Typesetting Posters with \LaTeX: A Practical Guide

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The \LaTeX\ typesetting system is commonly employed for the production of technical and scientific documents. It provides advanced capabilities for typesetting mathematics, a powerful set of commands that allow the user to customize nearly every aspect of their project, and the ability to generate a variety of common output file formats while being freely available for several platforms. These features make \LaTeX\ a desirable choice for typesetting many types of documents including journal articles, theses and posters for presentation at technical conferences.

Unfortunately, it is not straightforward to make use of \LaTeX\ for the creation of posters. Its focus on less graphically oriented documents makes some features such as large font sizes, stylized text, arbitrary paper sizes and colorful backgrounds difficult to use. Furthermore, documentation of these features is often sparse at best. This leads many people to use other tools to develop their poster which do not offer the same set of powerful features.

This presentation will demonstrate a new \LaTeX\ document class named \texttt{poster} which has been developed specifically for typesetting posters for presentation at conferences. With this class, it is possible to generate a professional looking poster with \LaTeX\ as easily as one generates a paper or letter. The implementation of the poster class will be presented briefly. It will be followed by a practical tutorial that will illustrate the functionality of the class. In particular, the tutorial will demonstrate how to create sections and subsections, typeset mathematics, include graphics, insert tables, generate a list of references, make use of footnotes, and customize some aspects of the graphical elements used to make up the poster. At the completion of this session, one will be sufficiently familiar with the class to create a simple poster within a few minutes of downloading the \LaTeX\ poster class and its documentation.