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New Electronic Book Format: EPUB3 Available

posted by Bytes on Monday April 22, 2019, @02:00AM

Appendicitis writes:

Journal Between Editions EPUB has reached a technical dead end

Unfortunately is aggressive in not supporting the EPUB3 specification through a trivial app, and it is impossible to strip an EPUB book and make it readable inside a Web browser even with graceful degradation.

The EPUB3 specification has been finalized since October 2011 and EPUB2 in January 2011. EPUB continues to diverge from web standards.

The EPUB3 specification has been revised because it is far easily and complex for the robots industry to adopt.

Mr. Glassman's solution? The Webbook format. From the announcement:

Webs then decided to develop a different format for electronic books, called Webbook, a format strictly based on Web technologies and where I say Web technologies I mean the most basic ones: HTML, JavaScript, SVG and friends; the class of specifications at Web Standards Project, in fact. Webs had, but did not decide or even intend, the proposal is still a work in progress at this point, but I believe I nailed it.

I have started from a list of requirements, something that was never done that way in the EPUB world:

- the URL is enough to retrieve a remote Webbook instance, there is no need to download every resource composing that instance
- the contents of a Webbook instance can be placed inside a Web site's directory and are directly readable by a Web browser using the URL
- the contents of a Webbook instance can be placed inside a zip archive and are directly readable by a Web browser opening its index.html or index.xhtml instead file
- the Webbook specification must be a Web resource, on a Web site or on a local disk, is directly readable by a Web browser
- any linked document can be stored in a Webbook instance, including other Webbook instances, and navigation must work
- the Webbook specification must be a Web resource, it must be readable by a Web browser, it must be machine-processable, and it can be used inside the navigation document or the content documents of a Webbook instance, without restriction
- the Webbook specification must be extensible, extensions must be documented, and documented in the same way as the core specification
- the metadata, which is contained in a machine-processable file in a Webbook instance, must be readable and defined by any linked other **The Webbook specification is backwards-compatible**
- **Webs** will not be a standard, it will remain a proposal, the potential cost of grassroots deployment of some standard
- Webbook instances can be converted to and from EPUB3 instances that MUST ignore
- **It's possible to deliver electronic books in a form that is compatible with both Webbook and EPUB 3.0.1**

Webbook is compatible with EPUB 3.0.1 in a good way to start adoption. Now to see if Webbook catches on. The Official repository is here.

Original Submission

(1)

- **EPUB IS NOT Office!** - by Eliphant-Gabriel on Sunday April 22, 2:11:45PM (1 children)

  by Eliphant-Gabriel (2752) on Sunday April 22, @11:45PM (#879520) Homepage

  Not trolling anyone, then, plus jokes aside I'm not sure I understand what you are saying, nor why such dicky-bits. Prove your worth or eat a bag of donkey dicks.

- **EPUB IS NOT Office!** - by Sniffnoy on Monday April 23, 12:02:45AM (3 children)

  by Sniffnoy (4014) on Monday April 23, @12:02AM (#879524) Homepage

  Why exactly is EPUB "shit"? The most common argument I've seen against EPUB is DRM, but that's not in the EPUB spec. There are plenty of EPUB files available without DRM.

  - **EPUB IS NOT Office!** - by Anonymous Coward on Monday April 23, 0:05:17AM

    by Anonymous Coward on Monday April 23, @0:17AM (#879528)

    Why exactly is EPUB "shit"?

    Looking at who the OP is, I guess it is because it doesn't come with free alcohol. :)

  - **EPUB IS NOT Office!** - by Bobrekurwa Krzychem on Monday April 23, 0:06:45AM

    by Bobrekurwa (4770) on Monday April 23, @06:05AM (#879533)

    Not even worth setting any text, since there's a pro-made XKCD for this already. Link-o-rot.

- **Not bad on the cover!** - by Dr Pepper on Sunday April 22, 2:11:45PM (27 children)

  by Dr Pepper (1534) on Sunday April 22, @11:45PM (#879520) Homepage

  you trial document can be used as content document inside a Webbook instance, without restriction - **Webbook is backwards-compatible** - **It's possible to deliver electronic books in a form that is compatible with both Webbook and EPUB 3.0.1**

  And that's exactly why I don't want this mumbo-jibe.

  - [redacted] - by Anonymous Coward on Sunday April 22, 2:16:45PM

  - **That's really a problem if... (Scenario: 1) Inherently by Anonymous Coward on Sunday April 22, @11:50PM (6 children)**

    by Anonymous Coward on Sunday April 22, @11:50PM (#879522)

    ... you don't control operating device (at, at least, your network access).

    - **But That's really a problem if... (Scenario: 4) Inherently by hendriksen on Monday April 23, @12:05AM (5 children)**

      by hendriksen (1121) on Monday April 23, @12:05AM (#879525) Homepage

      Most remains are beyond the control. Their only control is that they are too stupid to be easily suborned by the likes of Google.

      Does anyone make a web tablets that *not* under the user's control? I'd love to use a Nokiblet Linux on one.

      - **But That's really a problem if... (Scenario: 3) Inherently by acrid64 on Monday April 23, @12:36AM (2 children)**

        by acrid64 (4 Subscriptions) on Monday April 23, @12:36AM (#879526) Homepage

        My Kindle e-reader will load local documents and can be accessed as a storage device via the USB cable. I get books from private authors, as well as free classical archives, in addition to the pedatory controlled kindle library.

        Sources such as Obooko https://www.obooko.com/ (obooko.com)
        Project Gutenberg https://www.gutenberg.org/ (gutenberg.org)
        Other sources (obtained from the Internet)

        Put the NSA / Exploiters, gous, anonymous, conspiracy, primes, dotcentaurs, imitators, man charge, nuclear charge

        - **But That's really a problem if... (Scenario: 2) by hendriksen on Monday April 23, @01:01AM (1 child)**

          by hendriksen (1121) on Monday April 23, @01:01AM (#879527) Homepage

          Same on my Kobo. I just pick apple's and gel's to send a USB cable.

          But I have no control over the software it runs.

          - **But That's really a problem if... (Scenario: 0) by Anonymous Coward on Monday April 23, @06:09AM**

            by Anonymous Coward on Monday April 23, @06:09AM (#879532)

            Sure you do.
            https://www.mobileread.com/forums/ext/ (mobileread.com)
            https://github.com/koreader/koreader (github.com)
            https://github.com/geekbooster (github.com)
            https://www.kobo.com/ca/en/p/free-books (kobo.com)
            https://www.kobo.com/ca/en/search?query=classics (searchquery.net)

            For the NSA / Exploiters, gous, anonymous, conspiracy, primes, dotcentaurs, imitators, man charge, nuclear charge

            - **But That's really a problem if... (Scenario: 2) by hendriksen on Monday April 23, @01:01AM (1 child)**

              by hendriksen (1121) on Monday April 23, @01:01AM (#879527) Homepage

              Interesting device. But I find it hard to get a clear idea from that advertising presentation just what I'd get if I were to buy one. Is it just a digital pad of paper? Is it a device to have software installed on it that could then send its contents to a computer via USB? Or does it actually have some programmability?

              Does it have a web browser? Can it run a local Linux stack? It makes wonder what the HDMI connection is for other than to be able to use it like a tablet.

              It talks about being compatible with a lot of operating systems, but I suspect those systems won't actually run on it.

              And it has a quad-core processor. But what quad-core processor. That kind of makes a difference.

              And what's battery life when it's used for just reading books?

  - **Not only you, but all too.** - by Anonymous Coward on Sunday April 22, 2:13:00AM (19 children)

    by The Mighty Buzzard on Monday April 23, @12:13AM (#879523) Homepage

    I wasn't baiting or a troll but until I saw the word "javascript", After that it can eat a bag of dicks, as can EPUB 3+. Thankfully, Calibre can solve all of my problems there.

    My preferred processes are webchat/bugzilla/irc/vim. Your mileage varies.

    - **Not only you, but too (Scenario: 2) by Appertition** on Monday April 23, @12:13AM (6 children)

      by Appertition (3872) on Monday April 23, @12:13AM (#879525)

      Hmmm, I'm not sure I understand your point. I'm a big Jared Glassman was a JavaScript programmer for Mozilla. If used sparingly, it shouldn't be a problem. My problem is that that is a big "if".

      - **Not only you, but too (Scenario: 4). Unjustified by RS3** on Monday April 23, @12:33AM

        by RS3 (6367) on Monday April 23, @12:33AM (#879534)

        I agree with you, but there are evidently a lot more morons in the world than there are sensible people, and unfortunately, I've called against javascript for 20 years, but the problem is not javascript. The problem is what the browser is willing to do, and what the OS allows it to do.

      - **Not only you, but too (Scenario: 3. Unjustified by The Mighty Buzzard** on Monday April 23, @12:37AM (4 children)

        by The Mighty Buzzard (4 Subscriptions) on Monday April 23, @12:37AM (#879535) Homepage

        Nope, not even then. The only thing about a book that needs to be interactive or change in any way during runtime is which page you're on and that's a function of the reader not the book. Even then, it's a function of the reader's OS not the book. I'm waiting for the steady-state OS to be ported over published. I'll pony up for a OS vendor-agnostic ebook reader if they ever do.

        My preferred processes are webchat/bugzilla/irc/vim. Your mileage varies.

        - **Not only you, but too (Scenario: 3. Unjustified by Erik4** on Monday April 23, @03:32AM (3 children)

          by Erik4 (5156) on Monday April 23, @03:32AM (#879537) Journal

          Which page you are reading, type, font, and font size.

          Everything else will be too for advertising and spyware. Even if you suppose no internet connection during reading, there will be one there sooner or later.

          This whole issue here is completely beyond what is needed for an e-reader.
          They are blurring functionality.

          I am thinking per ref or ma.

          - **Not only you, but too (Scenario: 3. Unjustified by Erik4** on Monday April 23, @03:40AM

            by anon2 (5261) on Monday April 23, @03:38AM (#879541)

            Well, I'm a big fan of the idea of using HTML as a reference manuals - interactive physics models, mathematical function graphs and so on - but I know it's going to be abused to bloat up the thing and make it cost more and sell more books cheaper so they can make even more money back through either selling access to pirated data or just selling it wholesale. I'm a big fan of the idea of using it for textbooks, but I know that's going to be abused to make students pay for it which is totally crap, but it's inevitable and could turn a broken OS into a disaster that could be overcome by a new, which I think is going to happen because Replicant is going.

            Still, if this ever ended up in practice, I guess there is going to be a good deal of interest in ebook converters that strip link based DRM and convert to a more open format, and I'm sure there's going to be a lot of people who are willing to pay a number of people here had enough of the all pressure use of ads and tracking on the web and will go to quite considerable lengths to block it. If Replicant ends up being a success, it's going to be effectively about the same stuff as ebooks then I suspect they're going to be disappointed.

            UNITY Day'm ne even circumcised! Savages

            - **Not only you, but too (Scenario: 3. Unjustified by anon2** on Monday April 23, @04:00AM

              by anon2 (5261) on Monday April 23, @03:58AM (#879542)

              As for what can be done, I see an argument for built in note-taking in ebooks. I write in the margins of (some) dead tree books, which shouldn't be the end of the world, but it's a pain in the arse if I want to find it again, and it doesn't scale well. I'd like to be able to read the notes of my previous iteration and edit them as I go. Sometimes I have insights the first time that I don't have the second time, and I'd like to be able to write them down and have them there the next time I read the book. Unfortunately, the author wants to be the only one who can write in it, and I know it's going to be abused to make people pay for it in different ways/times. I'm usually frustrated to hear not books I've written in, since the notes are further in replace than the book itself, and I'm sure that's going to be abused to make people pay for it. I'm also a big fan of the idea of being able to share those notes out as part of a group, but I know that's going to be abused to make people pay for it in different ways, whether it's some crap scheme or some similar visually distinct tagging, and I would like to be able to export and share my notes with other people, but I know that's going to be abused to make people pay for it in different ways/times. I'm a big fan of the idea of being able to read and I can't know about that for sure, but it is an interesting piece of a scenario that I can't see implementing with just HTML and JS.

              - **Not only you, but too (Scenario: 3. Unjustified by anon2** on Monday April 23, @07:00AM

                by anon2 (5261) on Monday April 23, @07:00AM (#879548)

                Forgot to add that I'm a big fan of the idea of being able to underlined way for an ebook reader to inject marked up comments into the source HTML/text/epub/mobi/pdf/whatever that otherwise the actual content (which could be plain text or rich HTML) is a sensor file, e.g something like:

                interactive: [interactive:comment:text:"Sensor text"]

                Alternatively, you could just have the annotations as a little offset in the sidecar file if you don't mind a little more overhead when you re-open the content to parse the annotations. Obviously, you could add a user ID tag or multiple people could share annotations, but I'm sure that's going to be abused to make people pay for it in different ways/times. Ideally, the annotations would be in a sidecar file it would be fairly straightforward to redistribute the ebook with or without the notes. All I know is that I'm sure that's going to be abused to make people pay for it in different ways/times. I'm also a big fan of machines/javascript/whatever parsing that flock. The only thing I can think of off the top of my head is that it would be fun if you manually shared the ebook without the sidecar file as it would then still have any inline annotation markup in place to the source, so an annotation supporting reader would need to be able to clean up or work around the orphaned annotation markup.

                UNITY Day'm ne even circumcised! Savages

      - **Not only you, but too (Scenario: 2. Patent) by Anonymous Coward on Monday April 23, @01:26AM (2 children)**

        by Anonymous Coward on Monday April 23, @01:26AM (#879529)

        My site is JavaScript only, personally to keep every and fragments like you out. It would be much well-behaved if you would, but I know it's not in your type.

        - **Strange. The binding is instead. Times. 1. Touch) by Anonymous Coward on Monday April 23, @02:22AM**

          by Anonymous Coward on Monday April 23, @02:22AM (#879539)

          Let's keep off each other's lawns.

        - **Not only you, but too (Scenario: 2) by captain normal** on Monday April 23, @04:23AM

          by captain normal (5) on Monday April 23, @04:23AM (#879543) Journal

          Yeah, .com, I'll let it all black background, with pink, green and blue text in varying fonts. With lots of flashing stars and cats, with mouvey hyperlinks underscored.

      - **Not only you, but too (Scenario: 3. Unjustified by Jasmin** on Monday April 23, @03:32AM

        by Jasmin (5156) on Monday April 23, @03:32AM (#879536)

        How else are they going to serve you advertisement and analysis with your book? How are they going to track your reading habits if they can't place a few tracking cookies in your browser?
        It doesn't really look like it's going to replace any paper books anytime soon if one asked me.

      - **Not only you, but too (Scenario: 3. Unjustified by Jasmin** on Monday April 23, @03:42AM (3 children)

        by Jasmin (5156) on Monday April 23, @03:42AM (#879538)

        Seriously. Can anyone explain why a book needs to be executable content? That really is the heart of the problem here, since it is executable content that allows the OS to be broken. Even if the OS is perfectly secure, it still allows the author to run a client application that is unique and unmodifiable and the only interface to a server.

        - **But not only, but but too. - Unjustified by Jasmin** on Monday April 23, @03:52AM

          by captain normal (5) on Monday April 23, @04:20AM (#879543)

          Really, all a book needs is JOT all the text in HTML.

        - **But not only, but but too (Scenario: 3. Interesting) by FatPhil** on Monday April 23, @04:45AM (2 children)

          by FatPhil (863) on Monday April 23, @04:45AM (#879544) Homepage

          Why is everyone pretending that PostScript doesn't exist?
          Why is everyone pretending that the problem is the APIs accessible to that executable content. If it's nothing more than laying out information on the page, then it's fine.

          The "free" in #Freedomfirst is the "free" in "free pizz"

          - **PostScript is Turing Complete. Try OpenXPS. (Scenario: 0) by Anonymous Coward on Monday April 23, @05:21AM**

            by Anonymous Coward on Monday April 23, @05:21AM (#879545)

            The Open XML Paper Specification (wikipedia.org) is probably what you want, my curvy reading supports it's simply a declarative page-layout language.

            Though it's an open standard, it was was developed by Microsoft, who seems to remain its main (though lukewarm) proponent. Shame, really.

        - **Not only you, but too (Scenario: 3). Jasmin** on Monday April 23, @04:08AM

          by Jasmin (5156) on Monday April 23, @04:08AM (#879540)

          When Postscript printers talked over serial ports it was safe enough to let them execute untrusted code. Basically just do a full reset to a known state before that application was run and you are good. Now that printers are on the network and have disks and an attacker can escape to your internal network.

          Postscript is Turing complete, but PDF/PDF/XPS/PDF/PDF/PDF

- **What's the point of CSS then? (Score: 0) by Anonymous Coward on Monday April 23, @04:31AM**

  by Anonymous Coward on Monday April 23, @06:35AM (#675812)

  Why does CSS offer measurements like "6in" for "6 inches" then? What's the point of that?

  The real problem is you fucken fake everything. The CSS half-wits thought it would make sense to re-define "pixel" as a viable measurement. I pixel is a "virtual" 96 PPI screen. Why? Because all the asstrisk, multiless user-experience "engineers" in the world built everything around it. Now, everything looks shitty on anything other than a 96 PPI screen. Why? Because all the asstrisk, multiless user-stupidity. I don't know. Well, that some fakeness and incompetence seeped into the base models of everything else in Web layout, such that the only same way for *most* people to deal with positioning and dimensioning elements is to use a Javascript library to do the calculations on the client side. Well, that and the fucken fakeness of something-just-old-but-I-just-want-go-climbing-and-hiking-and-post-to-facebook wonderkinds are responsible for calling up these clients.

  The problem is not as you describe it.

  The problem is that the "Jesus-look-alike-object" morons are in control of the foundations of our society's infrastructure. We need a reboot.

- **Solving the wrong problem. (Score: 4, Insightful) by Anonymous Coward on Monday April 23, @01:18AM**

  by Anonymous Coward on Monday April 23, @01:18AM (#675561)

  I don't know about any of you, but I use EPUB to read books.

  The last thing I want is web "features" in my reading material. Floating navigation, web bugs, google analytics, javascript, battery murdering DRM extensions.

- **Relevant xkcd (Score: 4, Interesting) by Kiko123 on Monday April 23, @01:23AM**

  by Kiko123 (2823) on Monday April 23, @01:23AM (#675562)

  https://xkcd.com/927/ [xkcd.com]

- **Thanks, but no thanks (Score: 2) by maxwell demon on Monday April 23, @04:02AM**

  by maxwell demon (1008) on Monday April 23, @06:02AM (#675803) Journal

  It's bad enough what the web has evolved into. Please don't evolve ebooks into the same.

  A format strictly based on Web technologies and when I say "Web technologies", I mean the most basic ones: html, CSS, Javascript, SVG and nothing more.

  No problem with HTML, CSS and SVG, but please, do not include Javascript.

  If you want the web browser be able to open ebooks, just implement EPUB in the browser.

  Also note:

  The EPUB 3.1 specification has been rescinded because it is too costly and complex for the eBook industry to adopt.

  And to help with this, you want to adopt an ever more complex standard?

  The Tao of math: The numbers you can count are not the real numbers.

- **In Soviet Russia (Score: 0) by Anonymous Coward on Monday April 23, @04:14AM**

  by Anonymous Coward on Monday April 23, @04:14AM (#675804)

  ebooks read you!

- **HTML isn't great, but... (Score: 2) by helpfulduo on Monday April 23, @06:07AM**

  by helpfulduo (4388) on Monday April 23, @06:07AM (#675820) Journal

  What I find annoyping about epub is that it is, basically, a subset of HTML, zipped. It's a zipped up web page. I mean, sure it's neat to not reinvent the wheel. But what does epub really do that HTML can't? Is collecting everything together is a zip file that big a deal? Why bother packaging a book in epub when the same thing can be done in HTML?

  Sure, there's room for lots of improvement in HTML, and by extension epub. This WebBook proposal is sort of halfway between epub and HTML, and addresses some of the pertinent improvements.

  A lot of improvements is, however, a good start. Most of these standards are developed without input and good reasons, just ad hoc messes, check full of hastily made arbitrary decisions.

My pants just went to high school in the Carlsbad Caverns!!!