

Creating a Dust-cover in ConT_EXt

a layout exercise

Abstract

This short article describes how to setup a dust-cover for a book, using the standard features available in ConT_EXt.

Keywords

non-guru ConT_EXt dust-cover

Introduction

A beautiful set of narrations, originally written by my grandfather (father of my mother), a former police officer and tracker dog guide, inspired me to typeset them using ConT_EXt, and have them published in a real book¹.

It turned out to be quite a challenge, because I'm not an expert when it comes to using ConT_EXt. Manuals are always close at hand! Quality is my main incentive to use T_EX and its progeny ConT_EXt.

Book Design

The proportion between the width (140mm) and height of the page is set to 2:3. The typesetting area was obtained using the Tschichold[1] method, and equals 93.3mm by 140mm. The header contains the title of the book on the leftside of the left-hand page, while the title of the current chapter is being displayed at the rightside of the righthand page. The footer holds the pagenumber just in the middle. Each left-hand page that starts a new chapter has no header. An example page of the book is presented in Figure 1.

The book's contents, preface and colofon are typeset in Computer Modern Roman (12pt). The header and footer use the italic variant at 10pt.

Dust-cover

Computer Modern Roman (12pt) is also the main font style used in typesetting the dust-cover. The flaps however apply the sans serif style (10pt).

The dust-cover actually consists of two pages that are combined using the page arrangement feature of ConT_EXt:

```
\setuparranging[2*2,doublesided]
```



Figure 1. Example page.

The above command puts the pages one and four next to each other. The page layout is shown in Figure 2.

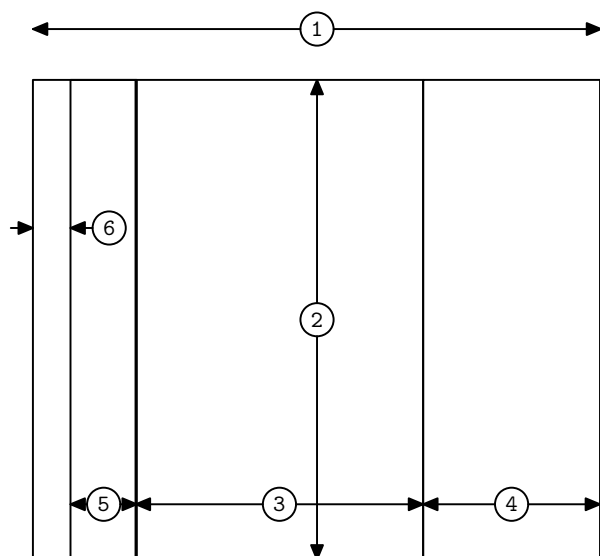
The dust-cover has two flaps and is based on a papersize of 257mm by 217mm, and defined by the following command:

```
\definepapersize[DUSTCOVER]
  [width=257mm, height=217mm]
```

I used the front flap for a short description of the book's intention, while the back flap contains a biography of the author in a nutshell! At the top of the backside one finds a photograph of the author together with a few key features of the book. The bottom shows the publisher's logo and the ISBN-number. The front of the cover shows a typical bridge in Griendtsveen, a municipality in the Peel. The Peel is the name of a marshy region in the west of the province Limburg. My grandfather has worked in this region for 10 years.

Grandparents' children cherish happy feelings when they recall their childhood in the Peel! Nowadays it is a region rich in natural beauty and worth exploring on foot or by bicycle.

The height of the linen hardcover exceeds that of the book's page by 3.5mm on both ends. The cover's width is 7mm larger than the span of the page. The size of the book's spine, 34mm, was obtained from the very first bounded copy. This of course equals the actual thickness of the book. The dust-cover should fit the linen hardcover as accurately as possible, so its dimensions equal those of the linen hardcover.



1: paperwidth = 257mm 2: paperheight = 217mm
 3: textwidth = 130mm 4: rightmargin = 80mm
 5: leftmargin = 30mm 6: leftedge = 17mm

Figure 2. The page layout for the dust-cover.

Front

I used the layer mechanism to create the front. It enabled me to position the text on top of the full-page photograph. The photograph has been adapted using the GIMP package, my favorite when it comes to producing and modifying images.

```
\definelay[frontpicture] [position=no]
\setlayer[frontpicture] [x=-0.0mm,y=0.0cm,
                        preset=righttop] {%
  \externalfigure[bruggriendtsveen.jpg]
  [scale=1000]
}

\setupbackgrounds[text]
[background=frontpicture]
```

The above given commands define and position the photograph on the front side of the cover.

The title is divided in a horizontal and vertical part. The `\startnarrower` command is applied to facilitate in a reduced width of the typesetting area.

Here is how it is realized:

```
\startnarrower[2*left,3*right]
\rightaligned{\Large \color[MyColor]
{Wat is } \kern.5cm}
\rightaligned{\rotate[rotation=270]
{\Large \color[MyColor]
{het leven kort!}} \kern.5cm}}
```

The fontsize `Large` and color `MyColor` are defined in the preamble with `\definefont` and `\definecolor` respectively.

Spine

The code fragment displayed below is responsible for the text on the spine of the cover. It is used in combination with a layer.

```
\setupbackgrounds[header,text,footer] [leftedge]
[background=back]

\definelay[back] [
width=2\edgewidth,
height=\paperheight]

\setlayer[back] [x=-17mm,y=0mm]
{\rotate[rotation=270]
{\framed[
width=\paperheight,
height=34mm,
background=color,
backgroundcolor=MyColor,
foregroundcolor=white]
{\bfd Wat is het leven kort! -
P.G.Th. Sieben}}}
} % End of layer
```

Usage of a layer in this situation enabled the exact alignment of the text at the middle of the spine's width! Note the shift in the x-direction by -17mm, causing the layer to pass halfway across the edge of the page!

Back

The back also uses a reduced width of the typesetting area. The text is wrapped around a figure using the `left -option`.

The final result of the full-color cover is presented in Figure 3.

Flaps

The front flap is typeset using the `\inright` command with the settings defined as

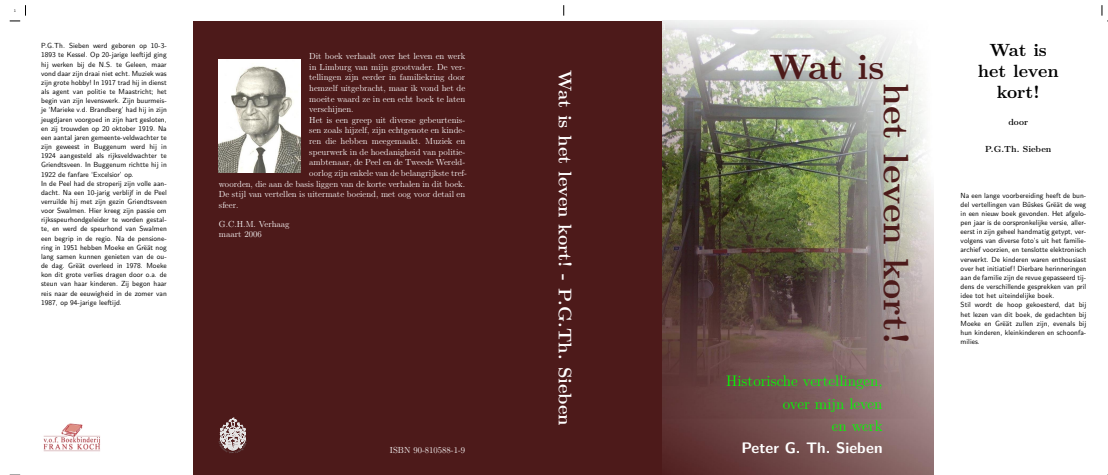


Figure 3. The final look of the cover.

```
\setupmargin[right]
[style=\ss\tfx\setupinterlinespace,
align=no,width=60mm,distance=12.5mm]
```

The flap at the back is based on the `\inleft` command.

Conclusion

Creating a dust-cover using ConTeXt turned out to be fairly easy. It took me quite a while however, before I ended up with the solution as described here.

References

- [1] Egger, W., *Help! The Typesetting Area*. Maps 2004, 30, pp. 52-9

1. For those interested in the bookbinder, here is the information:

v.o.f. Boekbinderij Frans Koch, De Koningstraat 66, 5984 NJ Koningslust (www.boekbinderijkoch.nl)

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