

README for the NICETEXT bundle

Minimal Markup for Documenting, Text Filtering, ...

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== General Idea ==

The NICETEXT bundle supports "minimal" markup syntax for rather simple kinds of text. The code you type should show little more characters than are printed, though you get LaTeX quality. We try to do away with backslashes, technical terms, and curly braces (clumsy to type ... - "syntactic sugar").

Main focus is easy documentation of LaTeX packages. Preprocessing by Perl or so is replaced by TeX macros (reviving/generalizing the 'docstrip' idea), including expandable, safe, correct string substitution and typographical enhancements of plain text for LaTeX input.

== Packages ==

'wiki.sty' addresses general kinds of texts. 'niceverb.sty' is made for documenting LaTeX packages. 'niceverb.sty' especially offers [almost-]WYSIWIG for meta-variables (macro arguments) and for referring to commands (and their syntax) in footnotes, section titles etc. E.g., to get the syntax description

```

\foo[<opt-arg>]{<mand-arg>}
you just type
\foo[<opt-arg>]{<mand-arg>}
!-)
```

'fifinddo.sty' provides basic setup for text filtering, especially string substitution. 'makedoc.sty' extends it to provide a simple script language for transforming plain text package files into LaTeX input files [manual!?!]. One LaTeX run can perform preprocessing and typesetting.

== Comparisons ==

One source of inspiration is the markup syntax of editing Wikipedia pages. 'wiki.sty' of the bundle offers something similar as a LaTeX front-end for italics, boldface, sectioning, and certain list-like environments. This is also similar to 'easytex',

<http://www.ctan.org/pkg/easytex>

which is more powerful and uses Perl. NICETEX, by contrast, consists just of LaTeX packages, working on any TeX installation [!? note restrictions in 'fifinddo.pdf']. Cf. also preprocessor packages 'txt2tex' and 'txt2latex'.

Regarding "self-documentation," there is a difference to current '\DocInput', similar ideas are in 'gmdoc' and 'lineno.sty', see 'niceverb.pdf' and 'makedoc.pdf'. Standard 'doc.sty' and 'contrib' extensions of it are rather avoided.

There are several *LaTeX macro* packages for processing text or databases or for editing TeX's input stream while typesetting -- see 'fifinddo.pdf'. What seems to be new here is *expandable string substitution* and safe, correct detection of substrings -- discussed in 'fifinddo.pdf'.

== Documentation ==

'fifinddo.pdf' describes 'fifinddo.sty', typeset from 'fifinddo.tex'. 'makedoc.pdf' describes 'makedoc.sty', typeset from 'makedoc.tex'. 'mdoccheat.pdf' is a list of script commands, typeset from 'mdocchea.tex'. 'niceverb.pdf' describes 'niceverb.sty', typeset from 'niceverb.tex'. Typesetting them anew (for customizing printout) requires 'makedoc.cfg', 'mdoccorr.cfg', and the *.sty files.

'wikicheat.pdf' is a one-page manual of 'wiki.sty'. The file 'wiki.sty' contains additional documentation as plain text. Note that certain features must be activated by commands in the document environment.

== Templates/Dialogue ==

txt to TeX functionality through \MakeDocCorrectHook can be tried and applied with templates 'fdtxttex.tpl' and 'makedoc.tpl' and in a dialogue started by running 'fdtxttex.tex'. Running 'copyfile.tex', you get a dialogue for "compressing" blank lines or text encoding conversion.

'substr.tex' should typeset the version of Harald Harders' 'substr.sty' next at your TeX installation. 'arseneau.tex' should typeset documentation of a few packages by Donald Arseneau. MY results are 'substr.pdf' and 'arseneau.pdf'.

== License ==

Copying, distributing, modifying, using the files of the 'nicetext' bundle are allowed under the terms of the LaTeX Project Public License, either version 1.3a or any later version, the latest version is at

<http://www.latex-project.org/lppl.txt>

There is NO WARRANTY, and you must CARE indeed with 'fifinddo' and 'makedoc', they will OVERWRITE existing files without warning (because their main purpose is updating).

The bundle is AUTHOR-MAINTAINED in the sense of the LPPL.

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Please report bugs, problems, and suggestions via the previous web form.

== Installing/Required ==

'makedoc.sty' requires the 'moreverb' package from

CTAN:/macros/latex/contrib/moreverb

You find the latest public version of the NICETEXT bundle at

<http://mirror.ctan.org/macros/latex/contrib/nicetext/>

A TDS version 'nicetext.tds.zip' is available at

<http://mirror.ctan.org/install/macros/latex/contrib/>

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