XF Rendering Server 2008

XPS Overview

"The XML Paper Specification (XPS) makes modern documents possible for all. With XPS, documents print better, can be shared easier, be archived with confidence, and are more secure."

Overview

The XML Paper Specification (XPS) describes the format of a new general-purpose document (XPS Document) made available by Microsoft to facilitate the easy exchange of documents between applications, platforms and hardware systems such as printers and scanners.

XPS builds on the Open Packaging Conventions and is intended for consumers who want to access, render, or process the contents of an XPS document. This specification is designed to provide users with a consistent document appearance regardless of where and how the document is viewed.

XPS will also be the new print format for the enhanced Windows printing subsystem in the forthcoming Windows Vista and it will be the preferred method to exchange documents in their final form on Windows Platform.

Features

XPS has maximum flexibility. Maintaining the XPS format means that late changes in the output device can be accommodated easily. XPS also offers greater efficiency. Maintaining data in the XPS format maintains efficiency in the print path and can boost performance.

As an open, cross-platform document format, XPS allows users to create, annotate, view, share, print and archive fixed-layout paginated documents as well as to digitally sign and apply rights management to those documents. When combined with the new print subsystem from Windows Vista, its capabilities as a new page description language mean that it will offer significant improvements in fidelity and increased performance in rich graphics content that users increasingly demand.

Other features of the format include a Print Ticket format for specifying intent for how the associated document should be printed, and extended color. In addition, XPS will have DRM support in the near future, via Windows Rights Management Services.

The XPS format supports random content access and includes a rich metadata layer, aiding the accessing of page content and shared resources. XPS also supports an interleaving mechanism that makes it possible to stream the format to a device.

These features provide a very stable, secure, and reliable document platform and make XPS Documents ideal for applications that require accurate presentation of the document's contents, adherence to data governance, protection of sensitive information, or long-term document storage.

Benefits

The XML Paper Specification is designed to simultaneously support innovation and format consistency so you can build custom implementations that have a safety-net of backward compatibility.

The XPS Document format includes a provision for optional components that can group page contents together for easier streaming and provide information and control data for use when the document is printed.

XPS is a fixed document format. This means that the layout of lines and pages within the document are fixed and the exact location of all elements on a fixed page is defined. This ensures a consistent appearance of the document when it is viewed or printed on other systems, so that an author can have confidence that the visual appearance of the document will be preserved as he intended. In this way, XPS is similar to PostScript and PDF.

For printing, XPS provides significant benefits in overall performance and image fidelity. This is due to improvements in the efficiency of the new print system and the ability of the format to handle advanced

graphics such as smooth gradients and transparency, enhanced color support including RGB color and improved typography support. XPS is likely to bring significant improvements to print fidelity. As a document format, a key benefit of XPS is its integration with the Windows platform.

Overall, the printing performance with a full XPS pathway (XPS from the application down to a XPS supporting device) is expected to be better than with the current Windows pipeline.

Impact

XPS is viewed as a potential competitor to Adobe's portable document format (PDF).

Although XPS does not include dynamic capabilities similar to those of PDF, we see XPS providing an improvement in document delivery from information workers into commercial print workflows and we think it will meet user requirements for a large range of applications. XPS might play a large role in a number of areas where PDF has not yet penetrated.

Studies indicate that Microsoft operating systems are in place on more than 90% of the world's desktop and laptop computers. Adoption of XPS will come quickly and it will be widespread.

Technology Comparison

XPS	PDF
Is a competitive technology, a challenger and will be part of Windows Vista; it's widespread adoption can be predicted	Proves maturity, being the most used format
Is built around the XML language	Is built around a proprietary language
Was built from the ground up as a clean format	Has gone through a multitude of iterations
Has easy extension, partially due to XML format	Has difficult and cumbersome extension
Is not part of the current standard	Has advanced interactive features, including form processing
Easy to process XML format	Is a binary format
Is built from scratch to support secure distribution	Security was not present initially, but added subsequently

XF Rendering Server is:

- The first XSL-FO formatter in the world able to generate **XPS** documents
- Built upon years of experience in generating print-ready documents in **PDF**, **TIFF**, **POSTSCRIPT** and other formats
- Able to produce XPS documents from one single source of content
- A scalable server architecture able to produce documents at high speed
- Able to generate signed and encrypted documents for secure distribution.

Visit XF Rendering Server 2008 to find out more information about the product.

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