
Simply XML March 2021 Newsletter

This is the Simply XML Newsletter written by Doug Gorman, Founder and CEO of Simply XML, often under the counsel of his canine muse, Frank.

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Enterprise Content Management No Man's Land

Abstract

The available results from Enterprise Content Management (ECM) cannot be achieved until Operating Departments and Technical Departments adopt standards, processes, and tools that work efficiently and economically for both. There is currently a vast "No Man's Land" between Technical Departments and the "Rest Of The Organization" (ROTO). In the absence of a full commitment to topic-based writing and a common DITA XML content architecture:

- customers will get conflicting content that is inconsistently branded,
- reuse and single source publishing will be haphazard and confined to silos,
- translation execution, quality, and costs across the enterprise will be problematic, and
- operating costs will be too high.

The dominant authoring tool globally is Microsoft Word on a PC under Windows. It is used by more than 1.6 Billion people. No other authoring tool comes close to the ubiquity of Word. All roads to ECM must pass through MS Word.

Realizing the Value Opportunity

Content needs to be topic-based to make it accessible and understandable. Content needs to have an XML architecture so computers can process it for reuse and flexible publishing from a single source. DITA XML has strong momentum in Technical Departments. Our Simply DITA subset works appropriately and effectively for ROTO to achieve content interoperability and symmetry with Technical Departments. Eventual success demands this straight-forward approach.

Content Mapper is a Word Plugin. The author sees a Word UI and the repository sees valid DITA XML. We hide the XML and most of the DITA so the author can focus quickly and easily on creating great content under the DITA architecture.

Conclusion

With good intent, understanding, and minor tradeoffs, large organizations can achieve a content architecture and supporting processes that are widespread, cost-effective, and synergistic. Large enterprise-level tool and services vendors have the resources and will soon recognize the opportunity to bring simple topic-based authoring skills and relevant software to the MS Word customer base.

Download the Complete White Paper:

Enterprise Content Management No Man's Land

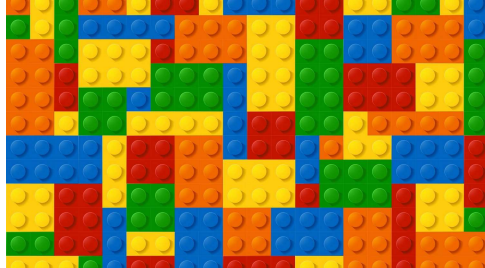
You can download the White Paper by clicking below.

<https://www.simplyxml.com/resources-white-papers.php>.

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Content Mapper Product Development

Busy During These Crazy Times



Frank: With the global pandemic forcing everyone inward, why not tell people what we've been doing on the product development front.

Doug: We have focused a lot of effort on customer-driven enhancements. As you know this keeps our development relevant and effective.

Simply XML Development Triggers

As always, our development is driven by customers, prospects, and customer/reader content needs. Content Mapper lets the author see a constrained MS Word UI while the repository sees XML DITA. To make it work, we always need to match any available DITA function with the equivalent MS Word functionality, back and forth using XSLT and C# code. We have taken advantage of the recent "lull in the world" to further improve and advance the utility of Content Mapper. It continues to be the only reliable Word to XML (and back to Word) authoring tool available today.

Exciting New Developments

For the past year, or so, we've been working in the following areas:

- DITA 1.3
- Oxy Review Functions
- MathML
- Repository Integrations
- Online Help

Content Mapper constantly moves content back and forth between MS Word and DITA XML. The action is trivial for a small DITA Topic or Map, but not for a 500-page DITA Map. For the past year, we've focused on enhancements to improve the number and breadth of integrations along with features to improve consistency, compliance, and customer focus.

DITA1.3

Our Simply DITA structure now validates natively with DITA 1.3. We not support native MathML tags rather than through the element "Foreign." Recognizing differences in CMS implementation levels, we have added configuration options for organizations using DITA 1.1 or DITA 1.2.

Oxy Review Functions

For complex/technical DITA XML authoring, editing, and review, client or cloud-based Oxygen seems to be the editor of choice. When DITA XML adoption achieves results in a Technical Department, the next step is often to bring more casual authors into this new world of DITA XML possibilities. These authors use Word and have non-technical KPI's to achieve. Over the last year we have improved our ability to round trip content that conforms in all ways to our Simply DITA Schema subset, including the round tripping of Oxygen review mark-up. This lowers the bar for broader adoption and lets both technical and non-technical staff author, edit, and review in their tool of choice.

MathML

A number of our customers are driven by compliance needs and verifiable scientific performance. A significant level of science and mathematics is often involved. Customers rely on published formulas for all sorts of critical functions. We have seen the requirement for review facilities that include changes to MathML at a very granular level. Those facilities have now been developed, tested, and deployed in the released version of Content Mapper.

Repository Integrations

Here's what we've been doing:

- easyDITA -- For recent customers, we built a REST-based integration that includes support for authoring, review, and publishing using modern work flow and metadata.
- Alfresco/Componize -- We updated our connector under the recently released version of Alfresco with their REST API.
- GitHub -- For organizations using GIT for their code and content, we offer an integration that takes advantage of the underlying tree-based structure of content.
- DITAToo -- We had developed a connector that used the DITAToo virtual drive. We have done a feasibility analysis and await the new REST integration with DITAToo.
- Vasont -- We see the clear potential here and await a solid prospect to integrate Content Mapper with Vasont.
- DropBox -- We are wondering about the need for for a DropBox connector?

Online Help

Content Mapper is easy to learn and use. Most functions are extremely familiar to an MS Word author. Once in a while, authors need help to understand the DITA XML functionality and feature options that are new to Word. Our recent release features improved help including configuration support for available, but lesser-used functions. We are considering building some Topic-based writing tutorials into our UI and would appreciate any feedback our readers would wish to provide.

Simply Tips and Tricks

All of our newsletters provide quick tips and tricks to help you simplify the XML world and beyond. Our tip for March 2021 is that people feel good when they win something. We want one of our faithful readers to feel "especially good" as we provide some high end clothing to wear to your next Zoom



meeting.

In Life:

Progress starts a new goal or with understanding of a problem we can solve.

IN XML:

After reading our Newsletter, kindly send a relevant description of a thoughtful need, suggestion or comment to hello@simplyxml.com. We'll send someone a "coveted" Simply XML Polo shirt (in a size we have in stock!)



There's a reason we call it Simply XML.

Simply XML provides simple, easy to use solutions for creating and publishing great content. Creating, managing, and publishing content with our XML editor, Content Mapper, minimizes costs and ensures efficiency across your organization. Learn more at www.simplyxml.com.

Request a Free Trial of Content Mapper

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