Welcome to \LaTeX\ News 2

An issue of \LaTeX\ News will accompany every future release of \LaTeX. It will tell you about important events, such as major bug fixes, newly available packages, or any other \LaTeX\ news.

December 1994 release of \LaTeX

December 1994 sees the second release of \LaTeX\ 2\epsilon. We are on schedule to deliver a release of \LaTeX\ every six months, in December and June.

This release has seen quite a lot of activity, which is not too surprising as it’s only been a year since the first test release of \LaTeX\ 2\epsilon. We don’t expect so much activity in the next six months.

Many of the changes are minor improvements and bug-fixes—see \LaTeX\ 2\epsilon for authors (usrguide.tex), \LaTeX\ 2\epsilon font selection (fntguide.tex) and our change log (changes.txt) for more details.

However, there are two important new packages available for \LaTeX: inputenc and AMS-\LaTeX.

Accented input

One of the problems with writing non-English documents in \LaTeX\ is the accent commands. Reading documents containing text like na"ive is frustrating, especially if your keyboard allows you to type na"ive.

In the past, \LaTeX\ has not supported input containing accented characters such as \textbackslash i, because Windows, Macintosh and Unix all have different ways of dealing with accented input, called \textit{input encodings}.

However, the \texttt{inputenc} package allows you to specify which input encoding your document is written with, for example to use the ISO Latin-1 encoding, you type:

\begin{verbatim}
\usepackage[latin1]{inputenc}
\end{verbatim}

At the moment, \texttt{inputenc} supports the \texttt{ascii} and \texttt{latin1} input encodings, but more will be added with future releases.

The \texttt{inputenc} package is currently a test release. The user interface for the full release will be upwardly compatible with the test version.

AMS-\LaTeX

AMS-\LaTeX\ is a set of miscellaneous extensions for \LaTeX\ distributed by the American Mathematical Society. They provide superior information structure and superior printed output for mathematical documents.

There are far too many features of AMS-\LaTeX\ to list here. AMS-\LaTeX\ is described in the accompanying documentation, and in \textit{The \LaTeX\ Companion}.

Version 1.2beta of AMS-\LaTeX\ was released for testing by intrepid users in October 1994. The full release of AMS-\LaTeX\ 1.2 is expected in early January 1995.

It will be divided into two bundles:

\begin{itemize}
  \item the \texttt{amsfonts} packages, which give access to hundreds of new mathematical symbols, and new math fonts such as blackboard bold and fraktur.
  \item the \texttt{amsmath} packages, which provide finer control over mathematical typesetting, such as multi-line subscripts, enhanced theorem and proof environments, and improved displayed equations,
\end{itemize}

For compatibility with older documents, an \texttt{amstex} package will be provided.

\LaTeX\ on the internet

\LaTeX\ has its own home page on the World Wide Web, with the URL:

\begin{verbatim}
http://www.tex.ac.uk/CTAN/latex/
\end{verbatim}

This page describes \LaTeX\ and the \LaTeX\3 project, and contains pointers to other \LaTeX\ resources, such as the user guides, the \TeX\ Frequently Asked Questions, and the \LaTeX\ bugs database.

The electronic home of anything \TeX-related is the Comprehensive \TeX\ Archive Network (CTAN). This is a network of cooperating ftp sites, with over a gigabyte of \TeX\ material:

\begin{verbatim}
ftp://ftp.tex.ac.uk/tex-archive/
ftp://ftp.shsu.edu/tex-archive/
ftp://ftp.dante.de/tex-archive/
\end{verbatim}

For more information, see the \LaTeX\ home page.

Further information

For more information on \TeX\ and \LaTeX, get in touch with your local \TeX\ Users Group, or the international \TeX\ Users Group, P. O. Box 869, Santa Barbara, CA 93102-0869, USA, Fax: +1 805 963 8358, EMail: tug@tug.org.