

Positioning Paper: A W3C Workshop on The Reality Gap

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Statement of Interest

Adam Hyde has been involved in publishing for 7 years since founding FLOSS Manuals in 2006. Since then he has developed the Book Sprint methodology for producing books collaboratively in 3-5 days. These are intense, strongly facilitated collaborative exercises where all production takes place in the browser and outputs are also generated with 100% web technologies. Central to this process are a number of book production tools, all open source and standards based, and leveraging HTML as the base file format and JS and Webkit as rendering technologies.

The Position

Book production is already completely possible using technologies that utilise only open web standards. The myth is that this is not possible and it is largely based on legacy culture that refuses to overcome bias towards HTML as a base file format and do not understand the considerable power the browser offers as a rendering engine. The creation of book formatted PDF which shares a one to one correlation with content as displayed in epub readers and the browsers is already possible as are a myriad of technologies that leverage JS, CSS and HTML to do everything you need in book production from text creation to design to book creation for paper *and* electronic content.

The technology exists but few people understand this – creating a reality gap. Statements from major players such as the W3C such as “Web-based content tools are getting more sophisticated, but there's no revision control or commenting, no change tracking, and no crash recover” and “HTML and CSS incomplete when compared to XML and XSL-FO” are simply untrue but commonly made none-the-less. There are a multitude of technologies that do all you need to produce books in the browser.

Adam will present a number of technologies, all open source, that will close this reality gap.

Participant's Interest

Anyone involved in the web that wishes to know about existing book production technologies and strategies using 100% open source and standards based web technologies that fulfill the entire book production workflow. There are many technologies available and this workshop is aimed at anyone that would like a comprehensive overview of the tools available and how they approach many of the

current and emerging issues in online book production.