

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
January 26, 2001

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Invisibility in a Nutshell

Sebastopol, CA—Mainframes on Wall Street trade stocks with one another by using it. Children playing games on their home PCs save their documents in it. Sports fans receive real-time game scores on their cell phones with it. “XML is so important that very soon it will become invisible,” says W. Scott Means, coauthor of the new O’Reilly book *XML in a Nutshell* (US \$29.95). “What I mean is, that its applications are so broad and diverse, that it will be taken for granted. Within the next five years, products will no more tout XML support as a feature, as they tout Windows support today.”

XML, the Extensible Markup Language, is a W3C endorsed standard for document markup. It provides a standard format for computer documents. This format is so flexible that it can be customized for areas as diverse as web sites, electronic data interchange, vector graphics, genealogy, real estate listings, object serialization, wireless devices, and voice mail systems. Because of that, XML is positioned to be the key web application technology of the future.

“In most new projects the question is no longer ‘Whether XML’ or ‘Why XML?’ it’s ‘Why not XML?’,” explains Elliotte Rusty Harold, coauthor of *XML in a Nutshell*. “XML has become as important to developers as Java, Perl, or C. Actually it’s probably more important. You can always choose a different programming language, but there isn’t any good alternative to XML for standard data formats.”

XML in a Nutshell is a comprehensive guide to the rapidly growing world of XML. It covers all aspects of XML, from the most basic syntax rules, to the details of DTD creation, to the APIs you can use to read and write XML documents in a variety of programming languages.

Developers can either write their own programs that interact with, massage, and manipulate the data in XML documents or they can use off-the-shelf software like web browsers and text editors to work with XML documents. Either choice gives them access to a wide range of free libraries in a variety of languages that can read and write XML.

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XML in a Nutshell covers the fundamental rules that all XML documents and authors must adhere to, detailing the grammar that specifies where tags may be placed, what they must look like, which element names are legal, how attributes attach to elements, and much more.

Harold adds: “*XML in a Nutshell* is a complete introduction to the state of the art in XML. Very few XML books even attempt to cover this much material. This book is the most concentrated, cost-effective way to educate yourself about XML.”

Chapter 9, *XPath*, is available free online at:
<http://www.oreilly.com/catalog/xmlnut/chapter/ch09.html>

For more information about the book, including Table of Contents, index, author bio, and samples, see:
<http://www.oreilly.com/catalog/xmlnut/>

For a cover graphic in jpeg format, go to:
ftp://ftp.ora.com/pub/graphics/book_covers/hi-res/0596000588.jpg

For an in-depth and real-life look at XML, catch Elliott Rusty Harold’s tutorials at the O’Reilly Conference on Enterprise Java, March 26-29, 2001 at the Westin Hotel in Santa Clara, California. <http://conferences.oreilly.com/java2001/>

XML Fundamentals:
http://conferences.oreillynet.com/cs/java2001/view/e_sess/1132

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XML in a Nutshell

A Desktop Quick Reference

By Elliott Rusty Harold & W. Scott Means

ISBN January 2001

0-596-00058-8, 480 pages, \$29.95 (US)

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