Heirloom Documentation Tools

Troff Demonstration Page

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The *troff* text processor from the Heirloom Documentation Tools project is a variant of the Unix application written by Joseph F. Ossanna and Brian W. Kernighan. It was derived from source code provided by the OpenSolaris project. Amongst many enhancements, Heirloom *troff* provides extended font handling capabilities:

☞ PostScript Type 1, TrueType, and OpenType fonts can be used as supplied by their vendor without any need for conversion; *troff* can access font metrics directly in the AFM, TTF, and OTF font files, and the *dpost* post-processor can embed glyph data into the PostScript output it generates.

☞ With Type 1 "expert," TrueType, and OpenType fonts, *troff* can be configured such that extra characters can transparently replace base characters to produce ligatures, as in the words "effective," "office," "offline," Small Capitals, or old-style numerals 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 without the need to type escape sequences for individual characters in the document text. The replacement characters need not reside in the same font.

☞ Pairwise kerning and letter space tracking are supported; the page title provides an example of the former, and the latter is used for the Small Capitals. Kern pairs can be defined between different fonts, and tracking can vary automatically with size.

☞ Hanging characters can be used to achieve better visual alignment of the margins and to implement hanging punctuation for commas, hyphens, &c.

☞ Dynamic letter spacing and glyph scaling, combined with other advanced features such as paragraph-at-once justification, can produce high quality documents.

Heirloom *troff* is free software; the C source code can be obtained at no charge from ‹ http://n-t-roff.github.io/heirloom/doctools.html ›. It runs on most Unix-like systems.