MMDS

Introducing MMDS
What is MMDS

- MMDS is a software tool to transform text documents into some other form.
- In particular, it transforms plain text documents into nicely typeset printable documents.
- It uses the best typesetter there is: \LaTeX.
- It can produce HTML (and several other formats) as well.
- Wait a minute... Aren’t there a plethora of tools that do exactly that already?
Well, not quite

- Most plain text to nice formatted tools work by means of inserting markup commands in the plain text.

```html
<h1>Plain text to HTML</h1>
<ul>
  <li><p>Easy to use text.</p></li>
  <li><p>Easy to use an &euml;.</p></li>
</ul>
```

```latex
\begin{document}
\section{Plain text to \LaTeX}
Easy to use text.\par
Easy to use an \"e\par
\end{document}
```
MMDS is different

- MMDS tries to do its job with a minimal amount of user supplied markup.
- MMDS stands for: Minimal Markup Document System.
- It tries to infer from the user supplied text how it should be formatted.
- And yes, sometimes some markup is required for special effects.
An example of MMDS input

Title: Example of MMDS input
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1. Using MMDS

Using MMDS is quite simple. Just type the input text using your favourite editor and make it look like it should.

* Type text straightforward
* Enumerations are simple as well

How does the output of this look?
Example of MMDG input

1. USING MMDG
   Using MMDG is quite simple. Just type the input text using your favourite editor and make it look like it should.
   • Type text straightforward
   • Enumerations are simple as well

   How does the output of this look?
Characteristics

- Basic input format is plain text. Input plugins can be supplied for different input formats (XML, POD, ...).

- Output is generated by output plugins. Plugins are provided for \( \LaTeX \), HTML and Text.

- Plugins for RTF and OpenOffice are under development.

- A driver program conveniently takes care of higher level conversions, like Text -> PostScript or PDF.

- By defaults it produces PostScript and sends it to your system printer.

- It can also be used to preview any of the results.
It’s Real!

- MMDS is not vaporware. It exists. It works. It is in use at several sites.
- It is a revamped version of the Squirrel Document System, developed during 1991-1994 for Multihouse Automatisering in Gouda.
- The first parts were written in Perl 3 (1991), the rest in Perl 4 (1992 and later).
- It stopped working with Perl 5.
- I accidentally made use of a Perl 4 bug that got fixed in Perl 5.
Current status

• It is used for notes, reports, meeting reports, offerings, and letters. And invoices. And presentations.

• But it is also used to typeset complete books, including graphics, table of contents, and index.
Package Overview

Outdated!
And next?

• MMDS will be made available for testing real soon.
• It will probably be located on SourceForge.
• With regular releases also on CPAN.