

‘Magic’ comments in T_EXworks 0.4

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The editor T_EXworks (<http://tug.org/texworks>) is designed to ‘lower the entry barrier to the T_EX world’. T_EXworks v0.4 has recently been released, and this is a good opportunity to look at one very useful feature: ‘magic’ comments. These are used to give the editor information about the file being edited. (The concept is not unique to T_EXworks: TeXShop and AUC_TEX both include similar ideas.)

```
% !TeX program = LuaLaTeX
```

specifies the name of the typesetting engine to use for the current file, which should be one of the engines that is set up for use with T_EXworks. This is useful if you normally use one engine (for example pdf_LA_TE_X), but have a few files that need an alternative engine. In the example, the file would automatically be processed with Lua_LA_TE_X as the engine.

```
% !TeX encoding = UTF-8
```

Sets the file encoding for the current file. The usual default is UTF-8, but this setting is handy if you need to collaborate with other people using non-UTF-8 editors.

```
% !TeX root = somefile.tex
```

Indicates that the current file is not the main file for typesetting: when you choose to typeset, T_EXworks will save the current file then typeset the master file. Using this setting, you need the full name of the master file including the extension. This is clearly a handy setting for larger projects, where you might have a lot of files which are to be included in one master document.

```
% !TeX spellcheck = de-DE
```

Specifies the spell check language for the current file. The language of course needs to be one you have installed: T_EXworks currently uses the hunspell dictionary format. OpenOffice.org also uses this format, but has recently extended it. More information is at <http://code.google.com/p/texworks/wiki/SpellingDictionaries>.

One point to notice with the `root` setting is how it interacts with `program`. Let’s imagine that the master file needs to be typeset using Lua_LA_TE_X, and that your default engine is pdf_LA_TE_X. You then need to include the program in each subsidiary file to get everything to work properly:

```
% !TeX root = master.tex
```

```
% !TeX program = LuaLaTeX
```

Without this, when you try to typeset from one of the subfiles then T_EXworks will use the currently-selected engine (probably pdf_LA_TE_X) and not Lua_LA_TE_X for the typesetting. Once you know, this is not so surprising, but at first it is easy to get caught out!

T_EXworks 0.4 includes plenty of other new features and bug fixes. Perhaps the most notable is scripting support for QtScript, Lua and Python, including now-bundled scripts for some common tasks. See the web page at <http://tug.org/texworks> for more information and a full list of changes.

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