

Software & Tools

The future of AmiWeb2c

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Dear Amigicians,

It is with great pleasure that I announce the availability of the latest, last, and final update of “AmiWeb2c 2.1”, the Amiga port of the famous Web2c system (version 7.2) of “ \TeX and friends” (see <http://www.tug.org/web2c.html>). This final release will hopefully fix all the bugs reported to me over the past year and it introduces a lot of new stuff not present in earlier versions. Three major resources for “AmiWeb2c” are

- CTAN:/systems/amiga/amiweb2c/. This is the reference distribution of AmiWeb2c 2.1 on the “Comprehensive \TeX Archive Network”.
- Aminet:/text/tex/. Identical in contents, but packed in `.lha` instead of in `.tar.gz` format, this distribution is part of the “Aminet”, the world’s largest collection of free software targeted to a single computer system.
- <http://www.tug.org/texlive.html>. A fully integrated and ready-to-run installation of the Amiga binaries in the general Web2c setup is shipped with edition 3 of the “ \TeX Live CD”.

As pointed out in the closing remarks of the documentation coming with AmiWeb2c 2.1, I must now abandon the Amiga. Having served the \TeX and Amiga community for several years by providing ports of, at first, standalone METAFONT and, since 1993, ever more complete \TeX systems for the Amiga, the decision to step down as maintainer of AmiWeb2c was not easy to make. However, my professional career does not leave as much time as would be required to keep up with the many interesting developments in the \TeX nicl field. Having stopped *using* the Amiga for my daily work, I no longer feel qualified to support it. A long list of “possibly nice ideas” is already coming with AmiWeb2c 2.1; there is more than enough TODO.

In the past years I have received feedback on AmiWeb2c 1.0 (April/May 1995) and AmiWeb2c 2.0 (February 1997) from many users in different parts of the world, so I guess there still is interest in keeping the Amiga in the \TeX bandwagon, no matter how small the group of hardcore Amigicians might have become. At least for me, porting “UNIX \TeX ” to the Amiga most certainly was a challenging, more

often than not frustrating, but sometimes rewarding task. I learned a lot.

With this note I am calling out to any volunteers willing and capable to take over the task of developing AmiWeb2c in the future. Skills in both the programming and the T_EXnical fields are required. You have to be familiar with most if not all tools and languages listed in the AmiWeb2c documentation. Besides, you need to have a fast and well-equipped Amiga and the SAS/C development system (you could, of course, try a different Amiga compiler). Web2c proper already provides full (yet hidden) support for the Amiga, but each new version of the UNIX software introduces new obstacles that need to be fixed.

Last October I submitted a “request for help” to the `comp.sys.amiga.programmer` usenet group and to my greatest delight Jim Cooper of SAS Institute stepped forward to volunteer as the future maintainer of AmiWeb2c. Get in contact with Jim at `jamie@interpath.com` or with me at the address stated below if you find bugs in the software or have ideas for AmiWeb2c’s future.

To conclude I want to thank

- Don Knuth for giving us T_EX.
- Karl Berry, Olaf Weber, and all participants of `tex-pretest` and `tex-implementors` for supporting the Amiga by integrating all the stuff I submitted.
- All users of AmiWeb2c who reported bugs and submitted fixes or otherwise helped make AmiWeb2c what it is today.

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