

Emacs for Writers

Jay Dixit

September 16, 2015

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1 Emacs for Writers

SLIDE

How I found my way to Emacs

Jay Dixit

The New York Writers' Intensive

Twitter: @jaydixit

jay@jaydixit.com

newyorkwritersintensive.com

2 My first computer

SLIDE

https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/9/99/DEC_VT100_terminal.jpg

2.0.1 Notes

NOTES

At work he had some kind of Vax Station... and at home we had a VT terminal

But it wasn't mine. It belonged to the university.

3 Modem

SLIDE

https://c2.staticflickr.com/4/3227/2979693877_c601ac432a.jpg

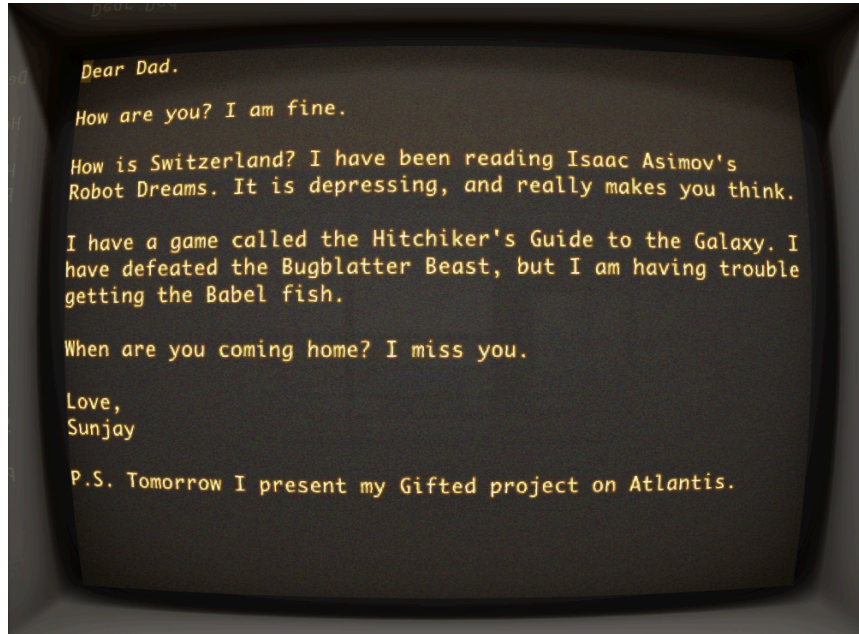
3.0.1 Notes

NOTES

And our modem looked like this

4 VAX Terminal

SLIDE



4.0.1 Notes

NOTES

It was a black screen with yellow text, like this: Dear Dad.

How are you? I am fine.

How is Switzerland? I have been reading Isaac Asimov's Robot Dreams. It is depressing, and really makes you think.

I have a game called the Hitchiker's Guide to the Galaxy. I have defeated the Bugblatter Beast, but I am having trouble getting the Babel fish.

When are you coming home? I miss you.

Love, Sunjay

P.S. Tomorrow I present my Gifted project on Atlantis.

5 Dungeon (Zork)

SLIDE

<http://xmedia.ex.ac.uk/wp/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/zork.png>

6 My own computer

SLIDE

<http://www.vectronicsappleworld.com/archives/vintage/images/0032/snap13.jpg>

7 Microsoft Word

SLIDE

http://computersandcomposition.candcblog.org/archives/v10/10_2_html/10_2_8_Boudreau1.gif

8 Microsoft Word

SLIDE

<http://i260.photobucket.com/albums/ii8/patheticcockroach/microsoft-word-sucks-write-wi.gif>

9 New Project

SLIDE

<https://johnntomsett.files.wordpress.com/2013/03/1984-opening-paragraph.jpg>

10 Googling

SLIDE



11 Workflowy

SLIDE

http://3.bp.blogspot.com/_oB6fkceAJrc/TSXTDtU_LiI/AAAAAAAAABi8/gLOs_kICDZU/s1600/organize-goals-alt.png

12 Scrivener

SLIDE

<http://www.autostraddle.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/scrivener.jpg>

13 Scrivener

SLIDE

<http://a5.mzstatic.com/us/r30/Purple/v4/fe/7b/16/fe7b1653-3165-7329-6ed8-60c10d4c4d5e/screen800x500.jpeg>

14 I needed a better solution

SLIDE

MENU

the ONION

Man On Internet Almost Falls Into World Of DIY Mustard Enthu...

SEARCH Q

TOP HEADLINES

Man On Internet Almost Falls Into World Of DIY Mustard Enthusiasts

NEWS
March 11, 2010
VOL 46 ISSUE 10
Science & Technology ·
Cooking · Old Internet ·
Internet



Steve Gibson sits at a desk that was once covered with mustard paraphernalia.

ONION VIDEO

WATCH MORE



6-Year-Old Data Entry Prodigy Already Entertaining Offers From Major Temp Agencies



14.0.1 Notes

NOTES

So I did what I always do. Internet research.

- blenders

7

- coffee grinders
- ergonomic keyboards

15 the original email

SLIDE

<http://i.imgur.com/263uwKv.jpg>

15.0.1 Notes

NOTES

Is there an app that displays keyboard-editable hierarchical structure in the left pane and text editing/word processing in the right pane?

I'm looking for a Mac or web-based app that will allow me to create and modify hierarchical structure (in the form of multi-level bulleted lists) in the left pane and do text editing/word processing in the right pane.

I wish I could combine Workflowy and Scrivener into one tool.

The good thing about Scrivener: It displays the hierarchical structure of my document in the left pane (with headers, subheaders, subsubheaders) and displays a text editor/word processor in the right pane.

The problem with Scrivener: Creating new sections, moving sections around, nesting one section beneath another, etc is cumbersome. Every time you want a new level of the hierarchy, you have to choose “new text,” name it, and use the trackpad (not the keyboard) to drag it to where you want it in document folder structure. Blech.

The good thing about Workflowy: Creating and modifying the hierarchical structure is so easy. You create a new list item simply by hitting enter, promote by hitting tab, demote by hitting shift-tab, and move list items around easily using the keyboard. The problem with Workflowy: no text editor pane.

What I want is a tool that's like Workflowy in the left pane—quick keyboard-based creating and modifying of hierarchical structure—but with a text editor/word processor in the right pane.

With the tool I envision, for each bulleted list item in the left-pane hierarchy, I could enter right-pane text. At the end, like Scrivener, the tool would “compile” a Word document, excluding the hierarchy of headers and subheaders and including only the right-pane text.

I can hack a solution to this with Workflowy by just entering body text below various list items in the structural hierarchy and adding a #bodytext tag for each paragraph of prose, then running a search for #bodytext and exporting only the paragraphs that appear thus tagged. But it would be

more far more useful to have a split-screen navigation so that I could see the body text in a separate pane from the hierarchical structure.

I looked at Omni Outliner, and with that tool, I do not seem to be able to select and export by hierarchical level, so I don't think I could isolate the body text.

Does such a tool exist? What solutions would you suggest? Thanks!

Jay Dixit

16 Re: outlining in the left pane, text in the right?

SLIDE

From: Lucas In the past, I used Mori for this sort of outlining and found it well suited. Both folders and notes can be hierarchically organized, and you can use the app's "Widescreen Layout" to get to the sort of set-up you're looking for. There are export options, but I don't know whether they would fit your needs. Development has been scarce and erratic in recent years, but you can try Mori for free.

16.0.1 Notes

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From: Stephen Zoll OP is asking about something that's hard to find in modern "outlining" applications, even harder on Macs. Most Mac apps of this sort (DevonThink, Together) rely on a folder structure to build hierarchy. Few allow you to nest one note under another. In most cases, shifting back and forth between the "tree" and the editor is awkward. Those apps with strong editor panes are not set up to make the tree pane easy to edit and organize. It's odd that this seems so difficult to code, because

it seems like a perfectly legitimate request: An application where it's easy to move between the editor and the outline, and where the outline is easy to edit and restructure using the keyboard. I agree with MadAboutDana that Tree is a good option to try, though the notes are inline and not in a separate, right-hand pane as the original poster requests. Steve Z.

17.0.1 Notes

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18 Re: outlining in the left pane, text in the right?

SLIDE

From: JBfrom. Posted by Nov 19, 2011 at 01:07 PM You can do this in Emacs Org-Mode by using indirect buffer, vertical split screen, and visibility cycling. Everything is handled via hotkeys. It's available for Mac. I frequently work in this mode for longer documents.

18.0.1 Notes

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19 Re: outlining in the left pane, text in the right?

SLIDE

From: Jay Dixit JBfrom, emacs org-mode sounds like a great solution. I'm intrigued. It also looks a little complicated, but if it indeed does exactly what I'm describing, then I'm willing to take on a learning curve. I've downloaded emacs and org-mode. Can you describe how to set it up to do this, or direct me to a resource that will?

19.0.1 Notes

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20 Taking the first step

SLIDE

Hey Joseph, Thanks for the tip about emacs org mode. It looks a little scary but I'm ready to try it out. I'm trying to get started and I've gotten stuck. Wondering if you can help me. I've installed emacs and ergoemacs on my Mac. Now I need to install org mode. I downloaded org mode and I'm trying to install it. The documentation simply says: To install orgmode, edit the Makefile, type 'make', then 'make install'. To create the PDF and HTML documentation files, type 'make doc'. But where am I supposed to type these things? In Terminal? Do I somehow type them in emacs itself? If so, how do I get a prompt in emacs so I can type commands?

20.0.1 Notes

NOTES

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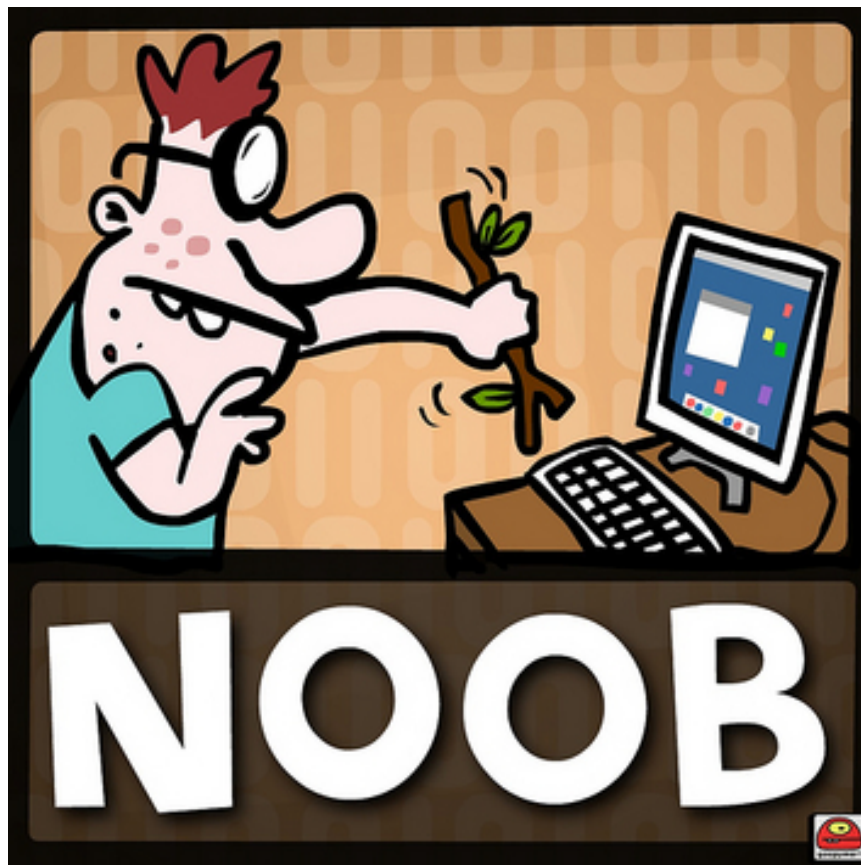
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But where am I supposed to type these things? In Terminal? Do I somehow type them in emacs itself? If so, how do I get a prompt in emacs so I can type commands?

21 n00b

SLIDE



21.0.1 Notes

NOTES

I was definitely one of these guys. . . Hey everybody had to start somewhere.

22 But... I figured it out

SLIDE

```
* strategy
* outline
  * INCLUDE
    * the Hurrydate mystery
  * QUESTION why? Why didn't people's advertised preferences match their actual preferences?
    - critics said one thing
    - as did Malcolm Gladwell
    - but Jason Weeden had a different explanation
  * ANSWER because their short-term mating systems got flipped
    * what is the short-term mating system?
      - men and women both have short-term and long-term systems
      - dads and cads
      - the cad gene
      - sociosexuality

      - hot and cold states, and how they're different.

    * Alison Lenton on how choice activates short-term system

  * QUESTION Maybe the easiest way to understand the short-term system and the long-term system
    is to think about porn and romance novels.

* verbiage
```

U:--- short-term-vs-long-term.org Top 112 (Org Cap Ind. I love you. Spc vl WordWrap Abbrev) 7:29PM 2.71 Mail

23 org-mode to write a book

SLIDE

<pre>* Part 2: why we pass up / fail to commit to the right people; or get divorced (superstimulus; the illusion) # superstimulus is the overarching structure for the second part of the book!!! * Factors that prevent us from committing (against commitment/overly high expectations/dissatisfaction) * commitmentphobia + dissatisfaction * overestimating the pool (media) * porn * not committing (marriage is a commitment device) * Factors that make us unhappy with the people in front of us * soulmate mentality * shopping mentality * misunderstanding of passionate love - serial monogamy * big ideas that will be integrated, but won't be chapters of their own</pre>	<pre>* Excerpt from "The Ecology of Choice, Allison Lenton" As the world evolves, it seems likely that we will be confronted with ever more choice. Previous research has shown that an increase in choice makes choosing more difficult and can result in choice deferral or even avoidance (e.g., Iyengar & Lepper, 2000). Accordingly, one might expect the expansion of choice to yield negative consequences. This study adds to the literature indicating that humans are more adaptable than such theorizing suggests (Gigerenzer, Todd, and the ABC Group, 1999): We adjust to an increasing number of options by changing our decision-making strategies. This adjustment means we experience no differential affect or meta-cognition, whether we face the prospect of choosing among as few as four or among as many as 64 potential mates. Thus, strategy use is context-dependent in mate choice, just as it is in consumer choice (Bateson & Healy, 2005). Alternatively, perhaps the similar affect and meta-cognition experienced by those facing limited versus extensive choice is due to statistical chance: for this article reports the results of a single study. Still, the earlier study on which this one was based (Lenton et al., 2008) also found no significant influence of the number of options on mate choice satisfaction. Perhaps, then, these particular results are due to the particular choice context: mate choice. Unlike jams or even 401ks, for example, we venture to say that the average single person spends a significant amount of time considering the attributes that are important to them in a potential long-term mate. As we mentioned earlier, the distinctions between extensive and limited choice are fewer in important domains (Klayman, 1985), perhaps for this reason. Our results also indicate that mate-standard strength may</pre>
--	--

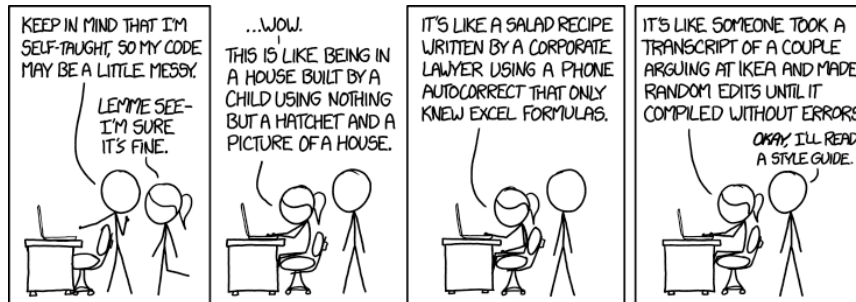
24 commenting my prose

SLIDE

* What role does culture play in love, dating, and sex?
phrase this better

For years, sex researchers had been studying individual differences in the way people have sex and have relationships,
what's a non-psychobabble way of saying "individual differences"?
trying to understand the link between personality and sexual behaviors. But they had very little information comparing these sex and dating across cultures.

25 I still don't really know what I'm doing SLIDE



26 The Emacs Learning Curve

SLIDE

http://farm4.staticflickr.com/3109/3251176498_c3485a55fb.jpg

26.0.1 Notes

NOTES

But my favorite is a blog post: learn Emacs in 10 years. StackExchange why I'm here

27 But at least I'm in good company

SLIDE



28 Neal Stephenson

SLIDE

<http://www.nealstephenson.com/assets/gallery/3/113.jpg>

29 Neil Stephenson

SLIDE

The engineer-hours that, in the case of Microsoft Word, were devoted to features like mail merge, and the ability to embed feature-length motion pictures in corporate memoranda, were, in the case of emacs, focused with maniacal intensity on the deceptively simple-seeming problem of editing text. If you are a professional writer—i.e., if someone else is getting paid to worry about how your words are formatted and printed—emacs outshines all other editing software in approximately the same way that the noonday sun does the stars. It is not just bigger and brighter; it simply makes everything else vanish.

29.0.1 Notes

NOTES

The engineer-hours that, in the case of Microsoft Word, were devoted to features like mail merge, and the ability to embed feature-length motion pictures in corporate memoranda, were, in the case of emacs, focused with maniacal intensity on the deceptively simple-seeming problem of editing text. If you are a professional writer—i.e., if someone else is getting paid to worry about how your words are formatted and printed—emacs outshines all other editing software in approximately the same way that the noonday sun does the stars. It is not just bigger and brighter; it simply makes everything else vanish.

30 WordStar

SLIDE

```
H:INTRO PAGE 1 LINE 9 COL 11          INSERT ON
      < < <      M A I N      M E N U      > > >
--Cursor Movement-- | -Delete- | -Miscellaneous- | -Other Menus-
^S char left ^D char right | ^G char | ^I Tab ^B Reform | (from Main only)
^A word left ^F word right | DEL chr lf | ^V INSERT ON/OFF | ^J Help ^K Block
^E line up ^X line down | ^T word rt | ^L Find/Replce again | ^Q Quick ^P Print
--Scrolling-- | ^Y line | RETURN End paragraph | ^O Onscreen
^Z line down ^W line up | | ^N Insert a RETURN |
^C screen up ^R screen down | | ^U Stop a command |
!----!----!----!----!----!----!----!----!----!-----R

1. Introducing WordStar

WordStar is highly flexible and very visible. Watch the
screens as you give commands, and information in various
parts of the screen will guide you. You won't see all the
information all the time, but it will be there when you need
it.

WHERE YOU ARE

The seven WordStar menus are your greatest aids. They are
like signposts at the top of your screen, showing you where
you are.
1HELP 2INDENT 3SET LM 4SET RM 5UNDLIN 6BLDFCE 7BEGBLK 8ENDBLK 9BEGFIL 10ENDFIL
```


31 George R.R. Martin

SLIDE



32 Richard Stallman

SLIDE



33 The End SLIDE

34 Org-HTML-Slideshow SLIDE

Make slides from Emacs Org-Mode!

34.1 Making Slides SLIDE

Org-Mode headlines with the `:slide:` tag will become slides.

34.2 Headlines Don't Have to be Slides

This section doesn't have a `:slide:` tag, so it will **not** become a slide, although it is still part of the exported HTML document.

34.3 Use Lists For *Bullets* SLIDE

- Use Org-Mode lists for bullet points
- You can make nested bullet lists
 - With sub-lists
 - Like this

34.4 Or Low-Level Headings SLIDE

1. By default
 - (a) Org-Mode headings below level 3
 - i. Become bullets
 - ii. Meaning they **cannot** be slides
2. This is configurable
 - (a) See Export Options in the Org-Mode manual

34.5 Slides Can Be Nested SLIDE

You can use the structure of the Org-Mode document to group your slides.
For example, this slide is a **level-2** Org-Mode heading.

34.5.1 Slide Headings Can Be Nested

SLIDE

This slide is a **level-3** Org-Mode heading, inside the previous one.

35 Presenter Notes

SLIDE

- Slides can have presenter notes
- Add a sub-heading with the `:notes:` tag

35.1 A Slide with Notes

SLIDE

- This slide has notes
- Notes are only visible to presenter

35.1.1 Notes

NOTES

- Presenter notes for this slide
- Not displayed as part of the slide
- Displayed in Presenter Preview window
- Only one `:notes:` section per slide allowed

36 Source Code

SLIDE

Use `begin/Users/jay/Dropbox/github/org-html-slideshow/src/end_srcblockstoincludesourcecode`.

```
(defn example []  
  (println "This is sample source code."))
```

36.1 Syntax Highlighting

SLIDE

- Org-Mode HTML export uses `htmlize.el`
- Code in exported HTML will match your current Emacs theme
 - Choose a theme that looks good on a projector!

36.2 Syntax Highlighting with CSS Classes

SLIDE

- Set the Emacs variable
 - `org-export-htmlize-output-type`
 - to the symbol `css`
 - (Does not work as a buffer-local variable)
- `Htmlize.el` will add SPAN tags with CSS classes
 - Named for each font face, e.g. `org-comment`
- Examine HTML output to see class names
- Add CSS styles to set colors

37 Images

SLIDE

- Slides can contain images
 - Any file type a browser can display
- See also these Emacs variables:
 - `org-export-html-inline-images`
 - `org-export-html-inline-image-extensions`
 - * Controls which file types get exported
- See Images in HTML Export in the Org-Mode manual.

37.1 Slide with Image

SLIDE

Make a file: link with the path to the image and no link text.

This example image is public-domain clip art by Josiah / yoderj.

38 Styling

SLIDE

- Use CSS styles to control appearance of slides
- Extra tags on a slide become extra CSS classes on its HTML

38.1 Org-Mode Tag as CSS ClassSLIDE:BLUE_BACKGROUND

- This slide has the `:bluebackground : tag`
 - Which is a class defined in `projection.css`

Make up your own tags

- Add them to the CSS file

39 Placing Stylesheets/JavaScriptSLIDE

Include the stylesheets and JavaScript at the **bottom** of your Org-Mode file.

They must go at the bottom because the Google Closure Library does not support an on-DOM-ready event. See the Closure mailing list discussion for an explanation.

39.1 Warning About Hidden HeadlinesSLIDE

Stylesheets and JavaScript will **not** be loaded if the **last** headline in your Org-Mode file is hidden by any of:

- COMMENT at the start of the heading
- +COMMENT at the start of the line
- `:noexport: tag`, or missing `:export: tag`

See Comment lines and Selective export in the Org-Mode manual for details.

`org-html-head-include-scripts`

39.2 The EndSLIDE

Sometimes it's safest to add an "empty" heading at the end of your document to make sure the stylesheets and JavaScript are included.