



SVG Essentials (O'Reilly XML)

By J. David Eisenberg

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Scalable Vector Graphics -- or SVG -- is the new XML-based graphics standard from the W3C that will enable Web documents to be smaller, faster and more interactive. J. David Eisenberg's insightful book takes you through the ins and outs of SVG, beginning with basics needed to create simple line drawings and then moving through more complicated features like filters, transformations, and integration with Java, Perl, and XSLT.

Unlike GIFs, JPEGs or PNGs (which are bitmapped), SVG images are both resolution- and device-independent, so that they can scale up or down to fit proportionally into any size display or any Internet device -- from PDAs to large office monitors and high-resolution printers. Smaller than bitmapped files and faster to download, SVG images can be rendered with different CSS styles for each environment. They work well across a range of available bandwidths.

SVG makes it possible for designers to escape the constant need to update graphics by hand or use custom code to generate bitmap images. And while SVG was created with the Web in mind, the language has a variety of other uses. SVG greatly simplifies tasks like:

1. Creating web sites whose graphics reflect the content of the page, changing automatically if the content changes
2. Generating graphs and charts from information stored in a wide variety of sources
3. Exchanging detailed drawings, from architectural plans to CAD layouts to project management diagrams
4. Creating diagrams that users can explore by zooming in and panning around
5. Generating bitmap images for use in older browsers using simple automatable templates
6. Managing graphics that support multiple languages or translations
7. Creating complex animation

By focusing sharply on the markup at the foundation of SVG, *SVG Essentials* gives you a solid base on which to create your own custom tools. Explanations of key technical tools -- like XML, matrix math, and scripting -- are included as appendices, along with a reference to the SVG vocabulary.

Whether you're a graphic designer in search of new tools or a programmer dealing with the complex task of creating and managing graphics, SVG Essentials provides you with the means to take advantage of SVG.

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

SVG Essentials opens the door to the rich language that underpins this emerging and fast-growing graphics language. Scalable Vector Graphics, which are described through text like a programming language and can be read on any computer platform with the appropriate viewer, hold great promise for the Web designer who knows how to take advantage of the latent power. This book helps to harness that power.

It's important to note that this book is not written for Web designers looking to add SVG graphics to their sites, but rather for Web programmers who need to add such graphics based on information extracted from a database, or who want to add them by hand. If you have or use an application that can export or embed SVG graphics, you may not need this book. However, if you are looking to create dynamic images that get created on the fly, or perhaps be able to draw graphics based on information from the user or from a database, you've come to the right book.

Although only 330 pages, the book offers 13 chapters and six appendices. Everything from a basic overview of the SVG language through practical examples to the finer points of serving SVG files over the Web is thoroughly detailed, and each chapter is concisely written and rich with screenshots, illustrations, and code examples.

O'Reilly has earned a positive reputation for publishing outstanding technical books, and *SVG Essentials* makes a fine addition to their lineup. The SVG graphics standard is rapidly gaining ground. Backed by important vendors as Adobe, SVG is poised to be a powerful tool in the arsenal of today's Web designer. Keep this book within arm's reach of any SVG developer or Web designer who wants to take advantage of this emerging and powerful technology. --*Mike Caputo*

About the Author

J. David Eisenberg is a programmer and instructor living in San Jose, California with his cat, Tabitha. David has a talent for teaching and explaining. He has developed courses for CSS, JavaScript, CGI, and beginning XML. He also teaches C and Perl at De Anza Community College in Cupertino. David has written articles for xml.com and alistapart.com on topics such as Javascript and the Document Object Model, XML validation, XSL Transformations and Formatting Objects, and (surprise) SVG. His on-line courses provide introductory tutorials for Korean, Modern Greek, and Russian. David has also been developing education software since 1975, when he worked with the Modern Foreign Language project at the University of Illinois to develop computer-assisted instruction on the PLATO system. He co-authored several of the in-box tutorials shipped with the venerable Apple II computer. David did the programming for the multimedia CD-ROM version of a series of children's stories, and the programming for beginning Algebra and Spanish discs. When not programming, David enjoys digital photography, reading science fiction, and riding his bicycle.

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