

## Just What is XML Anyway?

XML is an acronym for *eXtensible Markup Language*. Like its predecessor Hyper Text Markup Language, or HTML, it has its root in a standard known as the *Standard Generalized Markup Language*, or SGML. To understand why we need XML, let's take a look at both SGML and HTML. Understanding their respective strengths and weaknesses will shed some light on why XML exists and why it is gaining such strong momentum.