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Squire Technologies Uses MadCap Flare and MadCap Contributor to Produce Intuitive, Searchable Web-based Documentation

INDUSTRY

- Telecommunications



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Michael Johnston | **Squire Technologies**

Goals:

- Drive more customers to the website by moving print documentation online
- Make content more easily accessible to customers
- Improve the quality and consistency of documentation
- Reduce project time and costs

Solutions:

- MadCap Flare native XML multi-channel content authoring software
- MadCap Contributor for content review

Benefits:

- Eliminated both redundancies in Squire's documentation and duplications of effort by Squire team members
- Searchable content created in Flare makes it easier for customers to find information
- MadCap Flare enables design customization to align with Squire branding
- Integrated review process using Contributor and Flare has improved the quality and consistency of content

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Founded in 2001, Squire Technologies has always strived to provide superior carrier-grade products and services to the telecommunications industry worldwide. With deployments in over 70 countries, Squire's website has served as a central information hub for its clients, so it was a natural evolution to convert Squire's print documentation into intuitive, searchable online content.

Today, Squire is using MadCap Flare to publish timely, accurate online documentation for its carrier grade SS7 and Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) signaling products. Additionally, the company relies on MadCap Contributor to facilitate the process of reviewing the Flare-based content.

"We needed a platform that would allow our online documentation to be easily accessible," said Michael Johnston, marketing executive for Squire Technologies. "MadCap Flare and Contributor have made it very easy for us to create intuitive online documentation and achieve the exact style and design we had in mind."

Moving Beyond Print

Prior to implementing MadCap's software, Squire created its documentation in Microsoft Word and then published the content as PDF documents. The printed guides took a typical chapter approach to explaining how the products functioned, which could make it difficult for users to find answers to their questions.

At the same time, the team at Squire began to question whether print documentation was the right approach when the Squire website served as a primary information center for its clients.

"We want to encourage customers to come to our website and have all the advantages of the Web, such as searchable content, to help them answer their questions," Johnston explained.

After trying MadCap Flare, Squire decided to use MadCap's software to move its print documentation online. Key factors

in the decision were Flare's native XML architecture, the ability to produce print and Web content from the same project, and its easy-to-use interface.

"MadCap Flare proved to be a very flexible authoring tool, and it was easy for everyone in our organization to learn and navigate," recalled Johnston.

Attractive, Easy to Search Web Content

Squire has now published its first Web-based documentation, which includes how-to guides and tutorials. The combination of Flare's topic-based approach and support for searchable content allows users to readily navigate through the content and find what they need.

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"The search function in Flare is fantastic. It just works," Johnston noted. "Building a glossary of terms is also easy. You can put the definitions in there without making it a massive website."

Importantly, the online documentation matches the branding of Squire's website, ensuring a consistent experience.

"Incorporating our branding is just a matter of injecting HTML code," Johnston said. "With Flare, we can achieve the exact style and design we're looking for." In fact, he added, "Our engineers were surprised to discover that some of the coding tricks they came up with produced impressive results with Flare."

Johnston also explained that the ability to use JavaScript means Squire can depart from the typical templates and create unique individual landing pages.

Streamlined Development, Improved Consistency

Since adopting Flare, Squire also has been able to ensure consistency while eliminating redundancies in its documentation.

“In the past, we had to manage multiple versions across various departments, which led to significant redundancies,” Johnston recalled. “Now with Flare, we can create topics; relate topics together; and set tags to reference what is going on, with who and where.”

The content authoring and review process has been streamlined further through the addition of MadCap Contributor. Because it is tightly integrated with MadCap Flare, Contributor allows Squire Engineers to review and edit Flare-based content, as well as make annotations, without having to learn all the features in Flare.

“Contributor is an important tool for us, especially since we produce highly technical content that needs to be reviewed by many people within the company,” Johnston said. “Once everyone inputs their feedback into Contributor, I can view where each change is coming from, and then decide whether to accept or reject the change in Flare.”

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In addition to MadCap’s software, Squire has been aided by the MadCap user forum, Johnston said; “The MadCap forum, not only provided me with answers to my questions, it also offered interesting new ways of using Flare which I hadn’t imagined before.”

Johnston concluded, “MadCap Contributor has made it easy to review and contribute content to our documentation, and Flare has made it more visually attractive. It’s a great user experience!”