

Notes with Florian

1. Fundamental engineering difference between ConTeXt
 - no real formal document declaration
 - not a semantic markup language, based on macros
 - TeX is bottom-up, versus semantic (top down)
 - Jade transformer takes XML and SGML into a plain TeX document
2. pandoc is a wrapper
 - look into alternatives
 - least common denominator
 - resembles natural languages in that translations are ‘lossy’
 - post-design processes
 - proprietary options?
 - ★ Woodwing: developing similar systems, SmartBooks
3. cross-media publishing
 - nearly an artificial intelligence problematic
 - point of departure: why do have to start from scratch for all these different output formats?
 - unpredictability
4. generative typographic design
 - Conditional Design manifesto
 - Luna Maurer, Roel Wouters, Jonathan Puckey (Amsterdam)
 - LUST

- catalogtree (Rotterdam and Arnhem)
 - OS Publishing (Open Source Publishing, Brussels)
 - ★ Femke Snelting (uses ConTeXt)
 - Scriptographer
 - exhibition in Breda: Info Deco Data
 - Petr van Blokland
 - ★ “In our office we no longer use Adobe products, we program everything.”
 - ★ house designer of Rabobank
 - Open
5. wrappers on top of wrappers
- error handling
6. ODT does not live up to its promise
- DocBook: most robust XML format
 - TEI (Text Encoding Initiative): for electronic philology
 - Word is a good point for re-mediation, as it was meant to emulate the typewriter.
 - ★ typewriters are not document creation (typesetting) systems
 - ★ literal WYSIWYG
 - ★ allows visual poetry that is not possible elsewhere
 - ★ “free form typography,” creating a text visually
 - ★ per-line breaking
7. constant back and forth between ease of use vs robustness

- same problem as exists for semantic web

8. We have hit the limits of WYSIWYG, and designers are realizing this.
 - TexMacs: WYSIWYG
9. J David Bolter: re-mediation. hypertext/hypermedia. Grousin. *Re-mediation*.
 - the new medium holds the old medium, the old medium changes to fit the new
 - Michael Heim. *Electric Language*.
 - ★ how word processing changes writing
10. pandoc is not a heterarchy, but a hierarchy, with pandoc on top
 - ‘media’ was born in advertising in the 1940s
 - ★ which medium is appropriate for the message, how do you mediate that message in transferring it to medium
 - pandoc works in this classical media way, addressing concerns of mediating the message into various mediums
 - ★ text-to-speech, morse code, etc.
 - issues of scale: programming can be an inefficient solution
11. TeX limitations
 - no color separation
 - “showstoppers”
12. Adobe has developed an XML format for InDesign; can generate programmitically
 - in FLOSS, generate SVG.
13. Distributed authorship, open source, to design and art.
 - the system most used at this point is Drupal
 - FLOSS Manuals uses Drupal and htmldoc for printable documents.
 - ★ pragmatic

14. relating to theory: intermediation/re-mediation

- look into case examples of unfulfilled promises of computer technology
 - ★ Xanadu
- in the 70s it seemed like document transformation was basic; then you look at the intricacies. even simple user scenarios tap into the problem of what a computer can and can't do; let alone what a user can and can't do.

15. music vs texts

- music is not semantic
- no one expects a computer to produce music with a perfect voice; the expectation is something of its own
- yet with text, we have the expectation of reading text typeset in the same way as it is by hand
- perhaps an aesthetic difference: we don't expect electronic music to sound like analog;

16. Readability

- TeX comes close, but
- player piano vs a real pianist == TeX vs a WYSIWYG enabled typographer
- there is no good kerning algorithm
 - ★ why is text so difficult to create aesthetically?

17. Broaden perspective and see what else is going on in cross-media publishing

- media theory
- perhaps ANT works but it doesn't come out clearly in the proposal
- focus on one theory that gets to where we want to go
- core analysis of the discussion, stick to one or two theories

18. Holy Grail: one system that serves as the universal document source.
- in the end it might be many holy grails, one for each type of documents
 - can you reach the Holy Grail without complexity making it unworkable?