Who Am I?

• Neil Perlin – Hyper/Word Services.
  – Internationally recognized content creation and delivery consultant.
  – Help clients create effective, efficient, flexible content in anything from print to mobile.
  – Certified – Flare, various other tools.
  – Working in code since 1987, HTML since ‘91.
• Torture or geeky fun – you decide…
What We’ll Cover

• Why work in code
• What you need to know and do
• How to do it with Flare
Why Work In the Code
Why...?

• Speed and efficiency on a large scale to:
  – Fix global errors in a project.
  – Fix or clean up messy legacy projects.

• Three examples:
  – A – 1328 topics in 190 hrs. = 7/hr.
  – B – 5000 topics in 480 hrs. = 10.4/hr.
  – C – 915 topics in 140 hrs. = 6.5/hr.
Why...?

- You *can* do this one topic at a time in the GUI.
- But it’s hard to keep up that pace without making mistakes or missing things.
- Or just going batty…
Why...?

• Extending your project beyond what Flare supports through the GUI, such as:
  – Reduce your output’s footprint by putting all graphics in the cloud and replacing the paths with URLs in the img tags, or
  – Insert custom Javascripts.
Why Not...?

• Need to know HTML, XHTML, CSS well.
• Easy to mess up on a global scale.
  – Say hello to my little friend…
• Consider my all-time record for errors in one build when working in code…
  – 453
Why Not...?

• Flare won’t open a syntactically incorrect topic in the WYSIWYG XML editor until you fix the problem.
• Problems aren’t always obvious, even in simple cases.
• For example, where’s the problem on the next slide?
Invalid Syntax in Topic

- It’s *telling you* what the problem is.
- But the problem is really on line 8, not 7 – e.g. error messages aren’t always clear.
What You Need to Know
XHTML
CSS
Flare’s Text Editor/Code Viewer

Starting the Scheduler
You can start the WS_FTP Scheduler Utility in the following ways:

- Select Start > Programs > Utilities > WS_FTP Pro > Scheduler.
- With WS_FTP open, select Tools > Scheduler Utility.
Plus

- A lot of patience.
- And a healthy sense of fear.
How To Do It With Flare – the Mechanics
Accessing the Code – Method 1

- Open the desired topic, then click the Text Editor tab to switch to code view.
Method 1 (cont’d)

- You’re now in full-screen code view.

```html
1. <p>version="1.0" encoding="utf-8"?>
2.  xmlns:MadCap="http://www.madcapsoftware.com/Schemas/MadCap.xsd" MadCap:id="Starting the
3.  utility" MadCap:timeEstimate="0" MadCap:priority="0" MadCap:status="In Progress" MadCap:
4.  clockDepth="4" MadCap:lastHeight="152" MadCap:lastWidth="624">
5.  <ead><title>Starting the Find Utility</title></ead>
6.  <link rel="StyleSheet" href="Resources/Stylesheets/styles.css" />
7.  <body>
8.    <h1>Starting the Find Utility</h1>
9.    <p>You can start the WS_FTP Find Utility in the following ways:</p>
10.   <ul style="list-style: disc;" type="disc">
11.     <li class="p-Topic-Text-Bulleted">Select
12.     <p class="Topic-Text-Bulleted">Start &gt; Programs &gt; Ipswitch WS_FTP
13.     Utilities &gt; WS_FTP Pro Find Utility</p>
14.     <li>
15.     <li class="p-Topic-Text-Bulleted">With WS_FTP
16.     <p class="Topic-Text-Bulleted">Select &lt;span style="font-weight: bold;"&gt;Tools &gt; Find Utility</span></p>
17.     </li>
18.   </li>
19.  </ul>
20. </body>
21. >
```
Controlling the Text Editor

• You can use the text editor in full- or split-screen view.
  – Pane tabs.
  – Switch pane positions.
  – Grab handle to change pane width.
  – Switch between vertical, horizontal tiling.
  – Toggle split screen on and off.
Text Editor Toolbar

– Show line numbers – For reference when working in code. Leave on.
– Show outline – To be able to expand/collapse sections of the code. Probably leave on.
Text Editor Toolbar - More

– Show… colors – To apply different colors to parts of the code. Leave on.
  • Comments – Green
  • Style tags (like h1) – brown.
  • Properties (like font-family) – red.
  • Values (like Arial) – blue.
  • Text – black.

– Word Wrap – To turn on word wrap. Leave on.
Text Editor Toolbar – Still More

– Open in XML Editor – To return to the XML Editor view from the Text Editor.

• Only appears if you open the Text Editor by right-clicking topic in Content Explorer and selecting Open With > Internal Text Editor – e.g. you don’t have the XML Editor and Text Editor tabs.
Text Editor Toolbar – Finally...

– AutoComplete – To display the autocomplete window that detects when you type tags and offers to complete them for you

• For example, type `<h` and this appears:

• If you click on `<h1>` in the window, Flare finishes the code, like this:

```html
<p>Delete this text and replace it</p>
<h1></h1>
```
Accessing the Code – Method 2

• Right-click the topic in Content Explorer, select Open With > Internal Text Editor.
  – No pane controls this way.

• Do not select Notepad:
  – It’s not tied to Flare so you’ll have to re-import changed files – not hard, just extra work.
  – No line numbers.
Method 2 (cont’d)

• What about external 3\textsuperscript{rd} party editors like Notepad ++, etc?
  – You’ll gain GREP, other, capabilities but have the same problems as with Notepad.
  – GREP?
    • A command line utility for searching plain text files for defined strings.
    • Comes out of UNIX.
    • Google “windows editors with grep”.
Helpful Feature #1

• Cross-pane highlight retention.
  – Works in either direction.
Helpful Feature #2

- Find and Replace pane with Find in Source Code option selected – 9 – 10
Apparent Oddity in #2

• Selecting the “…source code” option and clicking Find Next displays this message:

  – Though you’re already in the Text Editor…
  – Just click Yes to switch modes.
HUGE Caveat #1

• Think before deleting unwanted start tags globally.
• Otherwise, how will you know what end tags to delete?
  – For example, if you have to delete all of one type of `<span>` tag in this code sample…
  – Which only has one type but pretend…
HUGE Caveat #1 (cont’d)

– If you delete the desired `<span>` tags, what `<span>` tags should you then delete?
– You can’t delete all your `<span>` tags since you might need some of them.
– Think through the steps carefully, backup before global changes or deletions.
HUGE Caveat #2

• Again, Flare will not open a syntactically incorrect topic in the XML editor until you fix the problem.
HUGE Caveat #3

- Old files, tools are full of surprises:
  - Using ** as a proprietary code delimiter that Flare doesn’t recognize.
  - Chunks of legacy code that Flare puts in a div tag and then complains about in the message pod – to fix, delete the div tags.
  - FrontPage 2K added page breaks between start and end tags that break your macros.
Helpful Feature #3

• Can’t open a file in the XML editor and can’t spot the problem in the code?
• Flare can do a partial auto-correct:
  – Copy the file and save it in Notepad with an htm extension.
  – Import the file from Notepad into Flare and open it – starts the Convert to XML Wizard.
• Fixes syntax errors *that it recognizes as syntax errors* to let you open the topic in the XML editor.
Pros and Cons of Feature #3

• **Pros:**
  – Fixes many syntax problems for you.

• **Cons:**
  – You have to open one file at a time to use the wizard – e.g. it’s slow.
How To Do It With Flare – the Process
Files Already in XHTML...

• …and contain bad but syntactically OK code, such as local formatting.

  – Back up the files.
  – Open the first topic in the XML editor, find the first instance of bad code, highlight it, and go into the text editor.

• Deleting a bad code? First decide how to delete its end tag before any deletion.
Files Already in XHTML...

- Editing a bad code but leaving its base code in place – e.g. changing `<p bad…>` to `<p>`? Don’t worry about the end tag.
  - Delete the end tags as necessary.
  - Save and back up.
  - Delete or edit the bad code by using Find and Replace with “…source code” option.
  - Build and view samples of changed topics.
  - Repeat.
Files Not Yet in XHTML...

...and contain unusual custom code.

– Back up the files.
– Change the file extensions to .htm.
– Copy or import the files into Flare.
– Open the first topic in the text editor, look for incorrect, repeated structural coding, fix it using Find and Replace with “…source code” option.
Files Not Yet in XHTML...

– Continue until XHTML structural coding is OK.
– Re-open the first topic in the XML editor, find the first instance of other bad code, highlight it, and go into the Text editor.
  • Deleting a bad code? First decide how to delete its end tag before any deletion.
  • Editing a bad code but leaving its base code in place – e.g. changing <p bad…> to <p>? Don’t worry about the end tag.
Files Not Yet in XHTML...

– Delete the end tags if necessary.
– Save and backup.
– Delete or edit the bad code by using Find and Replace with the “…source code” option.
– Build and view samples of changed topics.
– Repeat.
Summary

• You’re looking for patterns to use for find and replace.
• In many cases, especially with legacy files, you may not be able to automate the work and instead have to just grind through it.
• If you have the skill, patience, and outlook, it’s efficient, challenging, and geekily fun.
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