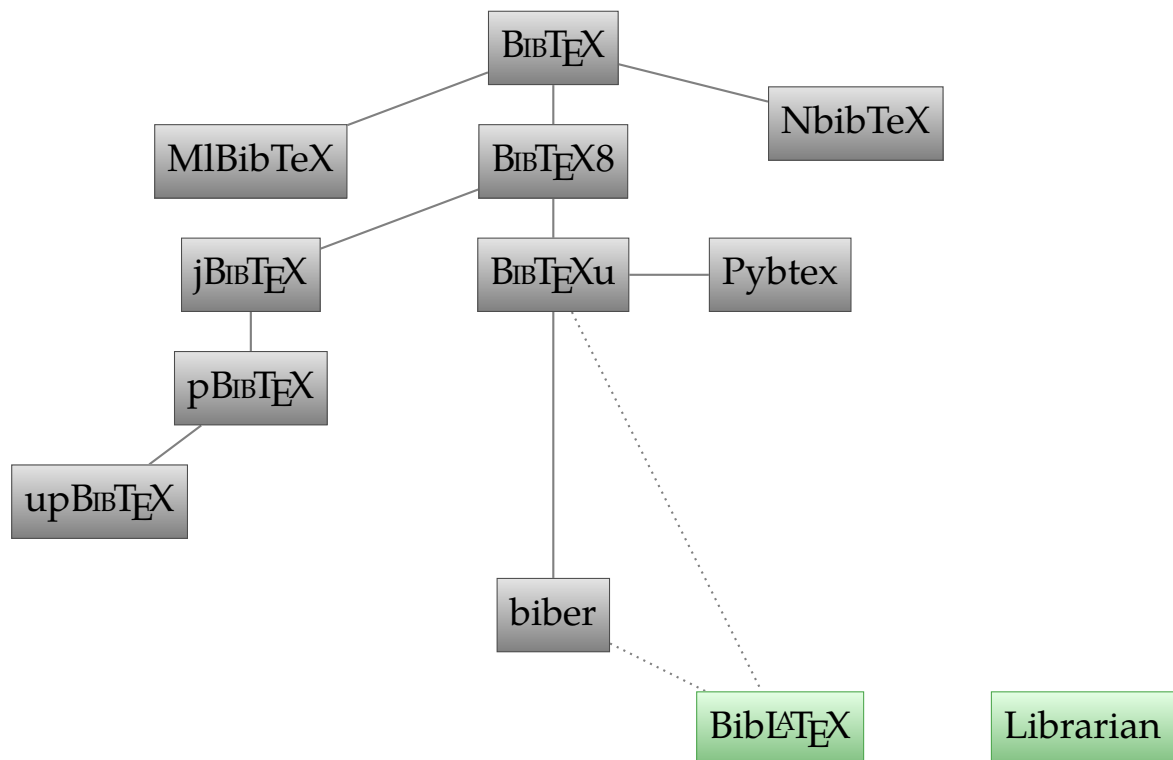
11. Pandora's Box

The following pages will be a hodge-podge of many things that are related to T_EX and used in the process of generating documents in different file formats, i. e. conversion tools, bibliography tools etc. Feel free to contribute, I'll choose case-by-case if I'll add something or won't include it. Text editors or viewers will *not* be included!

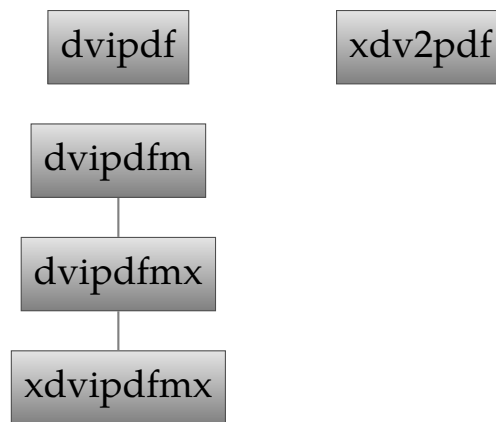
11.1. META*



11.2. BibT_EX

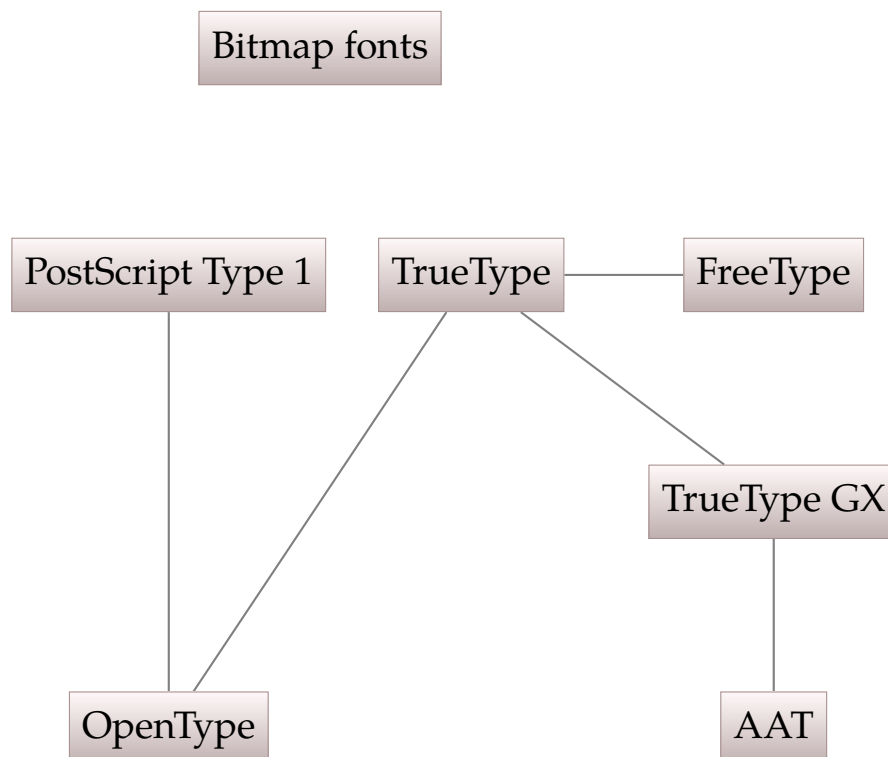


11.3. (x)dvipdf(m)(x)



11.4. Fonts

This section tries to cover the development of fonts – the most important thing for a typesetting system is it's font mechanism ...



11.5. Work Flow

Ok, this section maybe will kill me ... I will try to depict the typical work flow for working with \TeX . This will never be complete as there are many ways to work with any of the \TeX flavours, including helper programs etc. We will start with a simple \LaTeX document, and maybe we will extend this to different formats, engines etc. ...

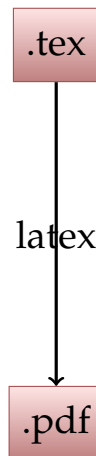
The preliminary nomenclature is:

red necessary files

yellow additional input files

blue automatically produced files

green program that is used – editor, processing tool, viewer, ...



Part II.

Text Views

4. T_EX – the program

T_EX

Born in 1978 by Donald Erwin Knuth.

ANT

Ant is Not TeX. A typesetting system inspired by TeX. Only *inspired*, so it has nothing to do with TeX in terms of common code.

T_EX- \XeT

The first extension to TeX, 1987. It was able to typeset in two directions, but only with a mark in the DVI to change the direction.

Nihongo T_EX

A true multibyte extension of TeX. Could handle all Japanese characters in one font.

jT_EX

An extension of TeX for typesetting Japanese. (1987, Yasuki Saito)

T_EX-- \XeT

TeX--XeT was able to really put the glyphs on the right place in the DVI.

T_EX3

Ability to handle 8-bit input. 1989. TeX development was frozen in 1991 and only bugfixes were made. Now in version 3.1415926, it gets closer to pi with every bugfix. Don Knuth wishes the version number to be pi when he dies.

pT_EX

Extension of Nihongo TeX to enable vertical typesetting. ("p" for "publishing") Distributed as WEB change files. Primary author is D. E. Knuth, latest version (TeX live 2011) is pTeX 3.1415926-p3.2 (modified from the official version 3.1.11)

encT_EX

A small extension to TeX, started 1997. Adds 10 new primitives relating input re-encoding

MLT_EX

Extension to TeX (started 1990) that allows hyphenation of words with accented letters. (Therefore the name: MultiLingual TeX.) Distributed as a change file to the original WEB sources of TeX.

upT_EX

Unicode-aware version of pTeX – "Unicode-publishing"-TeX

Ω

Support for 16bit-Unicode-input. Still constrained on the output encoding. Started 1994.

ϵ -T_EX

An extension to TeX, provided by the NTS team as an intermediate project until NTS would be ready. eTeX is a full TeX and backward compatible. The number of TeX's registers is increased and various new primitives useful to programmers are added.

T_EX2PDF

Early name for pdfTeX. Don't confuse with converters like dvi2pdf.

\mathcal{N}_{TS}

A project to completely reimplement TeX in Java. Now NTS is officially declared dead.

T_EXgX

"GX" stands for Graphic eXtension, a font technology available only on Mac OS. TeXGX was able to handle these fonts.

Ω_2

A short-time try to pick up the development of Omega again in 2006. Seemed more like a good plan and is now regarded as obsolete. LuaTeX is kind of a successor.

VT_EX

VT_EX (VisualTeX) can produce PDF, HTML, SVG, DVI or ps output directly from input. In contrast to pdfTeX, it includes a full PostScript interpreter, thus capable to include EPS figures, PStricks etc. First official version I found: February 15, 1999: VT_EX 6.3; last official version seems to be from Oct 1, 2005: VT_EX 8.61. Commercial product.

ε-pTeX

A merge of e-TeX with pTeX written by Hironori Kitagawa. Additional support for 256 math fonts, and some pdfTeX functionality. Latest Version (TeXlive 2011) is 3.1415926-p3.2-110415-2.3.

ℵ (Aleph)

Originally named epsilon-Omega, an attempt to stabilize Omega while merging epsilon extensions. Authors: John Plaice and Yannis Haralambous, now maintained for severe bugfixes by Taco Hoekwater. Latest version number is 3.1415926-1.15-2.1-0.0-rc4.

pdfTeX

A new engine to directly produce PDF-files from TeX, without the need of DVI-PS-PDF. This allows to use microtypographic extensions and many other features of the PDF format like page transitions etc.

εχTeX

Planned implementation of a high-quality typesetting system, written in Java. Based on experiences in NTS, eTeX, pdfTeX and Omega. Started in 2003, current version in repository is 0.0. (i. e. not very far ...)

pdf(ε)-TeX

Merging the pdfTeX engine with the eTeX-extensions. This engine can produce DVI (with or without the eTeX-extensions) as well as PDF (again, with or without extensions).

X_εTeX

This extension enables full multilingual support for left-to-right typesetting, right-to-left and almost any other possible direction. Unicode encoding is fully supported (utf8 as native encoding). XeTeX also features support for OpenType, AAT, TrueType and Graphite-fonts (via the operation system). In contrary to pdfTeX or LuaTeX, no external configuration file is needed to use fonts. In newest versions, character protrusion is possible.

eeTeX

Experimental extension to pdfTeX by Taco Hoekwater, created 2000. Distributed as change file. Now dead due to his development of LuaTeX.

Lua

A script language; has nothing to do with TeX.

LuaTeX

LuaTeX supports utf8, OpenType and many more things. TeX live 2011 ships version 0.70.1. LuaTeX features an embedded scripting language, Lua, making it easy to extend and to change the TeX interna, so most of the programming can be done in Lua instead of TeX-hackery.

iTeX

iTeX is the official successor of TeX3, announced by Don Knuth at the TUG conference 2010.

5. plainTeX – the first format

plainTeX

The basic format offered by Don Knuth to provide a minimal set of macros to work with.

ec-plain

A plainTeX using EC fonts. Latest changes in May 2002 for pdfTeX.

csplain

A plainTeX using cs-fonts.

eplain

Extensions of plainTeX to provide often-used utilities. Not thought for document preparation as LaTeX is. First version that is still available is 2.1 from 1992. Latest version 3.4 is from 2 2010 and based on pdfTeX.

6. L^ATeX – Lamport's TeX format

L^ATeX 0.90

First version still on web (historic archive, see refs) is 0.90, for use with TeX 0.95. No installation help found. Apparently one needs the files lplain.tex and latex.tex to create the format.

L^AT_EX 0.91

Version 0.91 for use with TeX 0.97 (C) 1983 by Leslie Lamport. Most changes to previous version are in the file lplain.tex.

L^AT_EX 0.92

First version with the @ as letter for internal names. Seemingly first version with a manual. For use with TeX Version 0.999999. (no joke, that's the version number given in the latex.tex file!) (C) 1983 by Leslie Lamport, conversion to 0.92 from 0.91 by Arthur Keller.

L^AT_EX 0.92 - 1.0

Adaptation of 0.92 for TeX version 1.0. (C) 1983 by Leslie Lamport, conversion to 0.92 from 0.91 by Arthur Keller.

L^AT_EX 2.0 - 1.0

Seemingly heavy changes compared to 0.92. Version for TeX 1.0. Release of 11 Dec 1983. There were never public versions 1.x

L^AT_EX 2.05

No sure information found so far.

L^AT_EX 2.06a

Release of version 2.06a of the LaTeX macros. September 1984.

L^AT_EX 2.09

The first official version by Leslie Lamport, 1985.

SL_AT_EX

A variation of LaTeX 2.09 to provide an easy way for producing presentations. In LaTeX 2e absorbed as a documentclass (slides).

A_MS_LA_TE_X 1.1

A port of Spivak's AMS-TeX to LaTeX 2.09 by Frank Mittelbach and Rainer Schöpf, released 1990.

L^AT_EX 2_ε

June 1994: New release of LaTeX to avoid incompatible dialects of LaTeX 2.09. Introduced by the LaTeX3-Team. This is the latest stable version of LaTeX at the moment. Support for pdfTeX, XeTeX and LuaTeX is given, where small changes allow for the special abilities of the engines. Most adaptation to the engines is done on package level (fonts, encodings etc.)

Λ

A LaTeX based format for the omega engine.

Lamed

A LaTeX based format for the aleph engine.

A_MS_LA_TE_X 1.2

A port of version 1.1 to LaTeX 2e by Downes and Jones.

A_LT_EX

A slightly changed LaTeX format by Matt Swift to offer modularity at format level. Acts as normal LaTeX if not explicitly told to do different. "A" for "alternate", "abstract" or the indefinite article.

A_MS_LA_TE_X 2.2

Latest AMSLaTeX version is 2.2 from 2001. Intermediate versions are not shown.

p_LA_TE_X

A LaTeX based format for the pTeX engine.

expl3

The expl3 bundle is the ground stock of LaTeX 3. It is a bundle of packages that can be used with LaTeX 2e, but are planned to become the kernel of LaTeX 3. They provide the low-level structures, programming structures and everything needed for package authors.

x_packages

The xpackages are a bundle of packages intended to become the ground stock of packages for the high-level and user-level interface in LaTeX 3. Based on expl3, they can be used with LaTeX 2e already.

L^AT_EX2_x

A (somewhat) planned experimental step towards L^AT_EX3. L^AT_EX2_x is a normal L^AT_EX2_e, but with expl3 and xpackages compiled in the format. It is **not** intended for everyday use but only for experimenting with L^AT_EX3. Might be concentrated on LuaT_EX, but XeT_EX and pdfT_EX variants will be available.

L^AT_EX2.2

Inofficial suggestion by Philipp Stephani on the LuaL^AT_EX list. L^AT_EX2.2 should still be a full L^AT_EX2_e, but with the expl3 bundle in the format. In fact, this is what L^AT_EX2_x is planned to be.

L^AT_EX2.5

Will Robertson suggested in an interview (see refs) an interim unstable version on the way to L^AT_EX3 with version number 2.5 that should bring package authors towards using L^AT_EX3 syntax. This version should be backwards **incompatible** to L^AT_EX2_e. (This version does not exist in any official plannings, but I liked the idea, so it is mentioned here ;))

L^AT_EX3

The long-time successor of L^AT_EX2_e. It is planned to implement a very elaborate low-level programming language. (Almost done by now.) The expl3-package provides an implementation that can be used on top of L^AT_EX2_e. Several L^AT_EX packages already make heavy use of expl3. (As does this document.) L^AT_EX3 makes use of eT_EX primitives and therefore needs this engine or successors. Special adaptations of LuaT_EX features are starting to evolve.

timesL^AT_EX

Some L^AT_EX 2.09 derivate, need more information.

7. ConT_EXt: con tex t – text with tex

INRST_EX

“Extended Plain T_EX for use with MLT_EX.”

pragmatex

Former name of ConT_EXt. Based, besides others, on INRST_EX.

ConT_EXt MKI

Original ConT_EXt with Dutch low level interface. “MK” stands for “Mark”, meaning “version”.

ConT_EXt MKII

ConT_EXt with English low level interface. Works with any T_EX-engine, as L^AT_EX does: T_EX, e-T_EX, pdfT_EX, Aleph, XeT_EX, For the end user, no difference to MKI.

ConT_EXt MKIV

Specially designed for LuaT_EX. MKIII was “skipped” for “practical reasons”, as Hans Hagens says, and “MKii, MKvi, MKvi all have 4 chars (which is why I skipped the v, but who knows if MKv will show up some day)”

ConT_EXt MKVI

Latest experimental version of ConT_EXt.

8. Other Formats

8.1. *A_MS*-T_EX

***A_MS*-T_EX2.0**

A macro package provided by the American Mathematical Society. Version 2.0 from 1990. No information found for versions pre-2.0.

L^A*A_MS*-T_EX2.0

“LamST_EX is an extension of AmST_EX, and thus almost completely compatible with plain T_EX”, as the documentation says. See references for details.

***A_MS*-T_EX2.1**

Version 2.1 released 1991.

***A_MS*-T_EX2.2**

Latest version is 2.2 from 2001.

8.2. BLUe

BLUe

A macro package based on plainTeX. Shareware, last version on CTAN from June 1996.

8.3. HPT_EX

HP T_EX

A format specially written for HP hardware, written 1984.

8.4. JadeT_EX

JadeT_EX

A macro package for processing Jade/OpenJade output, based on LaTeX.

8.5. Lollipop

Lollipop 0.9

First release, October 1992.

Lollipop 0.95

Latest, unofficial, release, January 1993.

8.6. MacroT_EX

MacroT_EX

Information needed.

8.7. MeX

MeX

Information needed. There seems to be different formats that use the pdfTeX engine: mex, pdfmex, htmex and utf8mex.

8.8. PHYS(E)

PHYS(E)

Documentation says: "The TeX formats PHYSE and PHYS are extensions of the PLAIN format and should simplify the writing of physics papers." Latest version I found is from 1986. PHYS is for german, PHYSE for english usage.

8.9. PHYZZX

PHYZZX

Documentation says: "PHYZZX is a macropackage which is designed to make typing papers destined for Physical Review or Nuclear Physics as simple as possible." Created 1984, latest version I found is from 1988.

8.10. StarT_EX – Starter's T_EX

StarT_EX

A format designed to help students with short documents. Using html-like notation: <command> instead of command

8.11. Texinfo

Texinfo

The official documentation format of the GNU project. Uses TeX to provide documentations.

8.12. XMLT_EX

XMLT_EX

A format (based on machines like pdfTeX, XeTeX and maybe LuaTeX) that converts XML input to DVI or PDF output. Can also be based on other formats when parsed at format-building time.

8.13. YT_EX

YT_EX

A macro package developed at MIT. Pronounced "why-TeX", "upsilon-TeX" or "oops-TeX". Tries to offer an easy structure for novices as well as a powerfull macro libraries for experienced users.

8.14. ZzT_EX

ZzT_EX

"a macro package for producing books, journals, and technical documentation", named "after a rock group from Texas." The author Paul C. Anagnostopoulos found LaTeX too unflexible. Appeared around 1992.

9. Distributions

9.1. T_EX live

Web2C

An Implementation and Distribution of TeX which translates the original WEB sources to a C code.

emT_EX

Eberhard Mattes' TeX Distribution for MS-DOS and OS2.

teT_EX

Maintained by Thomas Esser (hence the te in teTeX) from 1994 to May 2006.

4AllT_EXCD

The (vague) past ... (?)

fpT_EX

A free TeX distribution for Win32 based on teTeX, by Fabrice Popineau. Still active, provides up-to-date binaries for Windows. Special support for Japanese Typesetting.

XEmT_EX

A TeX distribution for Windows, based on fpTeX with XEmacs/ AucTeX as IDE for (La)TeX. XemTeX was sponsored by the French government.

T_EX live 1996 – 2007

First version 1996 (UNIX only, later also Windows binaries), and then a long story of ongoing work – see the documentation for a detailed history. Some of the binaries (still) identify themselves as *TeXk. The “k” stands for “Karl” meaning that they were compiled with kpathsea.

T_EX live2008

A new package manager and network installer are available. So installation via the net is possible as well as package updates. Missing packages are not installed on-the-fly. The last of the modern machines is added: LuaTeX

gwT_EX

A (re)distribution for Mac OS based on TeX live (earlier on teTeX) by Gerben Wierda. Provides TeX-related packages for the i-Installer. Unsupported from 2007 on.

T_EX live2009

Dropped Omega and Lambda. Aleph and Lamed are kept.

T_EX live2010

Release of 2010.

TLContrib

An extension to TeX live that contains packages that TeX live cannot hold because: not-free licence, binary update, not on CTAN or intermediate release. Useable via the TeX live manager.

T_EX live2011

Latest release of TeX live, available since July 2011.

MacT_EX

Once based on teTeX, MacTeX is now TeX live-based. For Mac OS X only, it provides a native installer, the TeXShop editor and Mac-specific tools.

9.2. MiK_TE_X

MiK_TE_X

MiKTeX is a TeX distribution originally for Windows only. Copyright by Christian Schenk goes back to 2001. Regarding the name, the author stated: “mik used to be my login name. It is an acronym for: Micro-kid. Hence the capital K in MiKTeX.”

MiK_TE_X 2.6

Windows only. featuring pdftex 1.40.4, mpost 1.000

MiK_TE_X 2.7

Windows only. featuring XeTeX 0.999.6, pdftex 1.40.9, mpost 1.005

MiKTeX 2.8

Windows only. featuring XeTeX 0.9995.1, pdftex 1.40.10, mpost 1.005

MiKTeX 2.9

Windows only (stable version). Beta version for GNU/Linux available. Featuring XeTeX 0.9997.4, pdftex 1.40.11, LuaTeX 0.60.2, mpost 1.211. Offers both LaTeX and ConTeXt (MK IV) formats.

ProTeXt

A distribution based on MiKTeX (since 2004) with a comfortable install procedure, Editor etc. Provides an easy installation for a full (La)TeX environment.

9.3. T_EX collection

T_EX Collection

A meta-distribution. Provided on DVD by the TUG, this distribution ships with TeX live, MacTeX and ProTeX as well as with a full CTAN snapshot.

9.4. standalone ConT_EXt

Standalone

standalone ConTeXt provides a distribution of latest (beta and stable) ConTeXt versions with binaries and formats. Efficient upgrading is possible as well as parallel use with another TeX distribution. Was renamed from “minimals” into standalone in 2011.

9.5. W32T_EX

W32T_EX

A distributon to provide binaries for MS Windows, with special support for Japanese. First version (up to the changelog): 2009/08/02. Still up-to-date.

9.6. OzT_EX

OzT_EX

A commercial distribution for Mac OS. No longer supported.

9.7. For Amiga

Amiga-TeX

By Thomas Rockicki and Radical Eye Software. Commercial distribution for Amiga.

pasTeX

A free distribution for Amiga. Distributed as 5 floppy disks (TeX) plus 2 floppy disks (Metafont). Available from the Aminet.

9.8. N_T_EX

N_T_EX

A distribution for Linux and other Unix systems. Latest version is 2.3.2, released at 23-Aug-1998. No longer developed.

10. Pandora's Box

10.1. META*

METAFONT

The program for creating the fonts originally used by TeX.

Metafog

A program to convert metafont shapes to Type1 contours. Uses mathematically correct transformations instead of autotracing.

MetaType1

A program to produce Type1 fonts from metafont source code.

MetaPost

A graphic generating program written by John Hobby, inspired by METAFONT. MetaPost can produce PostScript graphics as well as SVG. Latest (experimental) version is 1.750 as of spring 2011.

mptopdf

Actually a pdfTeX-generated format, this program can be used to compile metapost code directly into PDF output. Metafun is supported, too.

MFLua

A (so far) experimental implementation of METAFONT with Lua embedded for better extraction of information from METAFONT.

MegaPost

A planned extension of MetaPost “that will extend the range and precision of the internal data types.”

MetaFun

“MetaFun is Hans Hagen's extension to (or module for) the MetaPost language.” A format for MetaPost that is useable with ConTeXt.

10.2. BibTeX

BibTeX

A helper program to sort a bibliography list.

NbibTeX

“NbibTeX helps authors take better advantage of BibTeX data” says the homepage.

BibTeX8

The documentation says: “An 8-bit Implementation of BibTeX 0.99 with a Very Large Capacity”

MLBibTeX

Mentioned in the kpathsea-manual. No idea what it is. BibTeX for MLTeX?

BibTeXu

A Unicode-aware version of BibTeX

jBibTeX

jBibTeX was developed by Shoichi Matsui around 1988. It is included in the pTeX distribution since 1995.

Pybtex

A python implementation of BibTeX.

pBibTeX

Kind of a successor of jBibTeX, pBibTeX is a Japanese-aware version of BibTeX supporting Japanese bibliography lists. Special support for Japanese (input/output) encodings and punctuation.

upBibTeX

Can be found in the development repositories, but no documentation found.

biber

A perl implementation of a BibTeX-like program, designed as backend for BibLaTeX. “biber” is an animal handling bibliographies. (german for “beaver”, hence the beaver in the biber logo)

BibLaTeX

A LaTeX package as frontend for biber (can also be used with BibTeXu/8).

Librarian

A TeX file (useable with all formats) that typesets BibTeX-style bibliographies without the need of BibTeX. Therefore, it provides a format-independent typesetting of bibliographies.

10.3. (x)dvipdf(m)(x)

dvipdf

A shellscript from Ghostscript that uses dvips and and gs for converting.

xdv2pdf

No idea so far what this is, but it is mentioned in the fontspec manual as possible driver for XeTeX.

dvipdfm

Converts DVI files to PDF files. Does /not/ build on dvipdf, but is an independent implementation.

dvipdfmx

Extended version of dvipdfm. Support for multi-byte encodings and more pdfTeX features. Still active. Combined work of dvipdfm-jpn and dvipdfm-kor.

xdvipdfmx

Converts XDV files produced by XeTeX to PDF files. Normally always executed after a XeTeX run, so the user won't notice that an xdvi document was created in between.

.pdf

The resulting, ready-compiled document is most often a PDF document. Production of DVI documents is also mostly possible, but seldom used.

10.4. Fonts

Bitmap fonts

Bitmap fonts contain the shape of the letters as a number of dots. If you zoom in, a bitmap letter will show pixels. Hence one needs a special version for every resolution.

PostScript Type 1

Outline font. The shape of a letter is described as mathematical curves so the letter can be made arbitrarily large without getting pixelated.

TrueType

Available on Windows and Mac OS. Outline font technology with quadratic B splines.

FreeType

TrueType implementation for Unix.

TrueType GX

“Graphis eXtension”. A font format only available for Mac OS.

OpenType

Extension of the TrueType font format, adding support for PostScript font data. Developed by Microsoft and Adobe.

AAT

“Apple Advanced Typography” fonts are successors of the GX fonts. Only available for Mac OS, too.

10.5. Work Flow

.tex

The .tex file. A plain text file that typically contains all of the document information.

11. Program Names

The following list tries to explain what happens if a programm is called by a given name. E. g. calling the command `latex` on the command line will start the PDF ϵ -T \TeX engine² in DVI mode with the format L \TeX 2 ϵ . This will list the names used in the official T \TeX live distribution (which should be the same in MiK \TeX) and only those which are not totally clear by the name itself.

program	meaning
plain formats	
<code>tex</code>	T \TeX with the plain format
<code>aleph</code>	Aleph with the plain format
<code>eptex</code>	ϵ -pT \TeX with the plain format
<code>dviluatex</code>	LuaT \TeX with the plain format and DVI output
<code>csplain</code>	PDF ϵ -T \TeX with the csplain format and DVI output
<code>eplain</code>	PDF ϵ -T \TeX with the eplain format and DVI output
<code>etex</code>	PDF ϵ -T \TeX with the plain format and DVI output
<code>mltex</code>	PDF ϵ -T \TeX with MLT \TeX extensions enabled, DVI output
<code>pdfcsplain</code>	PDF ϵ -T \TeX with the csplain format and PDF output
<code>pdfetex</code>	PDF ϵ -T \TeX with the plain format and PDF output
<code>pdftex</code>	PDF ϵ -T \TeX with the plain format and PDF output
<code>ptex</code>	pT \TeX with the plain format
<code>mltex</code>	PDF ϵ -T \TeX with the plain format and DVI output
<code>xetex</code>	X \TeX with the plain format
<code>luatex</code>	LuaT \TeX with the plain format and PDF output
<code>pdfcsplain</code>	PDF ϵ -T \TeX with the csplain format and PDF output
L \TeX 2 ϵ	
<code>latex</code>	PDF ϵ -T \TeX with the L \TeX 2 ϵ format and DVI output
<code>pdflatex</code>	PDF ϵ -T \TeX with the L \TeX 2 ϵ format and PDF output
<code>lamed</code>	Aleph with the Lamed format
<code>platex</code>	ϵ -pT \TeX with the pL \TeX format
<code>xelatex</code>	X \TeX with the L \TeX 2 ϵ format
<code>lualatex</code>	LuaT \TeX with the L \TeX 2 ϵ format and PDF output
<code>dvilualatex</code>	LuaT \TeX with the L \TeX 2 ϵ format and DVI output
ConT \TeX t	
<code>texexec</code>	PDF ϵ -T \TeX with ConT \TeX t MKII format and PDF output
<code>texexec --interface = de</code>	dito, with german interface
<code>texexec --xtx</code>	X \TeX with ConT \TeX t MKII format
<code>context</code>	LuaT \TeX with ConT \TeX t MKIV format and PDF output
<code>context --interface = de</code>	dito, with german interface
other formats	
<code>amstex</code>	PDFT \TeX with the A \mathcal{M} S \TeX format and DVI output
<code>jadetex</code>	PDF ϵ -T \TeX with the JadeT \TeX format and DVI output
<code>mex</code>	PDF ϵ -T \TeX with the MeX format and DVI output
<code>pdfjadetex</code>	PDF ϵ -T \TeX with the JadeT \TeX format and PDF output
<code>pdfmex</code>	PDF ϵ -T \TeX with the MeX format and PDF output
<code>pdfxmltex</code>	PDFT \TeX with the XMLT \TeX format
<code>utf8mex</code>	PDF ϵ -T \TeX with the UTF8MeX format and DVI output
<code>xmltex</code>	PDFT \TeX with the XMLT \TeX format

²Actually it's only called PDFT \TeX now, but it is always the version that includes ϵ -T \TeX extensions. Here, always the full name is used for clearness.

metafont

mf	the METAFONT program
mp	the METAPOST program
mptopdf	PDF ϵ -T _E X with the mptopdf format and PDF output

Part III.

Appendix

A. References

The references are in order of occurrence in the above document. i. e. if you want information about Lua \TeX , it will be below e. g. $\epsilon\TeX$. Everything that is not listed as "book" is freely available on the internet.

Books

D.E. Knuth, D. Bibby, and I. Makai. *The \TeX book*
Addison-Wesley Reading, MA, 1986.

F. Mittelbach, M. Goossens, J. Braams, D. Carlisle, C. Rowley, C. Detig, and J. Schrod. *The \LaTeX companion*.
Addison-Wesley, 2004.

Overview Articles

Arthur Reutenauer. *A Brief History of \TeX* . Talk at EuroBach \TeX 2007.
<http://www.gust.org.pl/bachotex/EuroBachTeX2007/presentations/bhot.pdf/view>

A Brief History of \LaTeX
<http://www.xent.com/FoRK-archive/feb98/0307.html>

Hans Hagen: *16 years of Con \TeX t*. Article in TUGboat Vol. 32, Number 1, 2011.

Short Article About Omega And Aleph
<http://www.tex.ac.uk/cgi-bin/texfaq2html?label=omegaleph>

Interviews with Will Robertson, Hans Hagen et. al.
<http://www.tug.org/interviews>

Archives

CTAN – Comprehensive \TeX Archive Network:
<http://www.ctan.org>

Historic Archive of \TeX Distributions:
<ftp://ftp.tug.org/historic>

Engines

ANT project page

<http://ant.berlios.de>

Yasuki S AITO. Report on JTEX: A Japanese TEX. TUGboat 8 (1987), no. 2, 103 – 116.

<http://www.tug.org/TUGboat/Articles/tb08-2/tb18saito.pdf>

pTeX page

<http://ascii.asciimw.jp/pb/ptex/>

pTeX sources and documentation

<http://dante.ctan.org/tex-archive/help/Catalogue/entries/ptex.html>

encTeX page

<http://www.olsak.net/enctex.html>

MLTeX source (CH file)

<http://www.tex.ac.uk/tex-archive/systems/generic/mltex/mltex.ch>

pdfTeX project page

<http://tug.org/applications/pdftex/>

$\mathcal{N}\mathcal{T}\mathcal{S}$ project page

<http://nts.tug.org>

VTeX – official homepage of micropress-inc

<http://www.micropress-inc.com/>

X_ƎTeX project page

<http://tug.org/XeTeX/>

εχTeX project page

<http://www.extex.org>

eeTeX project page

<http://tex.aanhet.net/eetex>

LuaTeX project page

<http://www.luatex.org>

iTeX announcement by Don Knuth at the TUG 2010

<http://river-valley.tv/tug-2010/an-earthshaking-announcement>

Formats

Eplain homepage

<http://www.tug.org/eplain/>

EC plain on CTAN

<http://www.ctan.org/tex-archive/macros/ec-plain>

L^AT_EX project page

<http://www.latex-project.org>

A_MS_ET_EX: Documentation on CTAN

<http://www.ctan.org/tex-archive/macros/amstex/doc/>

L^AT_EX2.2 – mail from Philipp Stephani on LuaLaTeX-dev list (last paragraph)

<http://tug.org/pipermail/lualatex-dev/2011-January/001033.html>

L^AT_EX3 project

<http://www.latex-project.org/latex3.html>

ConT_EXt wiki

<http://wiki.contextgarden.net>

A^AL^AT_EX: Discussion in TUGboat Vol. 16 (1995), No. 3, p. 269ff.

<http://www.tug.org/TUGboat/Articles/tb16-3/tb48swif.pdf>

BLUe on CTAN

<http://www.ctan.org/tex-archive/macros/blu>

A_MS-_TE_X on CTAN

<http://www.ctan.org/tex-archive/macros/amstex>

INRST_EX on CTAN

<http://www.ctan.org/tex-archive/macros/inrstex>

L_AM_ST_EX: Short description

<http://www.tex.ac.uk/tex-archive/digests/texline/no13/lamstex>

HP T_EX on CTAN

<http://www.ctan.org/tex-archive/macros/hptex>

JadeT_EX project page

<http://jadetex.sourceforge.net>

PHYSE and PHYS on CTAN

<http://ctan.org/tex-archive/macros/physe>

PHYZZX on CTAN

<http://ctan.org/tex-archive/macros/phyzzx>

StarT_EX on CTAN

<http://www.ctan.org/tex-archive/macros/startex>

Texinfo project page

<http://www.gnu.org/software/texinfo>

XMLT_EX manual

<http://www.dcarlisle.demon.co.uk/xmltex/manual.html>

YT_EX on CTAN

<http://tug.ctan.org/tex-archive/macros/ytex>

ZzT_EX: Article in TUGboat 13 (1992), No. 4

<http://www.tug.org/TUGboat/tb13-4/tb37anag.pdf>

Distributions

fpT_EX: Announcment at TUG 1999

<http://www.tug.org/tug99/program/node39.html>

T_EX live development history

<http://tug.org/texlive/doc/texlive-en/texlive-en.html>

gwT_EX project page

<http://ii2.sourceforge.net/tex-index.html>

Brief History of gwT_EX

<http://www.tug.org/twg/mactex/award/2007/gerben/aboutgwtex.html>

TLContrib project page

<http://tlcontrib.metatex.org/>

MacT_EX project page

<http://www.tug.org/mactex>

MiKTeX project page

<http://miktex.org/>

Christian Schenk about the name of MiKTeX (mailing list archive)

http://sourceforge.net/mailarchive/message.php?msg_id=26826076

ProT_EXt project page

<http://www.tug.org/protext>

T_EXCollection page

<http://www.tug.org/texcollection>

ConT_EXt minimalis on ConT_EXt garden wiki

http://wiki.contextgarden.net/ConTeXt_Minimalis

Win32 project page

<http://w32tex.org/>

OzT_EX project page

<http://www.trevorrow.com/oztex>

T_EX on Amiga

http://serpens.de/~zza/amigafaq/AmigaFAQg_49.html

NT_EX project page

<http://www.langbein.org/software/ntex>

Fonts

Type1 Fonts specifications

http://partners.adobe.com/public/developer/en/font/T1_SPEC.PDF

The FreeType project

<http://freetype.org/index2.html>

OpenType specifications

<http://www.microsoft.com/typography/otspec/default.htm>

Everything Else

MetaPost developments in TUGboat Vol. 29 (2008), No. 3, p. 380ff.

<http://www.tug.org/TUGboat/Contents/contents29-3.html>

dvipdfmx project page

<http://project.ktug.or.kr/dvipdfmx/>

B. List of Contributors

I have to thank some people for helping me to improve this document. Of course I thank all the people providing the above-mentioned programs and references.

- Paul Isambert, for usefull discussions and testing.
- Heiko Oberdiek, for solving a bug that broke the document with Acrobat Reader.
- Peter Dyballa, for detailed historic information.
- Mojca Miklavc, for many information, especially on ConT_EXt-related stuff.
- Hironori Kitagawa, for information about Japanese-specific programs.
- Many people that stumbled upon my questions on different mailinglist, mostly texhax.