



Grosse Pointe Woods, MI

www.thebigsalad.net

The Big Salad Restaurant Chain Relies on MadCap Flare for Single-Source Publishing of Modern HTML5 Intranet and PDF Bookcase of Guides on Business Best Practices

INDUSTRY

- Health Food Restaurant Chain



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Larry Klimek | Vice President of Franchise Development, The Big Salad

Goals:

- Streamline the process of updating and maintaining content
- Build an HTML5-based intranet reference site for employees
- Create a collection of PDF manuals and guides for employee reference
- Enhance the user experience with an intuitive system
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- Establish consistency and content confidentiality across all corporate and franchise locations

Solutions:

- MadCap Flare native XML tool for topic-based authoring and single-source publishing
- MadPak Suite of fully integrated technical communication tools

Benefits:

- Topic-based authoring and conditional tags in Flare make it easy to generate content tailored to different groups of corporate and franchise users
- Single-source publishing in Flare enables The Big Salad to publish content on the intranet and in PDFs from the same Flare project
- Microsoft Word integration with Flare allows the documentation team to easily import new content from subject matter experts
- HTML5 output provides users with a visually attractive, state-of-the-art intranet resource
- Hyperlinking YouTube videos to Flare-based content provides a richer, visual training experience

The Big Salad Restaurant Chain Relies on MadCap Flare for Single-Source Publishing of Modern HTML5 Intranet and PDF Bookcase of Guides on Business Best Practices

Since 2008, The Big Salad has been dedicated to providing fresh and healthy salad, sandwich, soup and wrap options in the greater Michigan area. The company has built its brand by fostering consistently superior products and services across its growing number of corporate and franchise locations. Looking to expand its reach of a quality dining experience, The Big Salad plans to have 220 locations in production by 2020.

To support this effort, the company has developed its own Web-based best practices system, called the “The Big Salad Cookbook,” which is used by all staff members—from the CEO to every franchise employee. Today, the company relies on MadCap Flare to publish The Big Salad Cookbook in two formats: an HTML5-based reference intranet and a collection of PDF guides and manuals.

“As an emerging brand, we knew we had to have solid business processes in place,” recalled Larry Klimek, The Big Salad vice president of franchise development. “A franchise demands repetitive, flawless consistency across all of its practices. This is how we designed our company to be from the get-go.”

Needed: A Strong System

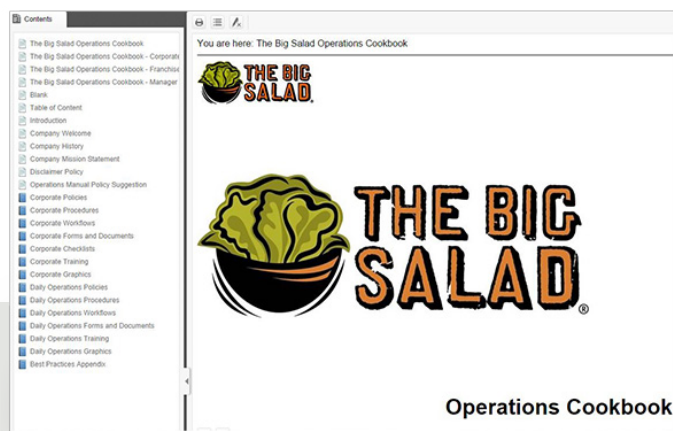
For years, The Big Salad used Microsoft OneNote as a cloud-based repository of data for gathering information and collaborating on files. However, as the restaurant chain grew, it became clear that this software was too freeform to support its needs. While The Big Salad team sought more structure for its system, it did not want to compromise the user experience.

“We are restaurant people. We require a tool that is intuitive, so we can establish a system that is easy to use across the entire company,” Larry explained. “We also want user-friendly content management that can bring consistency to our business and documentation management processes.”

After looking at 20-plus different offerings on the market, The Big Salad selected MadCap Flare for its single-source publish-

ing to multiple formats and ability to meet the chain’s long-term business objectives.

“We have a commitment to quality and consistency, performing due diligence on everything we deliver. Flare gives us the backbone to deliver solid resources to our end users—our corporate and franchise employees,” Larry says.



The Big Salad HTML5-based Intranet

One Cookbook, Two Channels

Today, the company relies on MadCap Flare to deliver The Big Salad Cookbook materials across two different online channels: The Big Salad Intranet and The Big Salad Bookcase. By storing all of its files electronically, with privilege protection according to user level, The Big Salad can ensure the confidentiality of information that is critical to the restaurant chain’s success.

“Our distinguished services and products, including our special sauce recipe, are what make our business. It is important that we keep that content secure within the company,” Larry explains.



The Big Salad Bookcase

The Big Salad Intranet is an HTML5-based website that employees can use as a reference for any of their needs. It is privilege-protected, granting access to specific content based on the user's role—from corporate employee to franchise owner to franchise employee.

“Flare helps foster a sense of community through our intranet system, since all of our employees refer to its materials as an invaluable resource day-to-day,” Larry observes.

Complementing the intranet is The Big Salad Bookcase, a collection of electronic PDF manuals and guides. Commonly used as a reference for restaurant employees, it offers a selection of tutorials, including training, recipes, and cleaning best practices.

“We have touchscreen computers in our restaurants where employees can choose whichever ‘book’ they need,” Larry explains. “All of the information is hyperlinked to the PDFs we have generated in Flare.”

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Rapid Deployment, Easy Maintenance

Using MadCap Flare, it took The Big Salad just six months to rollout the initial implementation of The Big Salad Cookbook. The company first imported the OneNote files into Microsoft Word; it then directly imported the Word files into MadCap Flare.

“Ramping up with Flare was incredibly easy because it can import existing documents from various formats,” Larry recalled. “We were amazed at how quick and seamless the process was to transition from our previous system.”

Flare's ability to import Word files remains an important part of the system, since Word is the standard software used by all of The Big Salad's subject matter experts to write the various topics.

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“We are not a tech company. Everything we do has to be simple and straightforward,” Larry notes. “We set up a cascading style sheet template with Flare. It serves as the standard for every import that we do, so we know that everything will stay cohesive.”

The Big Salad also relies on conditional tags to provide organization and structure for intranet system, including the assignment of materials to a table of contents. By identifying different topics with conditional tags, the restaurant chain also can make sure particular content is made available to each individual user based on his or her role within the organization.

“Conditional tags let us know that everything is where it needs to be. We love how we can rapidly deliver specific content to different constituents and easily create guides on the fly,” Larry says.

Flare has given us all the key ingredients to build a quality system, so now we're having fun looking at ways we can enhance the user experience."

Larry Klimek | Vice President of Franchise Development, The Big Salad


Enhancing the User Experience

Currently, The Big Salad Cookbook is used in the chain's six corporate and franchise locations. However, with national expansion on the horizon, The Big Salad is looking for ways to enhance the end-user experience. For example, the restaurant chain is integrating video assets into its Flare-based training deliverables by hyperlinking them to YouTube channel videos.

With an eye to the future, The Big Salad has purchased MadCap's MadPak technical communication suite, and is beginning to explore how to take advantage of the other MadCap tools. In particular, the restaurant chain is looking at how MadCap Lingo can help with Spanish language translation.

"Flare has given us all the key ingredients to build a quality system, so now we're having fun looking at ways we can enhance the user experience," Larry explains. "It's exciting learning how different MadCap tools can help us connect with our users in new ways, especially as our company grows."

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Small Victory Policy


Policy Description

The Small Victory Campaign is a culture that is fully embraced and shared at The Big Salad. It is corporate policy that each employee demonstrate our creed with every customer and staff.

The Creed:

"With Every Task Completed, Every Act of Kindness Shared, And Every Dream Followed, A Small Victory is Realized. At The Big Salad, We Do It At a Time."

[Small Victories Video](#)



The Big Salad integrates video assets into its Flare-based training deliverables