

FLYING OVER A CONFERENCE – AN OVERVIEW OF ELPUB2003 TECHNICAL TRACK ARTICLES

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For dealing with a large variety of issues in electronic publishing, the ICCC/IFIP International Conference on Electronic Publishing (Elpub) conference series has traditionally a large scope. The technical track in Elpub2003 issues, in particular, range from user interface considerations until machine learning, covering fields such as metadata, multimedia or mobile computing. This article makes an overview the main contributions of Elpub2003 technical track accepted articles.

Keywords: Elpub2003, technical track, overview.

INTRODUCTION

The ICCC/IFIP International Conference on Electronic Publishing (Elpub) is a large scope conference that traditionally includes people from very different communities. These range from the social scientists, lawyers and librarians to the software engineers and computer scientists. Such a wide group of participants find Elpub conferences as a meeting point to exchange experiences and knowledge, by providing a solid platform for bridging gaps between their communities.

Due to this large scope of participants, Elpub has two tracks running simultaneously: the general track (GT) and the technical track (TT). This article intends to present an overview of the Elpub2003's TT articles. Because deadlines were too tight and also because some authors were delayed in sending the final version of the article, only a very preliminary analysis is possible.

Articles also cover a very wide area, ranging from user interface considerations to machine learning algorithms and covering topics like multimedia, metadata and mobile computing. Therefore, this paper separates Elpub2003 authors' contributions in two separate lines: 1) tools and technologies and 2) application scenarios.

TOOLS AND TECHNOLOGIES

This section intends to provide an overview of the technologies mentioned in Elpub2003 technical track papers. First of all, XML is the common denominator to almost all of these articles. In fact 16 out of 21 specifically mention the word "XML" and talk about its usage in the specific context of the work addressed in that article (see figure 1). A great part of the technologies referred herein are (or may be) XML related. In fact, 15 out of 21 articles refer the usage of other XML related technologies (see figure 2). However not all the articles that use XML-related technologies specifically use the word "XML". The overall numbers are shown in figure 3.

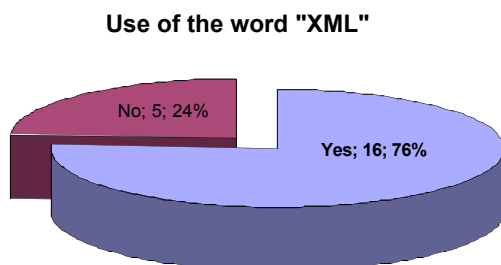


FIGURE 1 – NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF ARTICLES THAT SPECIFICALLY USE THE WORD “XML”.

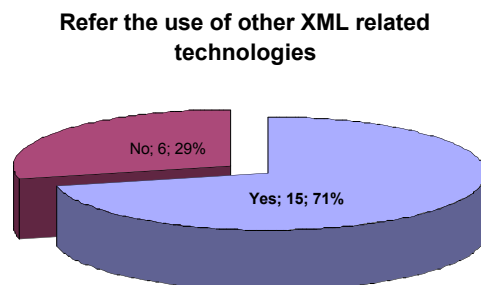


FIGURE 2 – NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF ARTICLES THAT REFER THE USAGE OF OTHER XML-RELATED TECHNOLOGIES

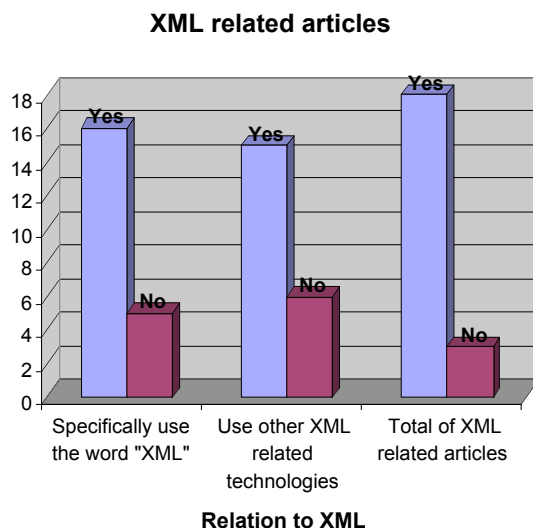


FIGURE 3 – NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF XML RELATED ARTICLES

Metadata is a word also referred in several TT articles. In fact 9 out of 21 refer the word and this same number talk about the usage of metadata technologies in the specific work addressed in that article (see figure 4). However, it is worthy taking into consideration that most of metadata technologies are XML related and therefore articles that talk about metadata are a subset of articles that directly or indirectly talk about XML. Other technologies like machine learning and specific user interface technologies are also addressed in TT papers, although not very intensively.

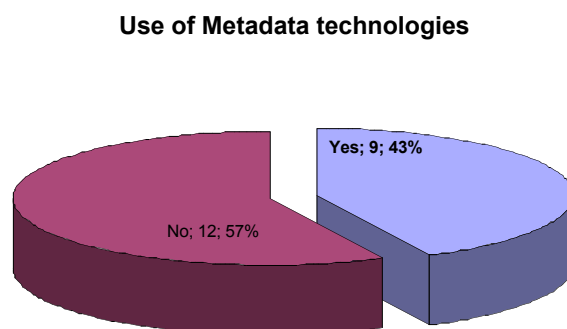


FIGURE 4 – NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF ARTICLES THAT REFER THE USAGE OF METADATA TECHNOLOGIES.

APPLICATION SCENARIOS

As it happens with the technologies, the application scenarios (of these technologies) although covering a wide range of domains, focus in some areas (see figure 5). General Web Publishing (Web sites, portals, Web services...) is the category with more articles. However, this is a “false”, a kind of “Others” category for it groups all articles that don’t fit in any of the other categories or that are not addressed to a specific application scenario in mind. The Digital Libraries category together with the Journals and Newspapers has seven articles. Mobile Computing has, this year, the same number of articles as Multimedia.

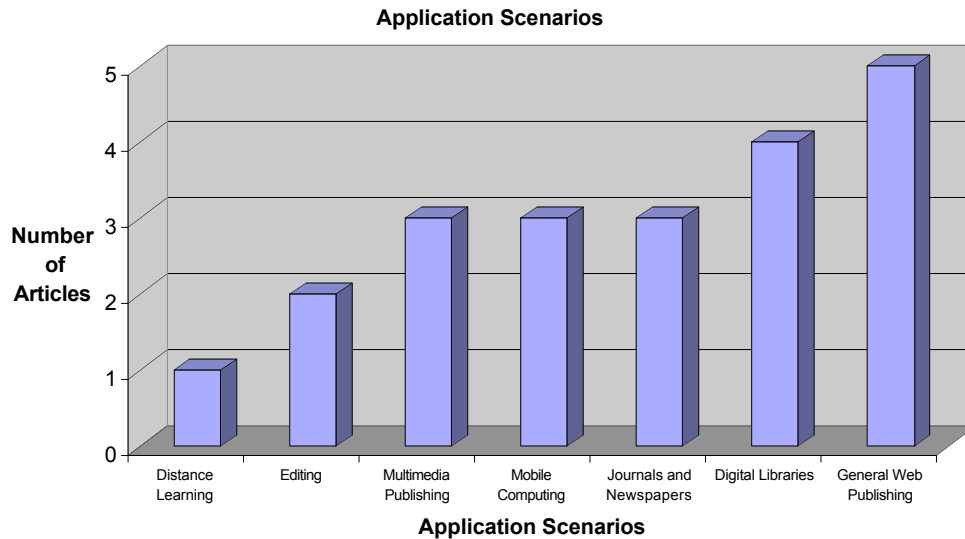


FIGURE 5 – MAIN APPLICATION SCENARIOS OF ELPUB2003 ARTICLES.

CONCLUSIONS

Concluding the overview, XML is the underlying topic in most of Elpub2003 TT speeches. Semantic Web and metadata technologies are also very up to date topics. Multimedia, digital libraries and journals publishing keep being very important subjects and mobile computing is making its place.

As one of the main conclusions we refer the wide range of concurrent technologies that show up or are already making a point.

In Elpub2004, one of the issues that can be more clarified in the area is this domination of XML in (almost) all electronic publishing scenarios. Will it continue to be so important? Which will be its future role? Will it be used as a storage technology or will it be used “merely” to transport information through the Web?

Regarding metadata, similar questions will be addressed. However, the main question is: what is the true role of metadata in the near future and in the far future? Will it make its point or another worldwide order will be found?

Another interesting issue to take in consideration in the future research is the tendency for adoption/rejection of some international standards and recommendations. It will also be interesting to investigate the real impact (and mainly its evolution) of each of them in the electronic publishing scene.