Heirloom Documentation Tools

Troff Demonstration Page

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The *troff* text processor from the Heirloom Documentation Tools project is a variant of the Unix application written by Joseph F. Ossanna and Brian W. Kernighan. It has been derived from source code provided by the OpenSolaris project. Amongst many enhancements, Heirloom *troff* provides extended font handling capabilities:

☞ PostScript Type 1, TrueType, and OpenType fonts can be used as supplied by their vendor without any need for conversion; *troff* can access font metrics directly in the AFM, TTF, and OTF files, and the *dpost* post-processor can embed glyph data into the PostScript output it generates.

☞ With Type 1 "expert," TrueType, and OpenType fonts, *troff* can be configured to transparently replace base characters with extra characters to produce ligatures, as in the words "effective," "office," "offline," Small Capitals, or old-style numerals 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 without the need to type escape sequences for individual characters in the document text. The replacement characters need not reside in the same font.

☞ Pairwise kerning and letter space tracking are supported; the page title provides an example of the former, and the latter is used for the Small Capitals, and, at a minor rate, to adjust the regular font of this document. Kern pairs can be defined between different fonts, and tracking can vary automatically with size.

☞ Hanging characters can be used to achieve better visual alignment of the margins and to implement hanging punctuation for commas, hyphens, &c.

Heirloom *troff* is free software; its C source code can be obtained at no charge from <http://n-t-roff.github.io/heirloom/doctools.html>. It runs on a wide variety of Unix and Unix-like systems.

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