
TUG 2022 conference report

Jim Hefferon

The TUG 2022 conference ran from July 21–24 (dates are for the Eastern US). As in the prior two years it was conducted online, over Zoom. The conference was completely free to participants, as well as to anyone watching the parallel YouTube live feed.

There were 232 registered attendees. While the largest number were from North America, there were also significant numbers from Europe, Asia, and Australia & Oceania, and in total there were representatives from six of the seven continents. The YouTube feed also had a steady list of watchers.

The first day was given over to L^AT_EX workshops, one each in French, English, and Spanish. The videos of these are already popular.

The remainder of the conference, from July 22 to July 24, consisted of forty three presentations along with a conference opening, a closing, and the TUG Annual General Meeting. The full schedule is at tug.org/tug2022/program.html. As in the prior online versions of the conference, the talks ran on a 24-hour rotating schedule so that the times could be reasonably convenient for the presenters. To the extent that it was practical, talks were grouped into sessions by topic. The result is that, as with the past two years, we were treated to a fascinating mix of talks by speakers both from within and outside of the T_EX community.

There were three keynotes: David Blakesley spoke on *The residual concepts of production vs. the emergent cultures of distribution in publishing*, Carlos Evia spoke on *The future of technical documentation starts with its recent past*, and Peter K. G. Williams spoke on *The Tectonic Project: Envisioning a 21st century T_EX experience*. There were live interviews with Boris Veytsman, current TUG President, and with John Lees-Miller, the CTO of Overleaf. In addition, Computer History Museum senior curator Dag Spicer took us on a tour through computing history starting with the Antikythera Mechanism.

There were a number of themes to the contributions. Rather than trying to be comprehensive, I will mention only two topics that continue from prior years and have proved to be of special interest: talks that describe and expand on recent changes either in the L^AT_EX kernel or in the underlying T_EX engines, and those addressing accessibility.

Once the talk videos have been processed, including editing and adding a transcription for closed caption, they will be posted on the TUG YouTube channel at youtube.com/c/texusersgroup.

The Annual General Meeting was on July 23. President Boris Veytsman made some remarks and Secretary Klaus H^oppner gave a presentation summarizing the events of the organization's prior year. After a little discussion from the floor, the meeting adjourned. Note that for confidentiality reasons this meeting is not recorded and so will not be available on YouTube. The minutes from the AGM are in this issue of *TUGboat*.

Organizing the conference is a huge job and volunteers did amazing work. The core group of the conference committee, Paulo Ney de Souza, J^er^emy Just, Ross Moore, and Norbert Preining gave their time and energy for running the Zoom sessions and handling the very many details, and are now engaged in post-processing of the videos. In addition, Karl Berry and Jennifer Claudio provided support, along with the entire Board, the President, and Executive Director Robin Laakso. The T_EX Users Group gratefully acknowledges the Zoom link provided by the University of Adelaide through Will Robertson's efforts. They were a conference sponsor and TUG is also grateful for sponsorship from Carleton Production Centre (Ottawa), DANTE e.V., Google, Overleaf, speedata, STM Document Engineering Pvt Ltd, and individual donors.

The fact that having so many people participating in the conference is great for T_EX and friends, as well as great for those participants, has not escaped the conference organizers or the TUG Board. When we return to in-person conferences in the future they likely will include some kind of online component.

However, no operation of this scale is without hiccups. There were fewer registrants this year than last year, which may have been because of less advertising on social media. Zoom instituted a change making it harder for viewers to comment or ask questions, reducing the role of the conference as a place to interact. Although organizers quickly responded by adding links to the communication and media platforms Wonder.me and Zulip, in the future such links should be there at the start. And, although the instructions to authors mentioned the potential problems with including copyrighted material in the presentation, it was not prominent enough and consequently the first day's video immediately got a takedown notice (since rectified).

In summary, there were many talks, of excellent quality. There were many participants, many who might not have the chance to attend in person. Overall the conference was a great success.

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