The " LaTeX and Graphics " contest is finished, and we had some time to read the contributed articles. It was a real pleasure! Most of the contributions came from blog writers. LaTeX bloggers frequently write nice posts and share their ideas. It's great, that you joined us here!

The contributions

Let's have a look at the contributions and the authors.

Lim Lian Tze , contributing regularly to the Malaysian LaTeX User Group blog, has written about an efficient technique for creating tiling backgrounds . A few patterns are combined to create a complex visual effect of a non-repeating pattern. Disk space might not be a big issue nowadays, but download and browsing speed is still important today. I just think of reading on mobile devices such as smart phones and tablets. She showed how a clever approach, which is already used in the web world, can be applied in LaTeX. It bases on maths, my beloved prime numbers. Maths, LaTeX and fun - I like that very much! It is the favorite article of one of our moderators.

Clemens Niederberger , who is a very active member of the LaTeX Community forum, the author of the mychemistry blog , submitted an article about drawing reaction schemes , using the ChemFig package.It's impressive how you can typeset complex schemes with just a few commands. I wish it would have already existed during my school time when I dealt with chemistry.

Paulo Cereda wrote about his opensource project arara , a TeX automation tool for easing the compilation workflow. He showed how to use it with gnuplot and gnuplottex as an example. It's capable of doing even more for us. So, great to learn about it! Clemens already fell in love with it, after reading Paulo's article, as he wrote afterwards in his blog post about installing, configuring and using arara .

Pieter Belmans, the autor of the (La)TeX blog On music, computing and math and of several LaTeX styles and themes, explained why TeX is a great tool also for producing graphics today: either in combination with open source tools such as gnuplot and matlab2tikz or using integrated TeX packages such as TikZ, pgfplots, and derived packages such as tikz-cd. It's a good motivation to work with LaTeX and integrated graphics, instead of some wordprocessor and importing from commercial graphics software.

Jürnjakob Dugge aka Jake, showed to us how to create bar charts in the beautiful style of Edward Tufte, the genius of data visualisation. Step by step we could learn how to get the perfect result. I look forward to reading more about plotting and drawing in Tufte style!

Joseph Wright , member of the LaTeX Project and writer of " Some TeX Developments ", created a template for us which allows easily producing good-looking plots without much LaTeX knowledge, just by using the template and the underlying pgfplots package. Very handy! I recommended this template article to a fellow user on matheplanet.com, who need to generate plots.

Hugues Vermeiren showed by examples how to the TikZ calc library can be used for geometric constructions . Besides for geometry it can be used for general drawings: no need for calculating points yourself if you can make use of their relation in position. The high point of his contribution is a convincing drawing of a parabola as an envelope of a set of lines. This example will go to the TeXample TikZ gallery . Huges already shared beautiful TikZ examples there.

Frits Wenneker , author of howToTeX.com and also a regular writer in our forum, provided some very useful tips for improving plots generated by Matlab and converted by matlab2tikz. Very nice to have this at hands, instead of having to find everything out yourself.

Jeff Hein , the author of the tikz-3dplot package and author of the blog tikz3dplot.wordpress.c

om , provided a tutorial for using this package
full of examples. This is a great start for doing your own 3D plots!

Allan Espinosa demonstrated the usage of pic/Dpic, M4 and Circuit_macros for easily creating system diagrams
, for example for Electrical Engineering. It's nice to read that here because it's shows that there further tools besided the well-known TikZ.

The results

Now for some numbers, as I can see today. The number of views shows, that each contribution was read many times during the contest. I'm sure they will be read many times more as they stay on this site.

Title	Author	Views	Votes
Tufte-style Bar Charts with pgfplots	Jürnjakob Dugge	1418	11
Plane affine constructions and the TikZ calc library	Hugues Vermeiren	855	
LaTeX and Chemistry - Drawing Reaction Schemes	Clemens Niederberger	1818	
Overcoming some flaws with graphics created using matlab2tikz	Frits Wenneker		10
Semi-automatic plotting using pgfplots	Joseph Wright	1043	9
Fun with gnuplot and arara	Paulo Cereda	1638	6
Why should I be using TeX for graphics?	Pieter Belmans	3553	

			9
Drawing with the tikz-3dplot Package	Jeff Hein	1148	8
Efficient Seamless Tiled Backgrounds	Lim Lian Tze	1631	13
Pic for expressive LaTeX diagrams	Allan Espinosa	1227	7

And the winners are...

So, it's time for a hard decision! Dear authors, you submitted high quality articles, I was impressed, and I got the same feedback from our moderators and friends. Even with the same topic, the articles are very different, which makes it hard to compare. Well, we will rely on the reader's votes - the jury, our moderators, agrees with the reader's choice. So the first book will go to *Jürnjakob Dugge*, with the highest average of votes - he really deserves it because of introducing beauty in plots. Regarding the votes, several articles follow with the same number, so the final decision is a moderator's choice - and we agreed that the second book will go to *Hugues Vermeiren*
for his very educational article.

Congratulations to Jake and Hugues!

To all, dear authors, thank you very much! You contributions are highly appreciated.