MadCap Software Acquires Doc-To-Help:
An Interview with Anthony Olivier

ON 7 JANUARY 2015, MadCap Software officially announced the acquisition of Doc-To-Help. Complementing MadCap Flare, the addition of Doc-To-Help brings together under one roof two of the industry's most popular content authoring and publishing solutions.

Recently we had an opportunity to interview Anthony Olivier, MadCap founder and CEO, and John Ayers, general manager of GrapeCity Developer Tools US, formerly ComponentOne. ComponentOne was acquired by GrapeCity in 2012. Together they discussed what the acquisition means for customers of Doc-To-Help and MadCap Flare, as well as the future of the products.

Intercom: What are the terms of the Doc-To-Help acquisition? Will Doc-To-Help relocate to MadCap Software's headquarters?

Olivier: MadCap Software has acquired all the Doc-To-Help assets, including the product source code, related intellectual property, customer accounts, and all related contracts. Doc-To-Help is a strategic addition to the company, so it is moving over to our headquarters in La Jolla, California.

Intercom: Will any members of the Doc-To-Help team be joining MadCap Software?

Olivier: All of the Doc-To-Help team members at GrapeCity have been reassigned to other positions within GrapeCity. However, we are very impressed with the talent and knowledge of the Doc-To-Help team, and we are still in discussions as to whether we may be able to bring a few of their people over to join MadCap.

Intercom: What factors were behind MadCap Software's decision to acquire the Doc-To-Help product?

Olivier: Doc-To-Help has always been the industry-leading tool for people who author in Microsoft Word, providing a unique multi-channel publishing solution that allows content creators to continue using Word as their editor of choice. As the very first technical authoring tool on the market, it also has a large and loyal customer base of users dating back to 1991.

MadCap has been running on a parallel path to Doc-To-Help since 2006 and has quickly become the industry leader for topic-based technical authoring and publishing using our award-winning, patented XML solution, which is contained in MadCap Flare.

In the wake of continued rapid growth and gains in market share, we decided to start looking at various acquisition opportunities to further expand our market share. Strategically, Doc-To-Help stood out as a highly attractive opportunity because adding this innovative Word-based authoring solution complements Madcap's toolset and offerings and allows us to reach a new customer base. At MadCap, we can now offer the technical writing industry a full spectrum of authoring solutions, regardless of the user's skillset, industry, or requirements.

The other nice synergy is that both Doc-To-Help and the full MadPak Suite of tools are Microsoft-centric, providing a solid basis for the future development of these complementary product lines.

Intercom: Why was MadCap Software an attractive suitor for Doc-To-Help?

Ayers: When Anthony and the MadCap team approached us to discuss acquiring Doc-To-Help, we were very interested in hearing what they had to say. We also saw how our Doc-To-Help product and MadCap's software provided a natural complement to each other as multi-channel offerings in the technical communication market.

Moreover, as a rapidly emerging leader in the market, MadCap has earned a reputation for delivering innovative, high quality products—and for backing these products with a support team of technical communications experts. This gave us the confidence that, under the MadCap umbrella, Doc-To-Help and our customers will be in the hands

of industry experts who will continue driving product innovation and offer first-class support.

Intercom: How is MadCap Software financially positioned to support the acquisition of Doc-To-Help?

Olivier: MadCap has been profitable since our first month shipping MadCap Flare in 2006. Since then, we've continued to grow revenue in the double digits year over year, all the while maintaining profitability and capturing market share to become the Industry standard in technical multi-channel, multi-language authoring and publishing.

At the heart of this success is our commitment to creating a superior customer experience, which has led to a very large and loyal customer base worldwide. We are excited to have Doc-To-Help customers join the MadCap family and extend to them our passion for providing first-class software and support.

Intercom: Will MadCap change the Doc-To-Help name?

Olivier: Doc-To-Help has built a lot of positive brand recognition and value, so our plan right now is to continue the current name and branding. In fact, Doc-To-Help customers and prospects will continue to use *www.doctohelp.com* for all their information and support needs.

Intercom: There is considerable overlap in functionality between Doc-To-Help and MadCap Flare, how will you position the two products?

Ayers: From our perspective, both the Doc-To-Help and MadCap Flare products are authoring and multi-channel publishing solutions, but they cater to different users and spectrums of the market.

Olivier: We agree. We consider Doc-To-Help the leading Word-based authoring solution on the market today. It is ideal for users who prefer to create content in Word, have a more book- or chapter-like approach to content development, and need to publish their content to multiple outputs from a single-source.

MadCap Flare provides a very powerful, feature-rich, built-in state-of-the-art XML-based editor for topic-based authoring. This functionality is important for technical communicators who may have larger document sets, and are looking for more advanced features and function-ality supporting content re-use, content management, advanced print, enhanced Cascading Style Sheets support, or even translation management to name a few. For these users, Microsoft Word as an editor is not enough to meet their needs.

Additionally, MadCap Flare is seamlessly integrated with other MadCap products—such as MadCap Lingo for translation, MadCap Mimic for software simulation movies and videos, MadCap Capture for image capture and graphics editing, and MadCap Pulse for socially-enabled online content, among others.

We also believe that, as the Word-based authors' projects, teams, complexities, and potentially languages grow, they may eventually outgrow the functionality of Microsoft Word and therefore need a seamless transition to a more powerful and possibly integrated solution. MadCap can now offer these users an easy transition to the power of XML, topic-based authoring, and content management—all from the same trusted Industry leader.

Intercom: What advice do you give customers or prospects trying to decide between using MadCap Flare or Doc-To-Help?

Olivier: As we discussed, both products are best-in-class solutions, but they have different strengths and serve different requirements. We recommend that people contact us so we can learn more about their projects and what they are looking to achieve, walk them through the different solutions, and together determine which product best meets their needs.

Intercom: What do you have on the product roadmap for Doc-To-Help and MadCap Flare? Will they continue as two different products?

Olivier: We will continue to support and develop both products independently for the foreseeable future. At the same time, each product has its strengths, and we will be looking at features and functionality that can possibly be leveraged across products to maximize the benefit for all customers. We will also look at opportunities for integrating the products, since it's not uncommon for different groups within a large enterprise to use both tools.

Ayers: It is worth noting that MadCap has already created an enhanced version of Doc-To-Help, which has launched in conjunction with the completion of the acquisition.

Olivier: Yes, we have just delivered Doc-To-Help 2014 V2, which adds an Office 2013 ribbon interface look and feel, a new "Theme" wizard, a number of bug fixes, and inclusion of MadCap licensing and trial behavior.

Intercom: Who will handle Doc-To-Help sales?

Olivier: All future sales will continue through the MadCap territory reps, and we are working to introduce all existing Doc-To-Help customers to their new account managers.

Intercom: How is product support for Doc-To-Help customers being handled?

Olivier: Doc-To-Help support will now be provided by the award-winning US-based MadCap team of technical support experts. We will continue to support those

Doc-To-Help customers with active maintenance plans and will honor the same terms and conditions as their currently active Platinum or Bronze support plans.

Intercom: What do current Doc-To-Help users need to do in order to move their current support plans over to MadCap support?

Olivier: Current Doc-To-Help maintenance plan customers will receive a new MadCap Doc-To-Help maintenance key for the remainder of their service agreement. All current support plan holders will need to visit the Doc-To-Help Support page (*http://www.doctohelp.com/support/*) and use the new key to open a support case. Doc-To-Help customers with active Platinum support plans can also call MadCap Support at +1 858-320-0387, option 3.

Intercom: What is the plan for training the MadCap sales and support teams on Doc-To-Help?

Olivier: All of our MadCap sales and technical support staff have undergone training of the Doc-To-Help product. We are ready and able to take any sales and support inquiries.

Intercom: What impact does the Doc-To-Help acquisition have on technical support for existing MadCap customers?

Olivier: The acquisition has no impact on the support previously provided for our customers. We have staffed sufficiently to handle the new Doc-To-Help users. Additionally, all our support staff has been cross-trained in MadCap and Doc-To-Help products.

Intercom: What, if any, changes do you expect to see in community support for either Doc-To-Help or MadCap Flare?

Olivier: There are no changes to the current MadCap Flare community support. Doc-To-Help community support previously provided via public forums will also continue. Doc-To-Help users can connect to these forums from *www.doctohelp.com*.

By having both Doc-To-Help and Flare under the same company, we also see the ability for the communities to slowly come together and expand the ability of all our customers to communicate with other experienced professionals they didn't have access to before.

Intercom: Can a current Doc-To-Help user migrate to MadCap Flare or vice versa?

Olivier: Yes, there are a number of ways to migrate Doc-To-Help content to MadCap Flare. The transition can be very easy, particularly since Doc-To-Help is a Word-based product. However, it also depends on a user's projects and experience level. Similarly, there are a number of ways to migrate content from Flare to Doc-To-Help.

As mentioned previously, our world-class technical support team is trained on both products, and we have been transitioning customers to Flare from other products since 2006. We will be more than happy to assist customers through the transition process from Doc-To-Help to Flare or from Flare to Doc-To-Help. Either way, we will work closely with the customer to ensure that the conversion process is a smooth one.

Intercom: What will happen to existing Doc-To-Help and MadCap channel partners?

Ayers: Interestingly, there are many resellers today that already sell both Doc-To-Help and MadCap Flare. This is another synergy of the acquisition.

Olivier: That's right. For the resellers that already carry both Doc-To-Help and MadCap products, the only difference is that they will now be working with one company. Other current Doc-To-Help resellers and channel partners will be required to sign reseller agreements with MadCap Software, which allow them to not only continue selling Doc-To-Help but also begin selling MadCap products, as well. For a list of approved Doc-To-Help resellers, visit (*http://www.doctohelp.com/resellers/*).

At the same time, with the addition of Doc-To-Help to MadCap, current MadCap resellers and channel partners worldwide will now to be able to add this product offering to their inventory list of items to sell.

It gives all resellers an opportunity to provide customers with more options to find the product that best suits their needs.

Intercom: Does MadCap have any other acquisitions or plans in the works to expand market share beyond this acquisition?

Olivier: Yes we do. However, due to confidentiality, we cannot discuss these in any detail at this time. What I can say is that we have some very exciting plans for the future that will greatly benefit our customers and also enable MadCap to expand into adjacent markets.

Intercom: Any last thoughts?

Ayers: We are very pleased to have found a good home for our Doc-To-Help product and customers. With MadCap Software, we are confident that our Doc-To-Help users have a provider who truly cares about the community, will continue to drive product innovation, and will deliver best-in-class support for years to come.

Olivier: Doc-To-Help has built a market-leading product and worldwide customer loyalty. With Doc-To-Help now solidly part of the MadCap family, we look forward to building on that success. 🛈