

# XML: Data Modeling or Muddling?

Fabian Pascal

Fabian Pascal has a national and international reputation as an independent technology analyst, consultant, author and lecturer specializing in data management. He was affiliated with Codd & Date and for more than 15 years held various analytical and management positions in the private and public sectors, has taught and lectured at the business and academic levels, and advised vendor and user organizations on database technology, strategy and implementation. Clients include IBM, Census Bureau, CIA, Apple, Borland, Cognos, UCSF, IRS. He is founder and editor of DATABASE DEBUNKINGS ([www.dbdebunk.com](http://www.dbdebunk.com)), a web site dedicated to dispelling prevailing fallacies and misconceptions in the database industry, where C.J. Date is a senior contributor. He has contributed extensively to most trade publications, including Database Programming and Design, DBMS, DataBased Advisor, Byte, Infoworld and Computerworld and is author of the contrarian column Against the Grain ([http://searchdatabase.techtarget.com/tipsIndex/0,289482,sid13\\_tax284872,00.html](http://searchdatabase.techtarget.com/tipsIndex/0,289482,sid13_tax284872,00.html)). His third book, PRACTICAL ISSUES IN DATABASE MANAGEMENT - A GUIDE FOR THE THINKING PRACTITIONER (Addison Wesley, June 2000) serves as text for a seminar bearing the same name (<http://www.firstsql.com/dbdebunk/fp1s.htm>). He can be contacted at [editor@dbdebunk.com](mailto:editor@dbdebunk.com).

## Abstrakt

The computer industry operates like the fashion industry: it is driven by fads. With help from the trade media, it constantly hypes new fads, obscuring their lack of soundness and imperfections. Every fad paves the way for a subsequent fad, by failing to solve old problems (and even by causing new ones!), a quite profitable system predicated on the accelerated obsolescence which underlies all fads. Many of these fads are, however, not even new, but previously discarded fads by different names, frequently worse than the original. Sound and correct solutions and principles, on the other hand, which would--actually even did--provide true solutions, are ignored and flouted.

The most recent evangelism revolves around XML: conferences and articles in the trade press proliferate and vendors step over each other--even Microsoft got religion--to announce all sorts of XML support, the hallmarks of a fad. Is it truly the holy grail of data management in the Internet age, or just another fad? Attend this presentation to find out. It offers a critical assessment of XML from the only perspective that counts, that of data management.

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