

dbslide - DocBook presentations in a web browser

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Objective

Computer-based presentations gain popularity in meetings and fairs. A certain product from a Redmont, WA based company has a huge marketshare, which is not good for these reasons:

- The said product is neither free nor Free
- The said product is not portable to other platforms but M\$ Windows

dbslide offers a simple alternative, which may be sufficient for many but the most sophisticated presentations.

Key features of dbslide

Features

- dbslide is a SGML application using the DocBook DTD
- dbslide is implemented as driver files for Norman Walsh's modular DocBook stylesheets plus some helper files
- The appearance can be customized in all output formats

Applications

- Computer presentations
- Overhead presentations
- Slide presentations

Components of dbslide

`dbslide.dsl`

A driver file for the HTML output of the modular DocBook stylesheets. It implements experimental JavaScript/JScript code to assist the keyboard- and mouse-based navigation in the presentation.

`dbslideovh.dsl`

A driver file for the print output of the modular DocBook stylesheets. It implements large fonts for the output of conventional overhead sheets.

`dbslidehdout.dsl`

A driver file for the print output. Used for the handouts and the speaker's copy

`fixdbslide`

A helper shell script to fix the JavaScript/JScript code generated by (Open)Jade

`dbslide.css`

A cascading stylesheet which implements large fonts for projection purposes.

Output formats

dbslide uses three DSSSL stylesheets to generate the different output formats from the SGML source.

output	stylesheet
screen presentation	dbslide.dsl
overheads/slides	dbslideovh.dsl
handout	dbslidehdout.dsl
speaker's copy	dbslidehdout.dsl

The dbslide screen presentation I

Keyboard

Compatibility: MSIE, Netscape (not Unix)

Return, space, n (as in *next*)

Moves on to the next slide

Backspace (only Netscape), **p** (as in *previous*), **b** (as in *back*)

Moves back to the previous slide

h (as in *home*)

Goes back to the start page.

The dbslide screen presentation II

Mouse

Compatibility: MSIE, Netscape

Left click \geq 200 pixel from the left margin

Moves on to the next slide

Left click $<$ 200 pixel from the left margin

Moves back to the previous slide

Left click and Alt key

Goes back to the start page

Why does dbslide use DocBook?

1. DocBook is an acknowledged industry standard for technical documentations.
2. DocBook is platform-independent. Therefore
 - Create the presentation with any text editor
 - Show the presentation on any platform with a browser
 - Make hotfixes to your presentation minutes before you start - on any platform, with any editor
3. Use all those nifty SGML tricks to process your document:
 - Use the dbslide stylesheets for the presentation and for slides/overheads
 - Use the DocBook print stylesheets for the handouts
 - Use marked sections for the presenters comments

Limitations

dbslide is a quick hack, so it has its very own limitations:

- The CSS is not fully implemented, so many elements are displayed using default settings.
- The DSSSL files are kludgy, e.g. they lack simple user-customization.

dbslide presentations are also limited by browser capabilities:

- JavaScript navigation is somewhat unreliable on Netscape ("press and pray")
- JavaScript keyboard navigation fails in Netscape on Unix

Document processing

Unix/Linux

- Get or compile Jade (<http://www.jclark.com/jade/>)/OpenJade (<http://sourceforge.net/projects/openjade/>)
- Use Emacs (<http://www.gnu.org>) and PSGML (<ftp://ftp.lysator.liu.se/pub/sgml/psgml-1.2.1.tar.gz>) to edit the documents

Win32

A complete suite of free SGML tools for Win32 is described at SGML for Windows NT (http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/hoenicka_markus/ntsgml.html)

**SG
ML^{NT}**

Summary

- dbslide is a package to create computer presentations or slides/overheads
- dbslide is based on DocBook
- dbslide is fully customizable
- dbslide presentations can be written and run on any platform with a text editor and a web browser
- dbslide is free (as in free beer and in Free speech)

