

How to publish your XML documents

XML's power comes from its use to describe structure, not appearance. But you need a way to render the structural components of your documents so that the text is easy for humans to read and work with. Here is a grossly simplified view of your options.

See also "[Publishing printed critical editions from TEI](http://wiki.tei-c.org/)" in the TEI wiki (<http://wiki.tei-c.org/>).

● = yes

◐ = sort of

○ = no

Method	If you want to produce:	... then use:	Can use standard web server	Can use any user agent (web browser, mobile device, etc.)	Notes
A	webpages	CSS (processed by browser)	●	● (Limitations and workarounds are widely known.)	While you need not display all the text in your XML, it must stay in the same order as in your XML. Good for quick proofing of your encoding using a web browser.
B	webpages	XSLT transforms XML into a form for use on the web. It's either processed "on the fly" by a browser or ahead of time by software (as in the <i>Philosophers' Imprint</i> exercise)	●	◐ (All major browsers support. Limitations and workarounds are not well known.)	Painfully slow to load each page. Can only process a single XML file at a time.
C	webpages	XML-aware publishing system (using XSLT and other technology)*	○	●	Can search specific XML tags. Can easily show portions of documents.
D	PDFs	XSLT transforms XML into XSL-FO, which an FO processor transforms into PDFs. It's either processed "on the fly" by a server or ahead of time by software (as in the <i>Philosophers' Imprint</i> exercise)	○	●	Open-source tools don't work well yet, and commercial tools are quite expensive. Alternatively, can use a tool like Prince (http://princexml.com/).
E	EPUB	epub-tools and other packages	○	◐ (Most readers except those from Amazon support.)	

*The TEI wiki has a category of pages on [publishing and delivery tools](#), which includes many XML-aware publishing systems