

Documentation for the HTML+ XTND Translator

HTML+ XTND Translator (version 1.0a1)

Description

HTML+ is an XTND Translator (export only, currently) that allows you to use your favorite word processor (ClarisWorks, NisusWriter, etc.) that supports XTND export to create your HTML documents (eg. web pages). By using standard styling in your document and then exporting, you get somewhat WYSIWYG editing of HTML.

I say somewhat since every browser is different and so there is no real way to get try WYSIWYG - but this isn't bad!!

How It Works

The way that the HTML+ XTND (hereafter referred to simply as "the translator") knows what HTML tags to apply to your text during the export process is by looking at its formatting. Fonts, sizes, styles (faces) and colors are all used to help. The translator is also smart enough to convert special HTML characters (like <, >, and &) as well as international or special characters (like å, é, ©, and ™) to their HTML equivalents.

However, there are limitations in what can be done from within an XTND translator. In order to provide better looking output, there is also an application called XTNDPostProcess included. This application will take the output from the XTND and do a bit of massaging on it to improve the final look. It will also use the clip2gif application to convert any pictures from your document into gif format.

Formatting Your Document

Title

A required part of an HTML document is the document's title, which will be the window title (and recent list name) of your document when viewed. You give your document a title by creating a new header and placing the text of your title there.

Author Address

Another required part of an HTML document is the address of the author who created it. This is usually found as the last thing in a document, and so we use the footer of a document to contain that info. Just create a new footer and place your contact info (name, EMail and optionally snail mail address) there.

Paragraphs & Line Breaks

You should write your at 12 point, which is considered to be the "base" style for a document. Currently all paragraphs will end with a
 (line break) tag, the postprocessor will serve to convert two consecutive
's into a <P> (paragraph). This will be improved in future versions. If you wish to use a line break instead, you should use a "hard return" in your document or insert it directly via the
 tag (see the Styles section on how to do this!)

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Headers

Headers (levels 1 through 4) are specified by size:

24 point = Header 1

20 point = Header 2

18 point = Header 3

14 point = Header 4

Styles

Just like in normal documents, you can use styles to catch the readers attention. In HTML there are two types of styles – logical & physical. Logical styles are the default mode for the translator to export in since they imply a concept in formatting (strong, emphasis, etc), but you can force the translator to use the physical style (bold, italic) by also making your text condensed.

Bold = Strong

Italic = Citation

Underline = Emphasis

There is also one other style that is special – Outline. It is used to tell the translator to ignore a block of text such as when you want to put your own personalized HTML code into a document.

Lists

HTML supports various list types such as:

Unordered

a bulleted list of items in no particular order

Ordered

a numbered list, usually used to specify steps in a procedure

Definition

this type of list consisting of a term & its definition

Menu

a list of items representing a menu from which the user may pick.

Directory

usually a multi-column list representing the contents of a directory/folder

The colors and their list types are:

red = unordered

blue = ordered

green = definition

cyan = menu

magenta = directory

Pictures

Any picture in a document is exported into it's own PICT file who name is "<docname>.pict.#".

<docname> is the name of the file you are exporting & # is an incrementing number (1, 2...)

Date & Time

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The use of Date & Time "tokens" (those special characters or references to the current date & time) contained in your documents are recognized and resolved. This is a great way to keep track of document versioning by putting this info into your document (either at the beginning or end).

Horizontal Rules

You can add a horizontal rule (<HR>) to your document by putting at least 3 '-'s on a line by themselves. For example:

Technical Notes

The actual HTML tags are stored in STR# 128, so that if you use want to use a variant of one (such as <HR SIZE=3>, or prefer to use for italic and <U> for underline) you can edit them!

Also, the international character mapping table (ie. å -> å) is stored in STR# 129. Each index represents the character's ASCII value and the contents are what the translator outputs, so you can add/modify/delete any mappings you wish. I believe that the current table is pretty complete for standard mappings as it is based on the RFT2HTML documentation & source.

If you want to have the resultant HTML file have a different creator other than BBEdit, you can modify the 'FTYP' resource and change it - a TMPL is included.

What's the Cost?

I have spent a lot of time on this project, which my fiance is not all too happy about since she'd rather I spent it with her ;). So if you want to help bring some piece back into our house, a contribution towards our wedding (it's will be in Aug. if you're interested) would be appreciated.

Send the \$\$ to:

Leonard & Michelle's Wedding Fund
41 Grandview St. #203
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

Please send any comments or suggestions for the HTML+ XTND translator, to me at leonardr@netcom.com.

Thanks To:

I couldn't have done this without help from my fearless testers, many who risked life, limb and their home pages to test out development versions of this XTND. Some of them went beyond the call of duty and so my thanks to:

Adam and Tonya Engst for also giving it a beating on Tidbits documents

Jon Wiederspan for hassling me about the details of proper HTML formatting

Jan-Erik Mostrom for banging out problems in early versions and picking on me about international character support.

Nigel Perry for writing up preliminary documentation & providing NisusWriter Macros

Aleks Totic for telling me why Netscape didn't do the things I asked it to (and then promising to fix them in future versions!)

Yves Piguet for allowing me to include his wonderful clip2gif utility so that I didn't have to write that code myself ;)

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