

Some reasons to use L^AT_EX

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January 2016

1 Referencing

Sections, figures and tables can be referenced with simple text keys.

2 Graphics

pdfLaTeX can natively handle pdf graphics. Word prefers png which can be large and slow if you have lots of figures or high resolution graphics.

Inserting graphics points to the graphics file, so just run your code again and the graphics are updated.

3 Longevity

Try opening a word processor document from 20 years ago. A LaTeX file is a text file. and can be read by any text editor.

4 BibTeX

BibTeX is a reference system. You can easily change the style of your bibliography. Most reference managers will output BibTeX files.

5 Comments

You can have comments like in code, this is surprisingly useful.

6 File size

How big is your thesis in Word? LaTeX file are just text.

7 Math

It was made for typesetting math and has any symbol you could possibly imagine.

8 Free

Free and in beer and free as in freedom.

9 BYO Text editor

You can use any text editor you please or any of the myriad IDEs for LaTeX.

10 Cross-platform

Guaranteed to have the same output on any platform.

11 Microtyping

Kerning, ligatures, spacing algorithms, etc.

12 Scalability

Works as efficiently with 1 or 100 page documents, it was made for typesetting books.

13 Rapidly change document styles

Since everything is markup, changes apply easily to the entire document.

14 Preferred by most journals

Most journals have their own templates, you just paste in your contents.

15 Dynamic reports

Many systems exist (e.g. knitr) for including code and text together in the same document.