

Inform 7 as Literate Programming

Nicola Apicella
GPN7

What Is Literate Programming?

- computer program as literature
- human readability primary goal
- intelligible and articulate writing style
- one file with:
 - human-readable documentation
 - machine-readable source code

Timeline: Literate Programming

1979	Knuth uses DOC
1981	WEB (Knuth): Pascal for TeX; TeX for documentation
later	CWEB (Knuth & Levy) and many more...

What Is Interactive Fiction?

Timeline: Interactive Fiction

1975	Adventure / Colossal Cave (Crowther & Woods)
1979-1986/89	Infocom (Zork, Enchanter)
1987	rec.arts.int-fiction
1993	Inform
1996	Inform 6
2006	Inform 7

How Does Inform 7 Work?

- Inform 7 code => Inform 6 code => final file
- 3 parts:
 - IDE
 - compiler
 - "The Standard Rules"

Inform 7

Design Goals

- Graham Nelson:
- "Natural Language, Semantic Analysis and Interactive Fiction"
- Inform 6 (1993-1996) "from first principles"
- from 2002: Inform 7 as "experimental higher-level layer on top of [...] Inform"
- Book-publishing metaphor

Wikipedia example: Inform 6

Wikipedia example: Inform 7

The Inform 7 IDE

- book-like interface
 - left: user input
 - right: computer "reply"
- Source, Errors, Index, Skein, Transcript, Game, Documentation, Settings

Paper, Part I: Naturality in Practice

- user interface
- shift to natural language
- adoption of rule-oriented design

Paper, Part 2: Naturality in Theory

- conceptual semantics
- predicate logic
- model theory

Let's Play!