

Forrest Publishing Framework

by

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1. Why XML and Forrest?

XML is just structured, tagged text standard. It allows human and computer readable documents to be created. In fact, humans find XML difficult to read because of all the tags and so do computers, they would much prefer a nice compact binary format. However, like in any marriage a compromise is better than a divorce, and this is where XML comes in. Bring along XSL, which are instructions on how to process the XML documents - themselves in XML, XSLT - the processors that churns through XML files and applies XSL transformations and you get kids. And just like kids, they can turn out very differently e.g. HTML or PDF docs, SVG graphics and so on.

So why XML? Answer is simple, you want to separate content, like the actual text of this document, from its presentation, be that HTML, PDF or something else. From one source document I can generate different output formats, change on the fly the output look and feel, combine multiple source and generally do what I fell like. XML allows us to de-couple ourselves from tools like MS Word and their clumsy templates etc. and worry about presentation later. This way you get the a writer to write the content, an artist or designer to determine the look and feel, and an engineer to bring it all together and produce the final output.

Best news - most of this cool stuff can be done using Forrest!