12-0011-EN-What is XML?

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What is XML?

» XML stands for EXtensible Markup Language
» XML is a markup language much like HTML
» XML was designed to describe data
» XML tags are not predefined. You must define your own tags
» XML uses a Document Type Definition (DTD) or an XML Schema to describe the data
» XML with a DTD or XML Schema is designed to be self-descriptive
» XML is a W3C Recommendation

The Main Difference Between XML and HTML

XML was designed to carry data.
XML is not a replacement for HTML.
XML and HTML were designed with different goals:
XML was designed to describe data and to focus on what data is.
HTML was designed to display data and to focus on how data looks.HTML is about displaying information, while XML is about describing information.

XML Does not DO Anything

XML was not designed to DO anything.
Maybe it is a little hard to understand, but XML does not DO anything. XML was created to structure, store and to send information.

XML is Free and Extensible

XML tags are not predefined. You must "invent" your own tags.
The tags used to mark up HTML documents and the structure of HTML documents are predefined. The author of HTML documents can only use tags that are defined in the HTML standard XML allows the author to define his own tags and his own document structure.

XML is a Complement to HTML

XML is not a replacement for HTML.
It is important to understand that XML is not a replacement for HTML. In future Web development it is most likely that XML will be used to describe the data, while HTML will be used to format and display the same data.
My best description of XML is this: XML is a cross-platform, software and hardware independent tool for transmitting information.