



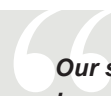
Cary, NC

www.gfi.com

GFI Software Switches from Microsoft® Word to MadCap Flare to Streamline Documentation and Localization Processes and Achieve a Five-Fold Reduction in Project Time

INDUSTRY

- Software for small to mid-sized businesses



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Jason Micallef | **Technical Communications Manager, GFI Software**

Goals:

- Enable single-source publishing to online and print formats
- Cut overall project time
- Simplify localization efforts
- Facilitate style consistency by separating content from style
- Enhance user experience

Solutions:

- MadCap Flare native XML tool for topic-based authoring and single-source publishing

Benefits:

- Flare's functionality and ease of use enabled GFI to cut project time dramatically
- Topic-based authoring and single-sourcing enable GFI to eliminate redundancies in creating manuals with shared content
- XML-based Flare separates content from style sheets to ensure brand consistency and facilitate localization
- Single-source publishing supports print, desktop and Web manuals
- HTML facilitates delivery of up-to-date documentation for fast-changing cloud solutions

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GFI Software is dedicated to providing enterprise-quality IT solutions for small to mid-sized businesses. These include on-premise and cloud-based offerings for collaboration, anti-spam, patch management, faxing, mail archiving, and Web monitoring, which are delivered via an extensive global partner community.

GFI's focus on offering small to mid-sized businesses the most efficient technology to ensure top performance is matched by a commitment to delivering first-class online Help and documentation to support the users of its solutions. Today, GFI's software of choice for creating and publishing this content is MadCap Flare.

Growing Documentation Complexity

When GFI began as a start-up, one engineer was able to maintain the documentation using Microsoft Word. Over time, however, the company began delivering a variety of different software and cloud-based solutions. Each of these offerings required online user guides, getting started guides, and other supporting documentation.

As the company grew, GFI saw the need to build a full-time team of technical authors. These writers continued to use MS Word, but they increasingly relied on a several other third-party tools to publish the content in different outputs, including CHM (compiled HTML), HTML, PDF and different print formats. Their reliance on multiple tools led to increased complexity and a redundancy of efforts.

"Word has its uses. However, some of our manuals could be up to 150 pages long, and even though 50% to 70% of the content for different manuals was the same, we couldn't easily reuse it," recalls Jason Micallef, technical communications manager at GFI.

Additionally, GFI extended its global presence, supporting hundreds of thousands of installations worldwide, which increased the need for localized versions of its documentation.

"Some of our manuals are delivered in over a dozen languages," Jason explained. "Each time a translator returned the localized version, it would change the styles in Word, and we would have to go back and adjust them. It was slowing our team down."

Searching for a Streamlined Solution

GFI decided to evaluate alternative software solutions, and the authoring team laid out six key requirements:

1. Offer a purpose-built technical authoring tool, backed by comprehensive support and a commitment to evolving the tool over time.
2. Publish to multiple online and print formats, reducing the time and labor required to generate various outputs.
3. Provide absolute control over the look of the final output.
4. Enable the migration to modern online Help based on HTML.
5. Support modern standards, such as HTML and XML, to help automate localization processes.
6. Provide a cost-effective solution, both in terms of initial purchase price and ongoing maintenance fees.

"Our search was both extensive and exhaustive. We evaluated the majority of the products on the market against our criteria, and we narrowed our list to three products," Jason recalls. "After a month-long evaluation the decision was quite simple. MadCap Flare fulfilled all our key criteria."

Flare provided an additional benefit over the other two finalists: a shorter learning curve.

"As we came to understand Flare, we saw no significant difference between authoring in Flare versus Word," Jason explained. "If anything, within MadCap Flare, content is organized in a more structured and logical manner, which makes it easier to find content during the authoring process."

“After converting our first project to Flare, we experienced a five-fold reduction in the total time required to generate outputs for a product.”

Jason Micallef | **Technical Communications Manager,**
GFI Software

Rapid Return on ROI

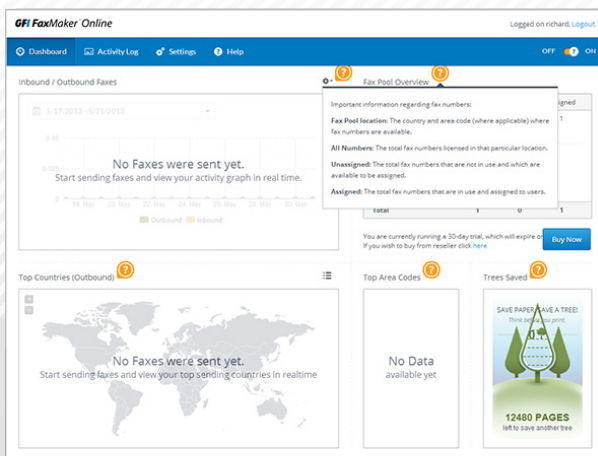
It took GFI very little time to realize the benefits of switching to Flare.

“After converting our first project to Flare, we experienced a five-fold reduction in the total time required to generate output for a product with three deliverables in three different formats in 14 languages totaling 126 individual target files—going down from roughly 25 hours to about 5 hours,” Jason notes.

Not only was GFI’s content workflow significantly simplified; the team observed that human errors went down drastically as well.

“Topic-based authoring and single-source publishing also provided us with a more efficient way to maintain documents that have common content between them,” Jason said.

“The ability to re-use content gives us a solid gain in productivity,” Jason explains. “When you multiply that benefit across all our manuals for all the products running concurrently, that translates into an incredible savings.”



Using Flare with CORA

MadCap support also played a central role in helping GFI to quickly realize the benefits of Flare.

“MadCap’s Help material and tutorials were great, and the MadCap support team really was there for us,” Jason recalled. “There was not one time when we contacted them that we did not get a reply. And when we had a problem, they had a solution.”

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Trimming Translation Costs

The efficiencies gained with MadCap Flare have enabled GFI to reduce the man-hours required to create and maintain documentation in different languages even as the company has expanded its product portfolio and language support.

“The combination of Flare’s XML architecture and the separation of style from content played a central role in simplifying the translation process,” Jason observes. “While XML facilitated the integration with other localization tools, the separation of content from style eased content localization.”

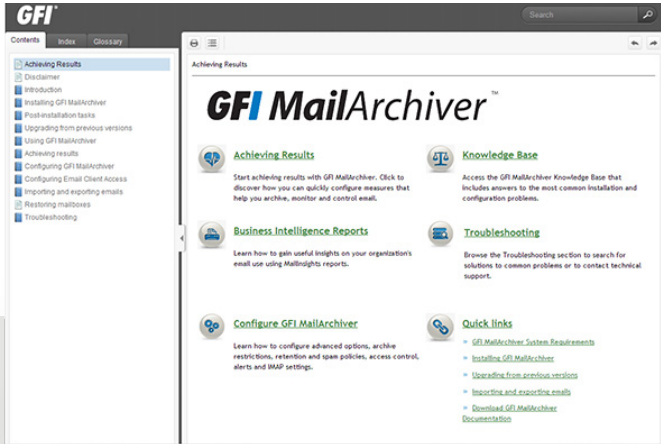
As a result, translators only deal with the translatable content, which is then imported and automatically assumes the correct formatting for each appropriate format, for example, PDF or HTML Help.

“We don’t have to worry about what software our translators use,” Jason notes. “And we have eliminated the hours of formatting previously required to get localized content into our corporate style.”

Modernizing with HTML

MadCap Flare’s support for HTML has enabled GFI to modernize its content in several ways.

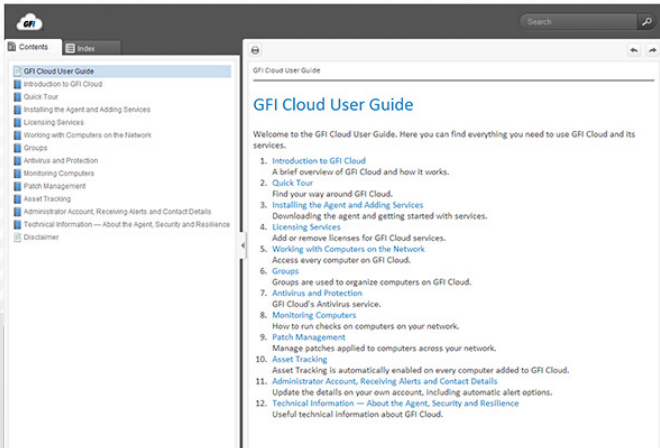
“With Flare and its support for HTML, the look and feel of our output is much cleaner and more in line with today’s common practices,” Jason observes.



GFI's MailArchiver

HTML is particularly helpful in ensuring that documentation keeps pace with GFI's cloud offerings, which are frequently updated. Using Flare, GFI's authors simply update the topics related to the new or updated features and then upload the revised sections onto the Web.

More recently, GFI has used Flare to begin moving online documentation to the newer HTML5 standard. Not only does HTML5 support the latest Web formatting features, it also enables users to search within topics, making it easier to find the information they need.



GFI's Cloud User Guide

“Without Flare, we may well have not won the award.”

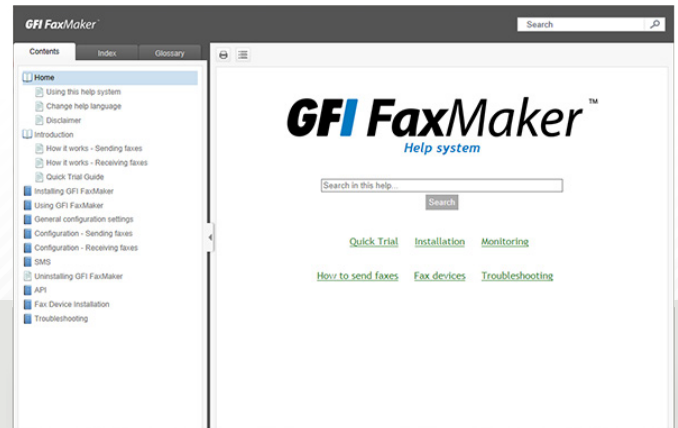
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GFI Software

Enhancing the User Experience

GFI also has enhanced its online Help system with context-oriented assistance (CORA), which relies heavily on Flare's single-sourcing and the ability to reuse content from the user manuals. With CORA, special markers are displayed in the interface of its products, making it easy to find and make adjustments.

In 2013, GFI received an Award of Merit from the Society of Technical Communications (STC) Washington, DC-Metro Baltimore Chapter in recognition for its GFI FaxMaker manual.

“We were competing against much larger companies, and without Flare, we may well have not won the award,” Jason said.



GFI's FaxMaker Manual

Looking ahead, GFI plans to look into how other Madcap solutions might make the company's online Help more interactive.

“We are continually looking at how we can enhance our documentation to support the current and future needs of our customers and partners,” Jason notes. “With MadCap, we have a publishing solution provider that shares our forward-looking commitment to providing a state-of-the-art user experience.”