Instrumentation Laboratory

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Leading Medical Diagnostic Company Uses MadCap Suite to Optimize the Delivery of Online Help and Print Manuals for Six Instruments in Eight Languages

INDUSTRY

- Healthcare

" *The MadPak tools are truly saving our company time while improving the quality of content we provide our customers, and ensuring that we don't miss a thing."*

Steve Gramolini | **Instrumentation Laboratory**

Goals:

- Make online Help for blood testing line intuitive and easier to use.

- Streamline the process of creating and publishing online Help and PDF manuals for six instruments.

- Facilitate the translation of online Help from English into seven foreign languages.

Solutions:

- MadCap Flare native XML content authoring tool

- MadCap Lingo translation management tool

- MadCap Analyzer for analyzing documentation

- MadCap Capture for image capture and editing

- MadPak ML Platinum Support

Benefits:

- Flare's drop-down text makes it easy to find information.

- MadCap Lingo simplifies translation, helping IL affiliates handle translations in-house

- MadCap Lingo eliminates redundancy, since only new content needs to be translated

- MadCap Analyzer allows IL to reduce translation costs by reducing word count

- MadCap Capture makes it easy to manage images, including adding translatable text callouts to images

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For more than 50 years, Instrumentation Laboratory (IL) has been a leader in providing medical professionals with diagnostic instruments and reagents for critical care and hemostasis. To support its automated, easy-to-use blood testing product line, the company places a priority on delivering an online Help system that makes it fast and simple for medical professionals to find the information they need. Today, IL relies on MadCap's technical communications suite to create easy-to-navigate online Help projects and PDF files for customers around the world in their language of choice.

New Product Spurs Move to New Help System

For years, IL has been delivering comprehensive Help to its users. However, the company was maintaining two Help projects for its different products, and its former authoring tool did not support some of the modern formatting features it wanted to incorporate. Additionally, the company needed an easier and more cost-effective way to produce translations. As a result,

Figure 1. HTML Help System

when IL planned to launch its newest automated blood-testing system, they sought to update the online Help authoring software as well.

"We had five analyzers in our product line, and we were launching a sixth," recalled Steve Gramolini, Instrumentation Laboratory technical writer. "Each analyzer requires online Help available on the software disc and as an independent PDF file, all available in four European and four Asian languages."

The MadPak technical communications suite from MadCap Software quickly emerged as the solution of choice. The single-source, multi-channel publishing capabilities in MadCap Flare enabled IL to publish all of its online Help versions and PDF manuals from a single Flare project. Additionally, the tight integration between Flare and the MadCap Lingo translation management tool streamlines the translation process. Finally, IL saw opportunities to take advantage of other products in the MadPak suite: MadCap Capture and MadCap Analyzer.

MadPak offers many tools that are easy to learn at every step of the way," Gramolini said. "MadCap Software provides a great user interface for its products, and after using the suite for two years, it has delivered everything we need."

Optimizing Authoring with MadCap Flare

The first step in using Flare was to consolidate the two separate Help projects into a single Flare project. To accomplish this, IL imported the existing Help projects into one Flare project. While this process was time intensive, it enabled the company to automate updates and tailor the text for different versions using conditional tags.

Gramolini noted that a key feature of Flare is its ability to have different sets of conditional text, "Some text is for online Help and other text is for print only. With conditional tags, I can enter the text once and have it appear wherever necessary. Going forward, conditional tags will facilitate updating our online Help and printed manuals as we roll out new versions."
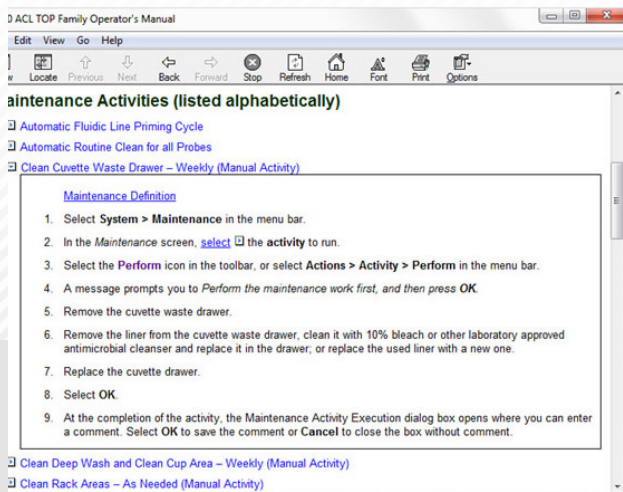
Creating and editing the source files is simplified in Flare by separating the Project Organizer and Content Organizer. Additionally, the File List provides one place for sorting and accessing topics quickly. The Locate File feature allows authors to instantly locate, open and edit topics.

Using Flare, IL was able to enhance the user experience for its customers. Flare makes it easy to add headers and footers to PDF files, something the old publishing tool could not do easily. Additionally, it can employ drop-down text in online Help topics to display the entire contents of each topic, in outline form, on one screen.
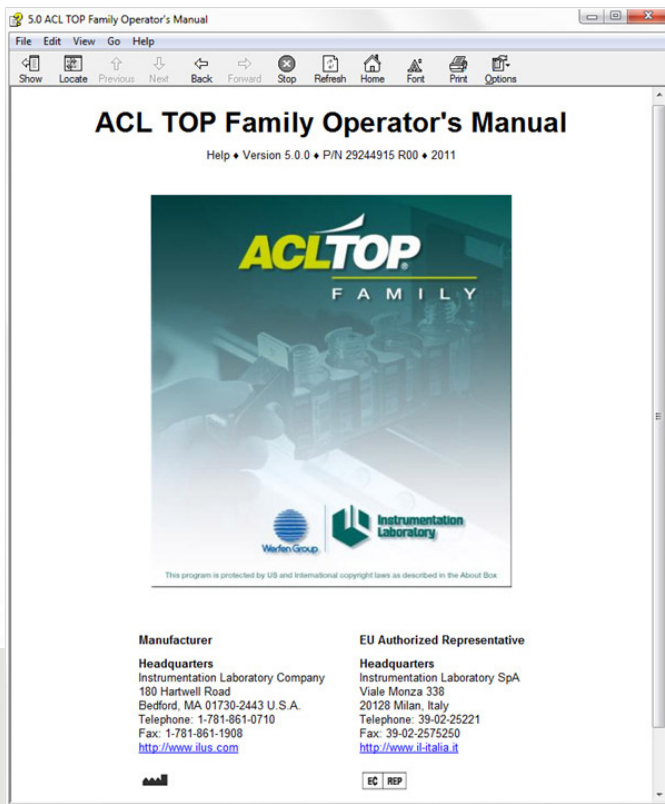
means that conditional tags can be used to coordinate images and photographs for different versions of IL's online Help and PDF manuals.

MadPak Facilitates Translation, Project Management, and Interactive Tutorials

To support IL's global customers, the company imports content from Flare into MadCap Lingo, which is then used to translate the content.

"The initial translation project was approximately 140,000 words. Because MadCap Lingo supports full translation memory, we will only need to translate the new updates, which may be fewer than 3,000 words," Gramolini noted.

MadCap Analyzer, which assesses Flare-based content and provides suggested improvements, has proven to be an effective tool in managing and further reducing the scale and cost of translation projects.
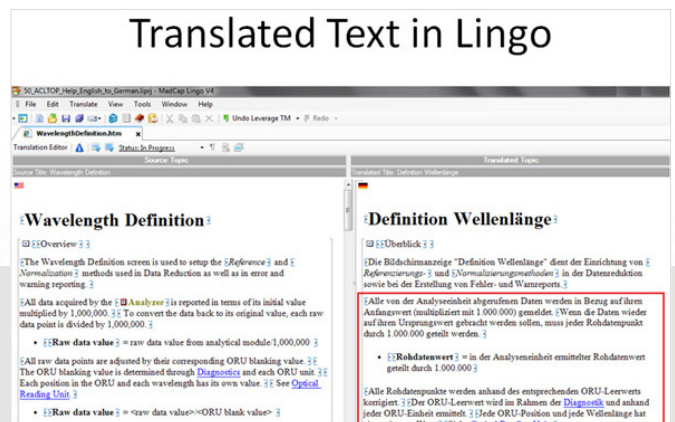

Figure 2. PDF Manual

Figure 3. MadCap Lingo

"Our old tool simply published a long page of HTML text that customers had to scroll through," Gramolini said. "With Flare, topic contents initially appear on one screen within drop-down text. This makes it easy for users to quickly find what they want. They simply click the visible text to show the hidden text with the relevant product information. It's visually intuitive and graphically appealing."

MadCap Capture complements Flare by providing image capture and graphic editing functionality. Integration of Capture with Flare

"A translation company initially proposed fees for translating 175,000 words, Gramolini recalled. "However, using Analyzer to run the statistics, we discovered only 145,000 words in the project. Thus we were able to reduce translation costs by nearly 20%."

"At the last minute," Gramolini added, "I was asked to take out 5,000 words to further reduce translation costs. I used Analyzer to find repeating segments. Then, in about one hour, I created 40 snippets to reduce the word count by the required 5,000 words."

Figure 4. Translated Manual

First-Class Support Complements Software

For IL, the MadPak Platinum Support plan has been as important a part of the complete solution as the MadPak technical communications suite.

"The MadCap support department has been fantastic. I can pick up the phone and get an immediate answer, or I'll send them a copy of my project to research a more in-depth solution," Gramolini said. "Based on my positive experiences, our international affiliates purchased Lingo support packages to help with the translation and localization process. The support team comes through quickly, and there is no better way to learn how to use the software."

"The MadPak tools are truly saving our company time, improving the quality of the content that we provide our customers, and ensuring that our information is complete."