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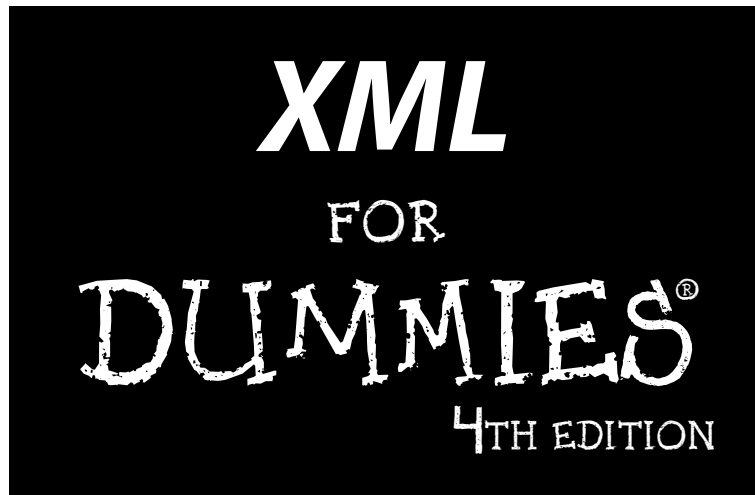
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by Lucinda Dykes and Ed Tittel



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About the Author

Lucinda Dykes started her career in a high-tech area of medicine, but left medicine to pursue her interests in technology and the Web. She has been writing code and developing Web sites since 1994, and also teaches and develops online courses — including the JavaScript courses for the International Webmasters Association/HTML Writers' Guild at www.eclasses.org.

Lucinda has authored, co-authored, edited, and been a contributing author to numerous computer books; the most recent include *Dreamweaver MX 2004 Savvy* (Sybex), *XML for Dummies* (3rd Edition, Wiley), *Dreamweaver MX Fireworks MX Savvy* (Sybex), *XML Schemas* (Sybex), and *Mastering XHTML* (Sybex). When she can manage to move herself away from her keyboard, other interests include holographic technologies, science fiction, and Bollywood movies.

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Ed is also Technology Editor for *Certification Magazine*, writes for numerous TechTarget Web sites, and writes a twice-monthly newsletter, "Must Know News," for CramSession.com. In his spare time, Ed likes to shoot pool, cook, and spend time with his wife Dina and his son Gregory. He also likes to explore the world away from the keyboard with his trusty Labrador retriever, Blackie. Ed can be contacted at etittel@yahoo.com.

Dedication

To the heroes at the W3C and OASIS, sung and unsung, especially members of the many XML working groups who have made the world (or the Web, at least) a better place through their tireless efforts, and to all those Web pioneers who generously offered help and support to those of us trying to figure out how to make our contribution to the Web in the early '90s.

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On a personal note, special thanks to my mother, Doris Dykes, who instilled and supported a lifelong interest in learning and in books. She claims that I'm the first child she lost to the Internet — but that makes me easy to find. Mom: I'll be in front of the nearest computer screen. Thanks and love always to Wali for making it possible for me to spend all these late nights tapping away at the keyboard, and for always making me remember the things that are really important. Thanks to our dear friends, Rose Rowe and Karmin Perless, who walked softly and made room for having a writer around. And finally, thanks to Wendy Fries and Cheryl Kline for great conversation, good advice, and lots of laughter at our monthly writers' session at the Coffee Grove.

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Introduction

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Welcome to the latest frontier of Web technology. In *XML For Dummies*, 4th Edition, we introduce you to the mysteries of eXtensible Markup Language (*XML*). XML is helping developers capture, manipulate, and exchange all kinds of documents and data, ranging from news feeds to financial transactions. In fact, many experts believe XML represents a kind of “lingua franca” that can represent information in just about any imaginable form, more accessibly than ever before — not only to human readers, but also to all kinds of computer applications and services.

We take a practical and straightforward approach to telling you about XML and what it can do for your data and document capture, management, and exchange efforts. We try to keep the amount of technobabble to a minimum and stick to plain English as much as possible. We also try to keep the focus on practical applications of XML technology, including desktop applications such as Office 2003. We have carefully chosen what we feel are the most relevant XML technologies for developers today. Besides plain talk about XML — and the many special-purpose applications that XML supports for document designers and authors, graphics developers, and many other communities of technical and business interests — we include lots of sample markup to help you put XML to work in your organization, business, or personal life. (No personal life is quite complete without a little XML.)



The Web page for this book is available at www.dummies.com/go/xmlfd4e. This Web page includes all the XML example files from this book, as well as numerous XML authoring tools, parsers, development kits, and other goodies for you to download. We hope you'll find it helpful for your own projects!

About This Book

Think of this book as your friendly, approachable guide to using XML for all kinds of interesting purposes. Using XML is a bit trickier than using HTML, so this book is organized to make it easier to grapple with XML's fundamentals, wrestle them to the ground, and use them well. We also document voluminous additional sources of information, both online and offline. Here are some of the topics we include:

- ✓ An overview of XML's capabilities, terminology, and technologies
- ✓ Tips for styling XML with CSS and XSLT

- ✓ Hands-on practice in developing DTDs and XML Schema for validating XML documents
- ✓ A beginner's guide to XPath
- ✓ An introduction to XForms and InfoPath
- ✓ A guide to XML application development, including Web services, databases, and news feeds



Because XML is essentially a markup language used to create other XML-based markup languages — or what we also call XML applications — it's not exactly accurate to call a document based on one particular XML application or another an "XML document." It really makes more sense to call it an "XML-based document" because the document itself contains markup defined using XML. But for brevity's sake, we call such documents *XML documents* in this book. After all, such documents must adhere to the rules of XML syntax and structure if they are to work properly. We could get all fussy and always refer to them (more correctly) as "XML-based documents" or "documents based on such-and-such an XML application." But that makes us squirm too.

Although you might think that using XML requires years of training and advanced technical wizardry, we don't think that's true. If you can tell someone how to drive across town, you can certainly use XML to build documents that do what you want them to. The purpose of this book isn't to turn you into a true-blue geek, complete with pocket protector. Rather, *XML For Dummies*, 4th Edition shows you which design and technical elements you need so you can get a practical handle on what XML is and how it works. We also provide numerous examples and case studies to illustrate how XML behaves, so you can gain the know-how and confidence to use XML to good effect!

Conventions Used in This Book

Throughout this book, you see lots and lots of markup. All XML markup appears in monospace type, like this:

```
<Greeting>Hello, world!</Greeting> ..
```

When you type XML tags or other related information, be sure to copy the information exactly as you see it between the angle brackets (< and >), because that's part of the magic that makes XML work. Other than that, we tell you how to marshal and manage the content that makes your pages special, and we tell you exactly what you need to do to mix the elements of XML with your own work.



Because the margins in this book can't accommodate some long lines of XML markup and still stay legible, sometimes we have to break lines of code. That tends to happen in designations for Web sites (called *URLs*, for *Uniform Resource Locators*) or special XML identifiers for namespaces and other information objects (called *URIs*, or *Uniform Resource Identifiers*) and also in the odd monstrously long line of markup that wraps to the next line. On your computer, these wrapped lines would appear on-screen as a single line of XML or as a single URL or URI — so don't insert a hard return when you see any such lines wrap in the book. Here are some examples of wrapped lines:

```
www.infomagic.austin.com/nexus/plexus/lexus/praxis/  
this_is_deliberately_long.html
```

and

```
<Item>Scientists have developed a robot that "learns" to walk like a toddler,  
improving its step and balance with every stride.</Item>
```



XML is sensitive to how element text is entered. If you're following our examples from the comfort of your living room, keep in mind that you have to use uppercase, lowercase, or other characters exactly as they appear in the book (or, more important, as they're defined in the document description that governs any well-formed, valid XML document — be it an XML Schema or a Document Type Definition, or *DTD*). To make your work look like ours as much as possible, enter all element text exactly as it appears in this book. Better yet, download the file from the Web page for the book (www.dummies.com/go/xmlfd4e)!

Foolish Assumptions

Someone once said that making assumptions makes a fool out of the person who makes them and the person who is their subject. Even so, we're going to make a few assumptions about you, our gentle reader:

- ✔ You're already familiar with text files and know how to use a text editor.
- ✔ You have a working connection to the Internet.
- ✔ You're hip to the difference between a Web browser and a Web server.
- ✔ You want to build your own XML documents for fun, for profit, or because it's part of your job.

Also, we assume that you have a modern Web browser — one that can support XML directly. As we write this, that elite includes Internet Explorer 5.5 (and higher), Netscape Navigator 6 (and later), Opera, Firefox, Mozilla, and

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