XQuery from the Experts: A Guide to the W3C XML Query Language

By Howard Katz, Don Chamberlin, Denise Draper, Mary Fernandez, Michael Kay, Jonathan Robie, Michael Rys, Jerome Simeon, Jim Tivy, Philip Wadler

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This informative guide to using XQuery allows readers to focus on either a tutorial or reference-style approach as best suits them.

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Editorial Review

From the Back Cover

"The individual perspectives on the concepts behind the XQuery language offered by **XQuery from the Experts** *will be of great value to those who are seeking to understand the implications, opportunities, and challenges of XQuery as they design future information systems based on XML."*

—Michael Champion, Advisory Research and Development Specialist, Software AG

XQuery answers the growing need for a functional XML search and transformation standard. Backed by the full weight of the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C), XQuery is being extremely well received by the IT community worldwide. The first major XML language that takes advantage of the benefits of strong typing provided by XML Schema, XQuery has the versatility to manipulate both XML and non-XML data and provides a valuable connection between the world of XML and relational databases.

In *XQuery from the Experts* , select members of the W3C's XML Query working group come together to discuss every facet of XQuery. From Jonathan Robie's introductory "XQuery: A Guided Tour" to Mary Mary Fernández, Jérôme Siméon, and Philip Wadler's "Introduction to the Formal Semantics," XQuery is revealed in a way that both novice programmers and industry experts can appreciate.

Edited by long-time XML expert and programmer Howard Katz, coverage ranges from strictly technical chapters to comparative essays such as Michael Kay's "XQuery, XPath, and XSLT," which explores the common ancestry of all three languages, and Don Chamberlin's "Influences on the Design of XQuery," which details the process behind XQuery's design.

Key coverage includes:

"Databases" *Basics* Jonathan Robie's "XQuery: A Guided Tour" provides a good starting point if you're new or relatively new to XQuery. Its easy, tutorial-like style means you can sit down and read it straight through if you're so inclined. As a compact and convenient reference to most of XQuery's key features, it's also a good place to periodically return to, for newcomers and experts alike, for a quick refresher of the basics as you weave in and out of the detail in the other chapters. Jonathan's coverage is extensive; most of the Glossary entries in the back of the book (a useful resource when you're stumbling across new terminology) originated in this chapter.*Background* The two chapters in the "Background" section provide historical context and a detailed rationale for many of the complex technical decisions the Query working group has had to make as the language has evolved. The second chapter in this section will be of particular interest to XSLT developers, since it provides a valuable comparison and contrast between XQuery and XSLT, the two official W3C-mandated languages that are quite similar in a number of ways.As Don Chamberlin describes in "Influences on the design of XQuery," the process of designing XQuery has been one of resolving the tensions between conflicting goals, and this chapter provides a historical and technical description of that dialectic in action. This chapter also places XQuery in the context of the other related languages and standards it coexists with. The second half of the chapter deals in cogent detail with the intricacies of what Don calls "watershed issues": eight complex and often controversial issues that have had a major impact on the design of the language. Don goes a long way to teasing apart the complexities As Mike Kay notes in his

chapter on "XQuery and XSLT," the fact that both these languages share a common data model, as well as a common sublanguage in XPath, is a major achievement of the W3C. His chapter explores that commonality and the overlap in functionality between the two languages, as well as their differences. This chapter describes where each language might be employed to best advantage. Mike addresses some of the same issues discussed by Don in the previous chapter but from the particular perspectives of XPath and XSLT.*Formal Underpinnings* Both chapters in this section were jointly co-written by Mary Fernandez, Phil Wadler, and Jerome Simeon. The chapter "Static Typing in XQuery" is a gentle tutorial that explores the ramifications of static typing in a language dealing with XML data. Despite the term "formal" in the title of this section --this chapter fits very naturally here because it provides such a great lead-in to the chapter on the formal semantics--the topic isn't difficult or particularly heavy. Static typing is important to XQuery developers because it can help guarantee program correctness. It can also significantly help speed up the development cycle, as this chapter attests. It's important that users understand the concept of static typing so they can better understand the meaning of the error messages returned by the query system they're working with."Introduction to the Formal Semantics" is a tutorial-like introduction to the formal semantics, the formal mathematical system on which XQuery is built. This is likely the single most challenging technical component of XQuery. This chapter should appeal to implementors, language theoreticians, and those just terminally curious about this aspect of the language. They should find this chapter a much less daunting approach to the formal semantics than that provided by the specification.*Databases* Most major relational database vendors already have or will shortly provide support for XQuery as a front end for relational data, and interest in XQuery from this market sector was one of the driving forces behind its development. The first two chapters in this section deal with the topic of XQuery and relational data and were jointly developed by their two authors. The last chapter in this section describes the features of what its author refers to as an XML database mangagement system.XQuery was designed to query XML, and using it to query and pull data out of relational databases that store information in tabular format poses a number of interesting challenges. Denise Draper explores these issues in "Mapping between XML and Relational Data."Michael Rys' chapter, "Integrating XQuery and Relational Database Systems," builds on the foundation laid in the prior chapter. This chapter shows two methods of accessing XML stored in a relational database. One approach uses the XML datatype to store XML into the database as an LOB (large object) and accesses that data using a combination of both XQuery and SQL. Michael also describes a so-called "top-level XQuery" approach that obviates the need to use SQL altogether.Jim Tivy's concluding chapter, "A Native XML DBMS," rounds out the offerings in this section. Jim describes the key features of what he calls an XML database management system and explores what that means. He looks at the use of the XQuery data model in that context and explores other XML DBMS features such as command languages and APIs, drawing on his experience with XStreamDB (his own native XML database product), Tamino, and the xmldb initiative.

0321180607P05222003 Users Review**From reader reviews:**
James Oliver:Have you spare time for just a day? What do you do when you have much more or little spare time? Yeah, you can choose the suitable activity regarding spend your time. Any person spent their very own spare time to take a go walking, shopping, or went to the Mall. How about open or read a book called XQuery from the Experts: A Guide to the W3C XML Query Language? Maybe it is to get best activity for you. You already know beside you can spend your time with your favorite's book, you can better than before. Do you agree with its opinion or you have additional opinion?
Victoria Manson:The e-book untitled XQuery from the Experts: A Guide to the W3C XML Query Language is the guide that recommended to you to read. You can see the quality of the book content that will be shown to you. The language that creator use to explained their ideas are easily to understand. The article author was did a lot of research when write the book, hence the information that they share for you is absolutely accurate. You also will get the e-book of XQuery from the Experts: A Guide to the W3C XML Query Language from the publisher to make you considerably more enjoy free time.
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