



Newton, MA

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INDUSTRY

- Healthcare
- Software

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Lesley Brown | Associate Vice President of Documentation and Training Development, McKesson Health Solutions

Goals:

- Streamline the process of updating and maintaining different product versions
- Tackle the growing complexity of documentation
- Facilitate content reuse and collaboration across multiple teams
- Enhance the overall look and feel of content
- Create more intuitive online Help and documentation for internal and external users

Solutions:

- MadCap Flare native XML single-source, multi-channel content authoring software
- MadCap Capture for graphic callouts and labels

Benefits:

- Efficiency: Topic-based single-source publishing facilitates content reuse, speeding delivery updates for multiple product releases
- Meaningful Graphics: MadCap Capture callouts and labels make content graphics more meaningful and create a more interactive user experience.


- Output Variety: Variables and condition tags allow easy customization of content for different roles and audiences. Cascading Style Sheets customize the look of feel of content.
- Collaboration: Integration with Apache SVN and ability to import Microsoft Word improve team collaboration on content creation and delivery.



7777 Fay Avenue
La Jolla, CA 92037

Tel: +1.858.320.0387
Fax: +1.858.320.0338

www.madcapsoftware.com
info@madcapsoftware.com



Nation's Largest Healthcare Services Company Leverages MadCap Flare With Apache SVN Integration for Agile Delivery of Online Help and Documentation Supporting Multiple Product Versions

McKesson Health Solutions (MHS) is a business unit of McKesson Corporation, the oldest and largest healthcare services company in the nation, ranked 11th on the Fortune 500 list. McKesson is in the business of better health and touches the lives of patients in virtually every aspect of healthcare.

McKesson Health Solutions automates and transforms complex financial and clinical processes across healthcare to help drive down costs and improve quality. MHS delivers industry-leading clinical evidence and expert technology to help payers and providers collaborate for better healthcare outcomes at lower costs.

MHS's solutions reduce unnecessary healthcare utilization while improving outcomes; operationalize complex volume- and value-based payment models; and optimize billing communication between providers, patients and payers.

Their solutions are in more than four out of five payers in the country; more than 3,900 hospitals and facilities use McKesson InterQual® evidence-based decision support criteria, and McKesson RelayHealth® financial solutions automate 1.9 billion financial transactions each year.

To help these and other customers take full advantage of its solutions, MHS uses MadCap Flare and MadCap Capture to deliver intuitive online Help and documentation.

Selecting a Sustainable System

For years, McKesson Health Solutions used a combination of Microsoft Word, Adobe FrameMaker, and Adobe RoboHelp to build its online Help and documentation. However, as its product families grew, the business unit sought a solution that could keep up with the tremendous growth of its products.

"The product releases were coming much more frequently, as often as every six weeks," recalled Lesley Brown, McKesson

Health Solutions Associate Vice President of Documentation and Training Development. "We were working with multiple Microsoft Word or FrameMaker files, and it became confusing to try and manage them all. It was extremely time-intensive and inefficient to update these files for each product release."

McKesson Health Solutions looked at tools that would help its writers publish customer support content in multiple formats from a single source. The organization wanted to tackle the growing complexity of its content and create more intuitive online Help and documentation for its users.

"We recognized Flare as an up-and-coming product at the cutting-edge of industry standards," Brown explained. "Flare was the clear choice, addressing all of our requirements and going beyond to help us consider new possibilities."

In 2007 McKesson Health Solutions selected Flare as its primary online Help and documentation solution. Just two years later, the business unit had migrated its entire system from FrameMaker and RoboHelp to Flare—an enormous feat considering the amount of content that needed to be migrated.

The Move to Lean, Agile Development

As McKesson Health Solutions continued to expand its software offerings, the organization took a more agile approach to the development and delivery of its software and supporting documentation.

The company began offering hosted software deployments, which streamlined the ability to provide new features and enhancements to customers. It also transitioned from a waterfall methodology and adopted Kanban—a more agile method for managing knowledge work that emphasizes just-in-time delivery. The Kanban method was applied not only to software development but also to the creation of supporting content.

“Flare fits perfectly with our lean development approach, allowing us to easily manage and guide the documentation for our product releases,” explains Pat Holmes-Clark, McKesson Health Solutions Team Leader and Specialist Technical Writer.

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Using Flare software to support its Kanban methodology for content, McKesson Health Solutions first developed online Help and documentation assets for its ClaimsXten™ full-services claims auditing product.

“We wanted to tackle the growing complexity of our ClaimXten resources and enhance its overall look and feel,” Holmes-Clark noted.

The benefits of using Flare for the ClaimXten documentation quickly became evident, according to Brown. “Issues within our system that we couldn’t see before became glaringly apparent. Using Flare, we could easily manage and clarify particular content for various release versions.”

Consistent Content for a Complex System

Adding to the complexity of an extensive product portfolio is the fact that not all McKesson Health Solutions customers use the same product release, and the business unit needs to provide reliably accurate content for every product version. To address this challenge, the writing team takes advantage of several of the capabilities within MadCap Flare.

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Pat Holmes-Clark | **Team Leader and Specialist Technical Writer, McKesson Health Solutions**

“Flare’s single-sourcing capabilities help us to streamline our processes and rapidly deliver the information our customers need for any new product releases,” says Holmes-Clark.

Single-source publishing and topic-based authoring work hand-in-hand to facilitate content reuse. Additionally, writers use variables in Flare to easily plug in and reuse bits of information, significantly reducing project time. Meanwhile, conditional tags help writers to designate changes for different applications and product versions.

“In the past, we would copy an entire documentation set and painstakingly make changes to that content,” Brown recalled. “With Flare, we can take existing documentation and apply specific changes for a new or different product release.”

McKesson Health Solutions also uses Flare’s cascading style sheets to customize and enhance the appearance of content, as well as the processes around creating and publishing it.

“Style sheets created with Flare, which are based on targets, are phenomenal—allowing us to create templates for the exact customized look and feel for our content.” Holmes-Clark observes. “Using these templates, we were able to complete documents for three releases in a matter of weeks.”

Fostering Collaboration

To synchronize efforts, the company integrates with the Apache Subversion (SVN) open source version control system for project management. Flare’s integration with Apache SVN allows writers to more effectively align their documentation with the different software versions developed and managed at McKesson Health Solutions.

“The MadCap support team has helped us with sticky Subversion integration issues, including troubleshooting our source files to get to the root of the problem,” adds Brown.

In addition to writers, McKesson Health Solutions support documents rely on collaboration with a range of subject matter experts. MadCap Flare provides the ability to import Microsoft Word documents into the main content system, so subject matter experts can develop content in Word.

Brown explains, "Since most people aren't experts in Flare, the integration with Word is terrific. Anyone within the company can edit and contribute content in Word and easily have those changes reflected in Flare."

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The organization further encourages collaboration and knowledge-sharing by participating in a monthly writers community forum, which enables employees across different McKesson business units to gather and discuss the different ways they are using Flare.

"McKesson is a huge company and it helps to share what we are learning as a community," notes Holmes-Clark.

The company also takes advantage of MadCap forums to address any issues it runs into.

Brown observes: "The MadCap forums are the best place to go. You can have an answer within an hour. It's a terrific way to share information."

New Strides for an Enhanced User Experience

With its Flare-based online Help and documentation system in place, McKesson Health Solutions continually looks for new ways to strengthen its user experience. Writers take advantage of MadCap Capture, MadCap's software for screen capture and image editing, to add callouts and labels to graphics into the content. This creates more meaningful and interactive content for customers. Looking ahead, the business unit is examining how to use MadCap Flare's capabilities for publishing content for mobile devices.

"With the growth in mobile computing, we want our users to be able to access information anywhere, from any device, so Flare's mobile publishing capabilities are very attractive to us," says Holmes-Clark.

McKesson Health Solutions also plans to embed videos into online Help assets for some of its product documentation. Additionally, MHS is considering a move to HTML5 Help output for a new product expected to launch in 2016.

Brown notes, "We are excited to take advantage of additional features in Flare to create the most intuitive online Help and documentation possible."