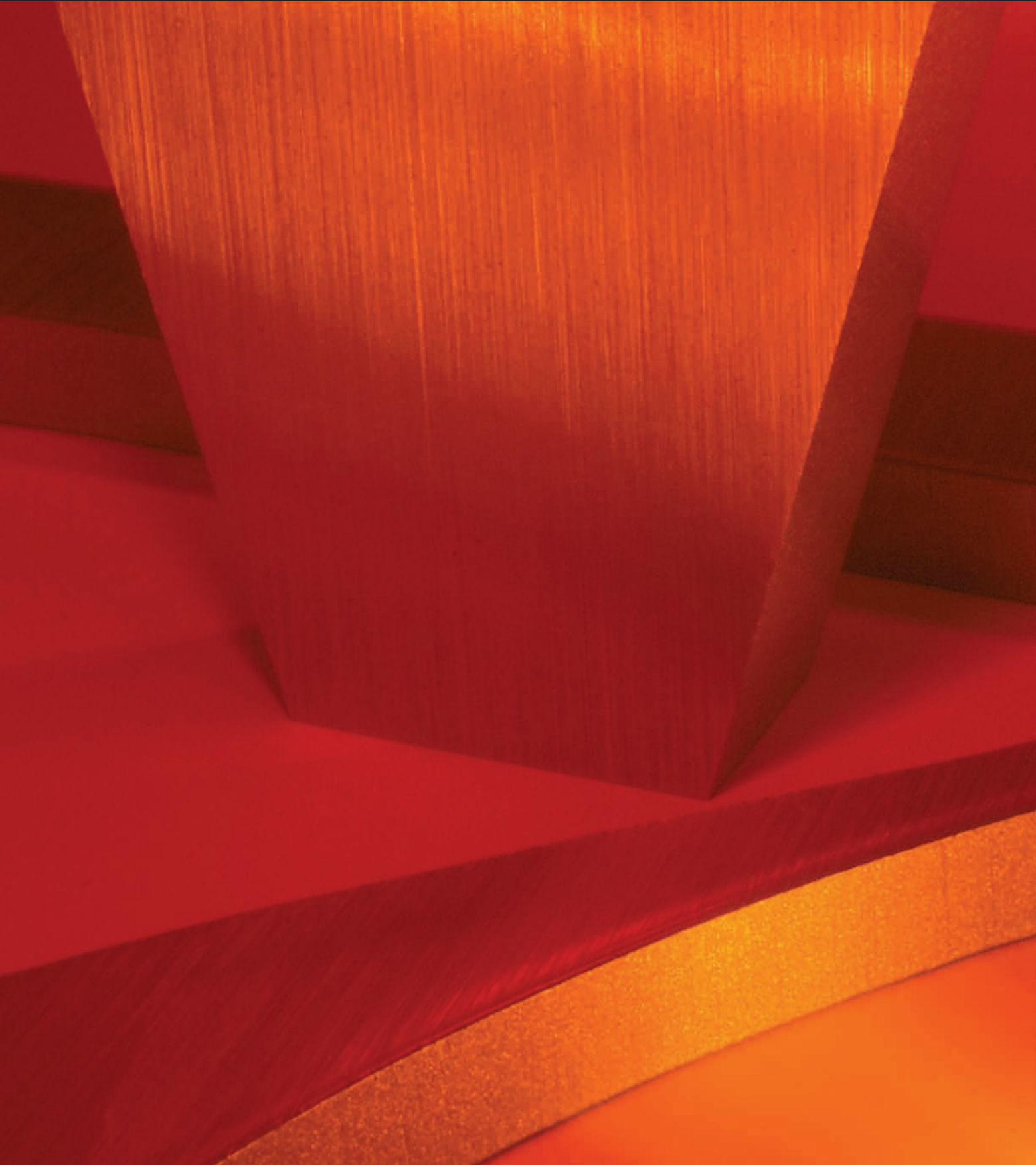


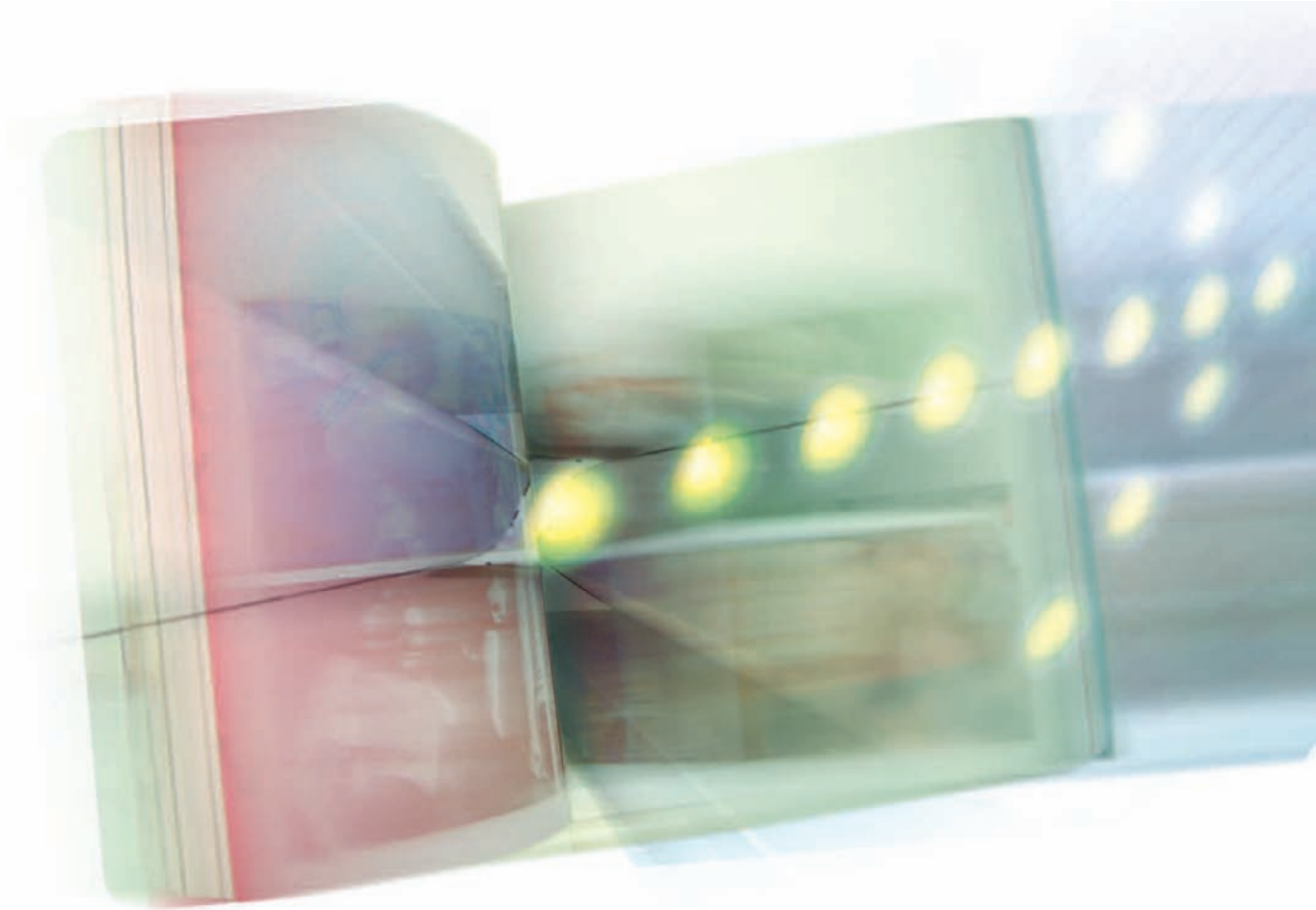
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PUBLISHING, WORKGROUP & ENTERPRISE TECHNOLOGY FOR QUARK USERS





Using XML Import to Create QuarkXPress Pages from XML

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Everyone knows that XML is becoming more important to anyone working with content. Handling content more fluidly between various media forms in publishing is one of the benefits of XML, but you may be able to make XML work for you in things that you already do today if you understand a bit more about how it works and how it can work with QuarkXPress.

Think about the various ways you use and receive text, and try to determine if there are any places where you perform a repetitive import of text into a standard format. This is the place to look for how you can work better and potentially utilize the XML Import XTensions module for QuarkXPress.

I'll give you a brief overview of how you might use this tool to streamline your work. For more detail, you can use the XML Import Guide as well as the Guide to avenue.quark that ships with QuarkXPress to help you further.

What is XML?

First let's talk a bit about XML. In its simplest form, XML is all about defining labels or *categorizations* for different types of text, as well as the structure or *order* in which the text is organized.

Think about a magazine or newspaper article. We know that there will always be a headline, maybe followed by a subhead, then a byline, and then the story itself. We've been reading these articles all our lives and have come to expect the sequence we experience when we read them, but you probably never thought twice about the fact that it was structured. This is the *order* that makes it an article.

We document this order by creating a document type definition (DTD), which specifies the expected structure of any file generated according to its parameters. We then generate a file that uses XML tags according to the structure of the DTD.

Creating an XML DTD can seem a bit daunting at first but if you start simple with just a few elements to get comfortable with it, you'll get the hang of it quickly.

Creating basic XML and a DTD

Creating an XML DTD can seem a bit daunting at first but if you start simple with just a few elements to get comfortable with it, you'll get the hang of it quickly. The example below shows the tag structure that an article might use.

```
<?XML VERSION="1.0" STANDALONE="YES"?>
<ARTICLE>
  <HEADLINE> RED SOX WIN THE WORLD SERIES
</HEADLINE>
  <SUBHEAD>  CURSES IS REVERSED
</SUBHEAD>
  <BYLINE> BY KEVIN SMITH </BYLINE>
  <BODY> THE YEAR OF THE RED SOX IS STILL
GOING STRONG...AND, YES, BOSTON IS STILL
TALKING ABOUT IT. </BODY>
</ARTICLE>
```

Based on this article structure, we could create a DTD that looks something like this:

```
<!ELEMENT ARTICLE (HEADLINE, SUBHEAD, BYLINE,
BODY)>
<!ELEMENT HEADLINE    (#PCDATA)>
<!ELEMENT SUBHEAD     (#PCDATA)>
<!ELEMENT BYLINE      (#PCDATA)>
<!ELEMENT BODY        (#PCDATA)>
```

What does it mean? Well, the first line, or the root element, is indicating all of the elements that would be contained inside of an article. Once you have declared the article element and its contents, you then need to individually define each of those elements.

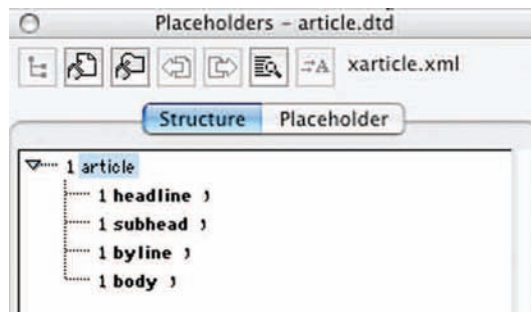
There are additional codes that can be added to elements that can further define them in cases where there may be more than one instance, or to add other rules or constraints to the element. A DTD is saved as a plain text file.

Working with placeholders in QuarkXPress

Now let's move on to QuarkXPress. Start with a document and design into which you would like to bring your XML text. You can also create style sheets for your various text elements, as you will be able to apply these styles to the XML elements that you import.

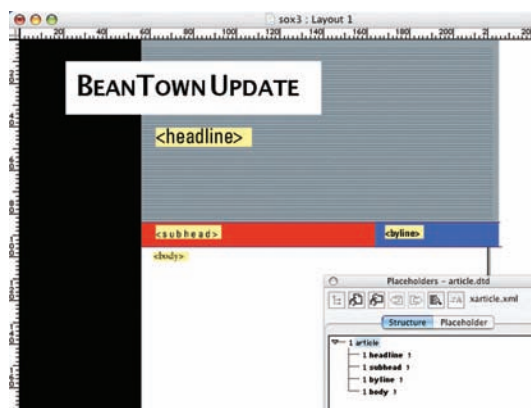
Handling content more fluidly between various media

Placeholders are used to connect your QuarkXPress document to specific XML elements that you've defined, and can be used repeatedly to bring in new content as many times as you need. To begin using placeholders, select WINDOW ► SHOW PLACEHOLDERS.



The first button at the far left is to import your DTD. Click on this button, and navigate to the DTD file you wish to use and select it.

Under the STRUCTURE tab of your PLACEHOLDERS palette you will see your element structure displayed. Drag and drop each of these elements on to your page into the appropriate text box for your design.

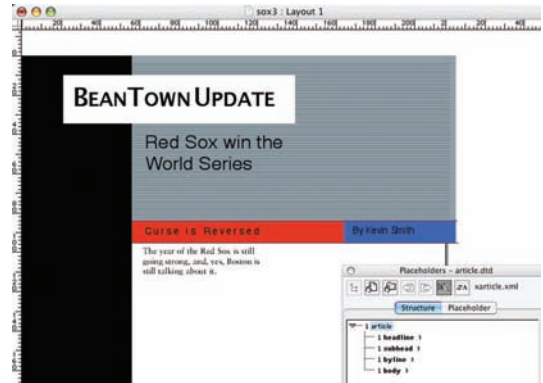


We're almost there! At this point you can save your file, and it will contain all of the items you would need to repeatedly use this as a template. You can use it each time you want to import new XML content, and then save that generated file out as a new file if you wish (I'll explain that part a bit later). You can also choose to output your file, not save it, and just move on

to your new batch of content. Using a template like this would let you generate multiple outputs of different content with the same design very quickly.

So let's get to the content.

Now that you've added your placeholders to the page, you can import your XML. By selecting the second button in your PLACEHOLDER palette, you can navigate to and select your XML file.



Now this is where the XML Import is going to verify your XML file to the XML DTD file that you have selected, and if it's not quite accurate you may get some errors. If you do experience this, take your time reviewing your DTD to make sure the structure is as it should be, that you have no extraneous characters, and remember that XML is case sensitive. With a little patience you should soon be on your way to getting XML imported.

Now if you have multiple XML files ready to import, you can move on to the next button in the toolbar, which allows you to point to a whole folder of XML files. By selecting this folder, you can then use the next set of buttons for PREVIOUS/NEXT XML files to toggle through and see the results of each file displayed on the page. This is when you can really start to see some efficiency.

Lastly, if you are ready to save this file with its specific import of XML, you can use the last button in the toolbar to replace all placeholders with actual text.

I'm sure you can think of many applications for a tool like this — weekly sales fliers, a directory that gets updated regularly, real estate sales sheets. All of these have the same structure, same design, but different data. Keep this in mind as you come across new requirements that may come your way with respect to creating content — it's fast and easy to use. ☒