

# Software: Librarians, Weblate, DocBook and Firefox

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- [Tools to Empower Librarians](#) [2]

Open source software is a popular choice for libraries and librarians, not simply because recent austerity measures in many developed countries have tightened available budgets. The ability to customise the software for a library's particular needs, the potential for interoperation with other software, and the lack of license restrictions makes open source software attractive.

Modern libraries need robust, scalable and flexible software to make their collections and services attractive, especially as digital libraries are radically transforming how information is disseminated. There are very few barriers to any library adopting an open source library system.

To provide an insight into the quality of software available, we have compiled a list of 7 tools that help librarians embrace web technology. The software is a fairly eclectic bunch, so hopefully there will be something of interest for any librarian.

- [Weblate 3.6](#) [3]

Weblate 3.6 has been released today. It brings rewritten notifications, user data download and several other improvements. It also sets depreciation timeline for Python 2 installations - after April 2020 Weblate will only support Python 3.

- [docbook2mdoc-1.0.0 released](#) [4]

After doing active development on it for about a month, i just released version 1.0.0 of the DocBook to mdoc converter, docbook2mdoc(1). The OpenBSD port was updated, too. In a nutshell, docbook2mdoc was brought from experimental status to an early release that can be considered mostly usable for production, though no doubt there are still many rough edges. That's why i called it 1.0.0 and not 1.1.1.

Lots of features were added including support for many new DocBook XML elements and for two kinds of file inclusion, formatting was improved in many respects, and several reorganizations were done with respect to internal code structure. The expat library is no longer needed, and no other dependency is required.

See its homepage for all information about the utility and the release notes for details about this release.

Thanks to Stephen Gregoratto for a number of patches and many useful reports.

The rest of this article explains some important design and implementation decisions and mentions some use cases.

- [Firefox Nightly: These Weeks in Firefox: Issue 57](#) [5]

- [My 20 years of web](#) [6]

Twenty years ago I resigned from my former job at a financial news wire to pursue a career in San Francisco. We were transitioning our news service (Jiji Press, a Japanese wire service similar to Reuters) to being a web-based news site. I had followed the rise and fall of Netscape and the Department of Justice anti-trust case on Microsoft's bundling of IE with Windows.

But what clinched it for me was a Congressional testimony of the Federal Reserve Chairman (the US central bank) about his inability to forecast the potential growth of the Internet.

Working in the Japanese press at the time gave me a keen interest in international trade. Prime Minister Hashimoto negotiated with United States Trade Representative Mickey Cantor to enhance trade relations and reduce protectionist tariffs that the countries used to artificially subsidize domestic industries. Japan was the second largest global economy at the time. I realized that if I was going to play a role in international trade it was probably going to be in Japan or on the west coast of the US.

I decided that because Silicon Valley was the location where much of the industry growth in internet technology was happening, that I had to relocate there if I wanted to engage in this industry. So I packed up all my belongings and moved to San Francisco to start my new career.

**Links:**

[1] <http://www.tuxmachines.org/taxonomy/term/38>

[2] <https://www.linuxlinks.com/libriantools/>

[3] <https://blog.cihar.com/archives/2019/04/20/weblate-36/>

[4] <https://undeadly.org/cgi?action=article;sid=20190419101505>

[5] <https://blog.nightly.mozilla.org/2019/04/20/these-weeks-in-firefox-issue-57/>

[6] <https://ncubeeight.blogspot.com/2019/04/my-20-years-of-web.html>