Building your own HTML poster

A tutorial on using this template to make your own posters

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Abstract

Academic posters are usually designed using presentation software and distributed as images or PDFs.

While PDFs are fine for printing posters, they are not particularly user-friendly: they are hard to read on small screens, don't support resizing text or increasing contrast, and often don't work nicely with screen readers.

The recent shift to online conferences is a great opportunity to reconsider our poster-making tools, and it turns out that plain HTML5 + CSS works pretty well for making (more) accessible posters.

This template is released under a permissive license: all we ask if you use it for your own posters is that you leave a one-line comment in the HTML sources.

Using this template

There are two ways to use this template: directly editing the HTML, and using Jinja2 templates.

Editing the HTML directly

This is the simplest way to get started, since it just requires a text editor:

1. Download the latest release of this template (or download the webpage and the corresponding stylesheet directly from the repository).
2. Adjust the metadata and add blocks to the `main` section.

Using Python and Jinja2

The poster is a Jinja2 template, so you can inherit from it and fill in the relevant fields and the contents.

1. Clone the GitHub repository.
2. Create your own jinja2 template, starting from this tutorial.
3. Create a new conda environment using the provided yml file. `conda env create -f ./environment.yml`
4. Enable the the environment `conda activate poster`
5. Use the make file system to build your poster. `make clean && make all`

The results will be a poster.html which you can view in your browser, a poster.png and a poster.pdf that you can submit.

The template for this tutorial includes documentation for each variable and block.

Poster layout

Posters made using this template are composed of a sequence of blocks. You can use CSS to customize the way the blocks are designed; by default they scroll left to right on wide screens and top to bottom on narrow screens.

Try resizing your browser to see how the poster's layout changes.

Block template

Each block has the following structure (fill in the italicized parts):

```
<article>
  <header><h3>Block title</h3></header>

  Block contents:
    paragraphs (<p>),
    figures (<figure>),
    lists (<ul>, <ol>),
    images (<img>, <object>),
    tables (<table>), …
</article>
```

Structural markup

The following markup is useful to structure content blocks:

- `<p>` Paragraphs `</p>`
- `<ul>`
  - `<li>…</li>`

  `</ul>` (Plain lists)
- `<ol>`
  1. `<li>…</li>`

  `</ol>` (Numbered lists)
- `<b>` **Call-outs (*alerts*)** `</b>`

Inline markup

- `<a href="url">` Links `</a>`
- `<em>` *Emphasized text* `</em>`
- `<strong>` **Important text** `</strong>`
- `<i>` *Scientific terms, foreign words* `</i>`
- `<var>` *Math variables, placeholders* `</var>`

Not sure which one to use? Check out Mozilla's explanations. Using appropriate markup helps screen readers a lot.

Figures

Use the following code to insert a figure:

```
<figure>
  Figure contents:
    images (<img>, <object>),
    tables (<table>),
    quotes, …
  <figcaption>Figure caption</figcaption>
</figure>
```

The HTML5 logo (*Source: W3C*)