



31st EPS Conference on Plasma Physics 28 June - 2 July 2004

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Preface to the CD-ROM

The attached CD-ROM contains the contributed papers to the 31st EPS Conference on Plasma Physics, held from the 28th June -2nd July at the Imperial College, London, UK.

The documents are provided in PDF (Adobe Portable Document) formatted file, with one file per submission. This was chosen for its portability across different computer platforms and the availability of free PDF viewers from Adobe and others.

The submission procedure

This conference is the sixth that has used the ELISE conference contribution submission program suite for the 4 page contributed papers and the second to use ELISE for the initial 1 page Abstract submission. ELISE was developed by Ch. Nieswand and B.P.Duval of the CRPP, Lausanne for the 1999 conference in order to a) provide a common, verified, engine for collecting the contributions in a readable form and b) permit the rapid publication of the contributions following the end of the conference where the interest in the contributions is most intense.

ELISE was designed to gather the conference proceedings electronically and provide a rudimentary Web-HTML server interface following the conference to the registered participants. (see section on [Technical Information](#) below).

Following the initial 1 page Abstract submission, each contribution was assigned a unique ELISEID. The Abstracts were then electronically marked and collected by Category into packages that were delivered to the Programme Committee members. Preliminary lists of accepted abstracts were returned from the Committee members who then met to finalise the acceptance of Invited, Oral and Poster contributions.

The participants were then informed of the committee's decision and were assigned a PaperID and a password to be used during submission of the 4 Page Contribution. Two weeks before the conference start, collections of the 1 Page Abstracts were made available on the conference web server for download by the conference participants.

The evolving PDF format and some surprising incompatibilities of some contributions with different

versions of the Adobe-Reader program, resulted in some papers requiring further manual processing.

About the CD-ROM

For the CD-ROM, a header and page number, internal to each document, were added to all pages of the contributions. In view of the absence of a Proceedings Book, papers to this conference are referenced in the following way:

Europhysics Conference Abstracts Vol. 28G **aa.nnn**

Where **aa** represents the session number (eg: P1, O3 etc.) and **nnn** represents the contribution number as given by the programme committee.

The table of contents and authors' index are available on the CD in HTML form with links to the PDF documents. Each PDF documents also contains links to the next and previous pages of the proceedings and the conference index.

The emphasis at this conference was to provide the best possible CD-ROM proceedings with the minimum delay following the end of the conference. Although every effort has been made to ensure the abstracts can be viewed and printed with both Adobe Reader version 4,5 and 6, experience has shown that, at the time of the conference, Acrobat Reader V4 offers the greatest compatibility with the PDF writers used by the conference authors and is available for a wider range of platforms (notably including UNIX).

The HTML indexes have been written in simple HTML that should be readable by most all web browsers.

If necessary, the papers can also be accessed directly in the *pdf* directory of the CD-ROM where the file names correspond to the conference reference **aa.nnn** above.

Hints on Printing

Since most computers are much more powerful than printers, some of the more complex graphics are better rendered by the computer before printing. This is indeed the way most cheaper PC printers operate by first making the image in the Computer and then spooling the result to the printer. Some of the graphics in the PDF files are complex and require long and often arduous calculation inside the printer. If there are problems in printing particular documents, it may be easier to use this *pre-rasterisation* technique. On PC machines, this is often the default and on Unix machines this can most easily be achieved with programs like a2ps which pass the file through ps2pdf from Ghostscript producing a pixel based output file. All of the PDF files printed quickly on a mid-priced printer in this way. Your milage may, unfortunately, vary.

Technical Information

Although the papers on the CD-ROM have all been further processed following submission, their quality on screen and when printed still depends on how they were prepared by the authors. Many PDF drivers have been used from many different text editing programs during this conference which sometimes results in only *partially correct* PDF files, according to the PDF standard. At the time of writing, the PDF format can still, however, be regarded as *state of the art* for document exchange between participants from all over the world and features intrinsic internal compression which is suitable for transmission over the internet.

In an effort to check the files as soon as possible they were all printed after submission. The files all open to screen in Acrobat4 and most open to screen in Acrobat5. They have all be printed with Acrobat4 and a recent pdf2ps (Unix) which is part of the GhostScript software suite.

From the original design, ELISE attempts to use only freely available software in keeping with the intention of providing the software suite to successive conferences at a minimum cost and largest support base. It is currently based on a modern LINUX distribution (RedHat 7.3 at the time of writing) with Apache web-server software. The documents are processed by a modified version of GhostScript and all scripting and CGI programming is performed in the PERL language. In particular, the 2002 conference introduced the use of a MySQL database to collect and collate information of the conference contributors and a package of scripts to take the information collected by ELISE to produce the required indexes and conference data.

In order to handle problems with the PDF files, a copy of the full Adobe Acrobat software should be considered a must. This software was also used extensively in the production of collections of PDF contributions into single files (for the referees, pre-conference Abstract collections etc.)

Further to this, a commercial package for handling other aspects of a conference, such as hotel bookings, Emails and conference announcements, although not obligatory, would be hard to do without.

A report on the current status of ELISE is available on request.

Basil P. Duval, Lausanne, July 2004



Comments

Following difficulties in providing PDF files that will print on the freely available Reader utilities, the ELISE data from this conference was examined for common failure scenarios.

ELISE was modified for this conference to verify more document parameters before acceptance. The page size of the submitted document, the margins and the used fonts were all examined and the author was requested to take remedial action when necessary.

It is a (lamented !) fact that a lot of participants use *Word* for creating their contributions. Participants using other products such as *Tex* or some of the Adobe product family often had far fewer problems with their submissions, but this may also be explained by a higher degree of computing knowledge for

this participant category.

Whilst text has not often caused problems, the inclusion of complex graphics from a wide range of sources and particularities of each individual OS installation on personal computers, often results in only partially legal PS and PDF documents, as can be seen by the unpredictability of Reader codes to interpret the submitted contributions.

There is, in general, no simple cure for this situation. *Word* has a tendency to be misused on Personal Computers that are often badly configured so that although the result may show up fine on the creating machine, the same is not true on a remote machine.