# The path to developer happiness: Beyond PDF

Here are my notes from the lighting talk 'beyond PDF' at the developer happiness days. There's a video online – I haven't watched it but I imagine it's the usual incoherent ranting, apparently with added sound quality issues, not to mention a touch of jetlag.

The intention was to:

1. Explain the big issue: we're not realizing the potential of the web for eLearning and eResearch when lots of academic work is happening in anti-web systems like MS Office.
2. Demo the ICE system for a technical perspective to show developers how it might make them happy.
3. Rant about how technical people need to do more to help their academic communities. Why are we pissing around with twitter and building repository infrastructure while thousands of PhD candidates aren't using styles to structure their thesis?

Three slides:

## Beyond PDF?

The problem:

- HTML is only accessible to most people in toy-scale applications like blogs or small pages in learning system.
- Services like repositories and VLEs don't typically deal with word processing documents at all well.
- Word processor vendors largely gave up on HTML export years ago.
- But a large amount of academic content is still made in Word.

## What am I doing about it?

- Spent the past 13 years designing Word templates and associated infrastructure and handing them out to the needy.
- Spend a lot of time trying to get large companies to care about the web for their word processing users. In the last year I have talked to Microsoft, Google, Adobe & Sun. Guess which one is the most open to discussion, use the comments.
- Trying to help with other open source projects like Zotero OJS and OpenOffice.org.
- Now working with PhD candidates to help them change scholarly publishing from the ground up.
- What are you doing?

(I know David Flanders is doing stuff with Google Docs)

## Some demos

- The ICE toolbar, Surreptitiously doing the right thing.
- Rapid feedback systems. Type in the word processor / refresh in the browser.
- Lots of integration points – push to LMS, blogs and repositories.
- Web services for conversion. (RESTish but not formally RESTful enough – we'd better work on that.)
- Points to cover: embedded semantics (chem, geo), generic structure,