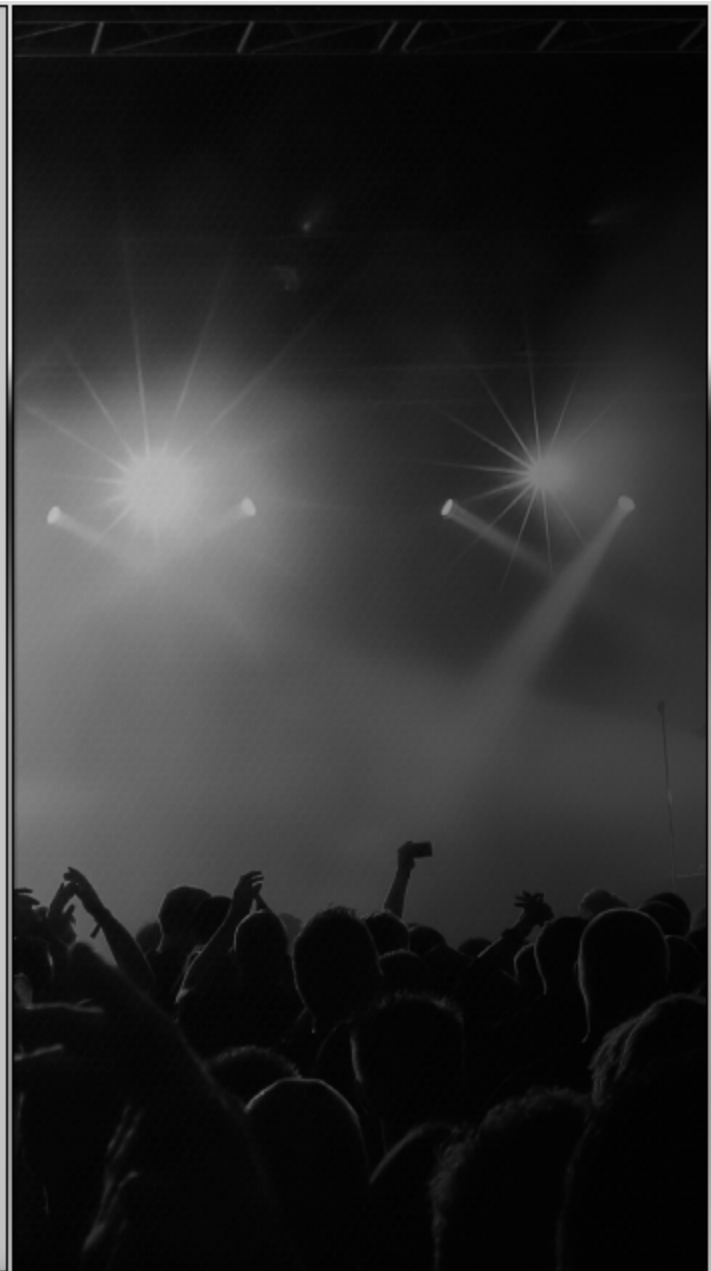
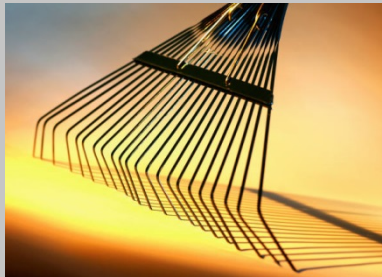


Welcome to

# *Down in the Weeds:* *Working With Topics* *in Code*

Presented by: Neil Perlin



# 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

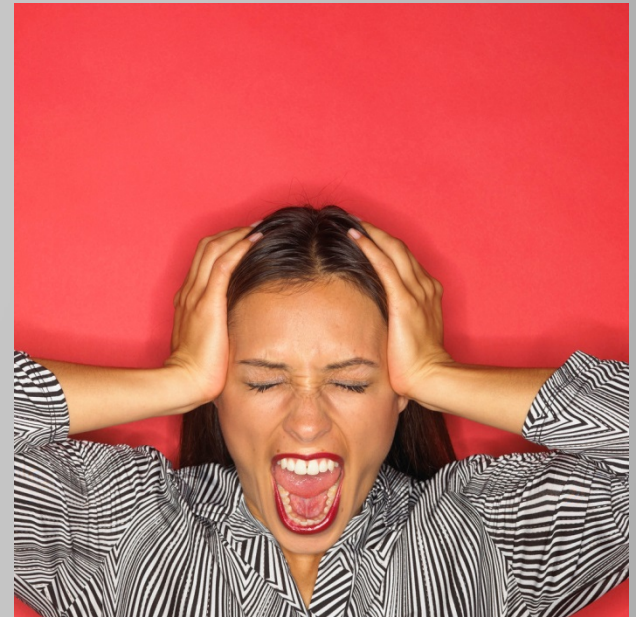


# Why...?

- 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

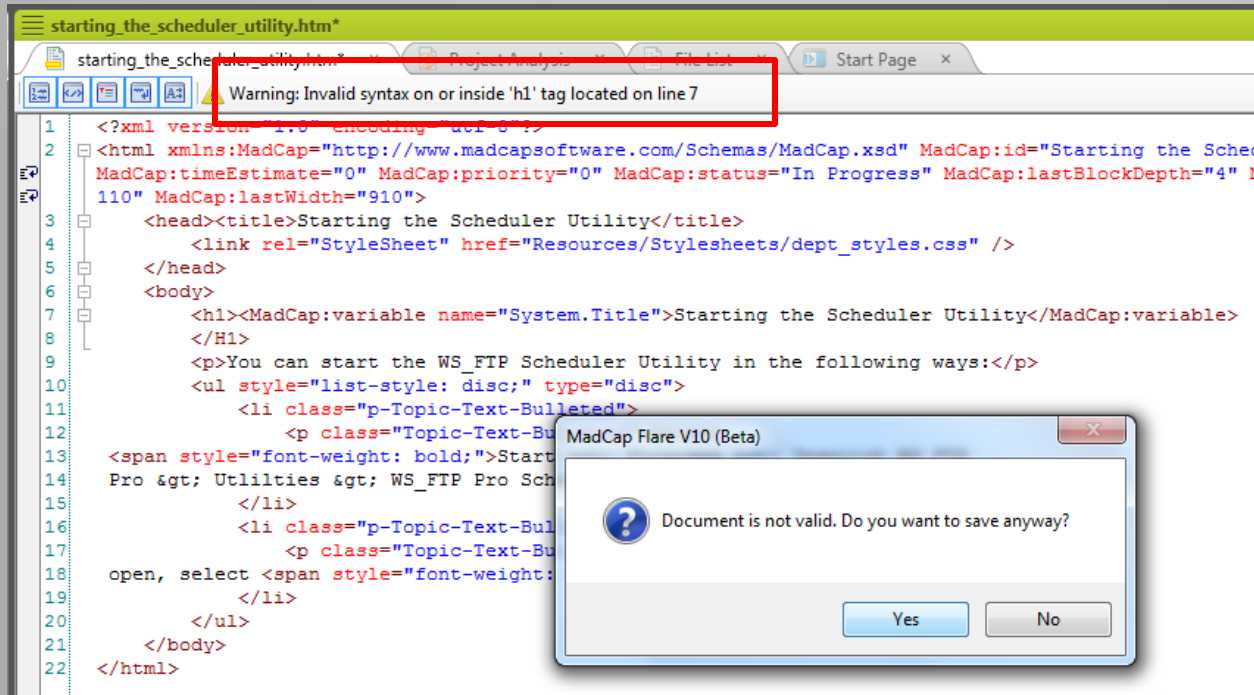




# Why Not...?

- 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

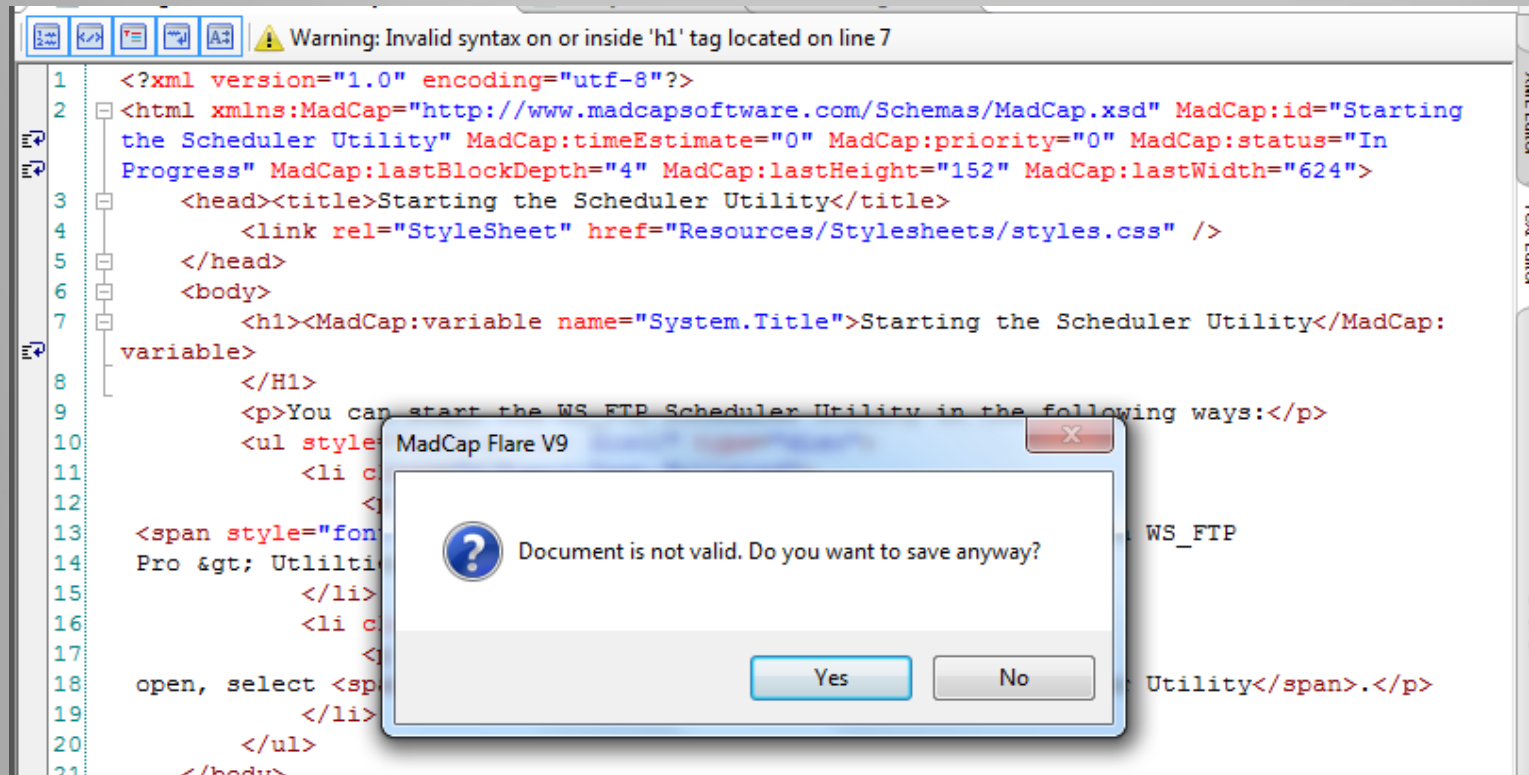


- It's *telling you* what the problem is.
- But the problem is really on line 8, not 7 – e.g. error messages aren't always clear.

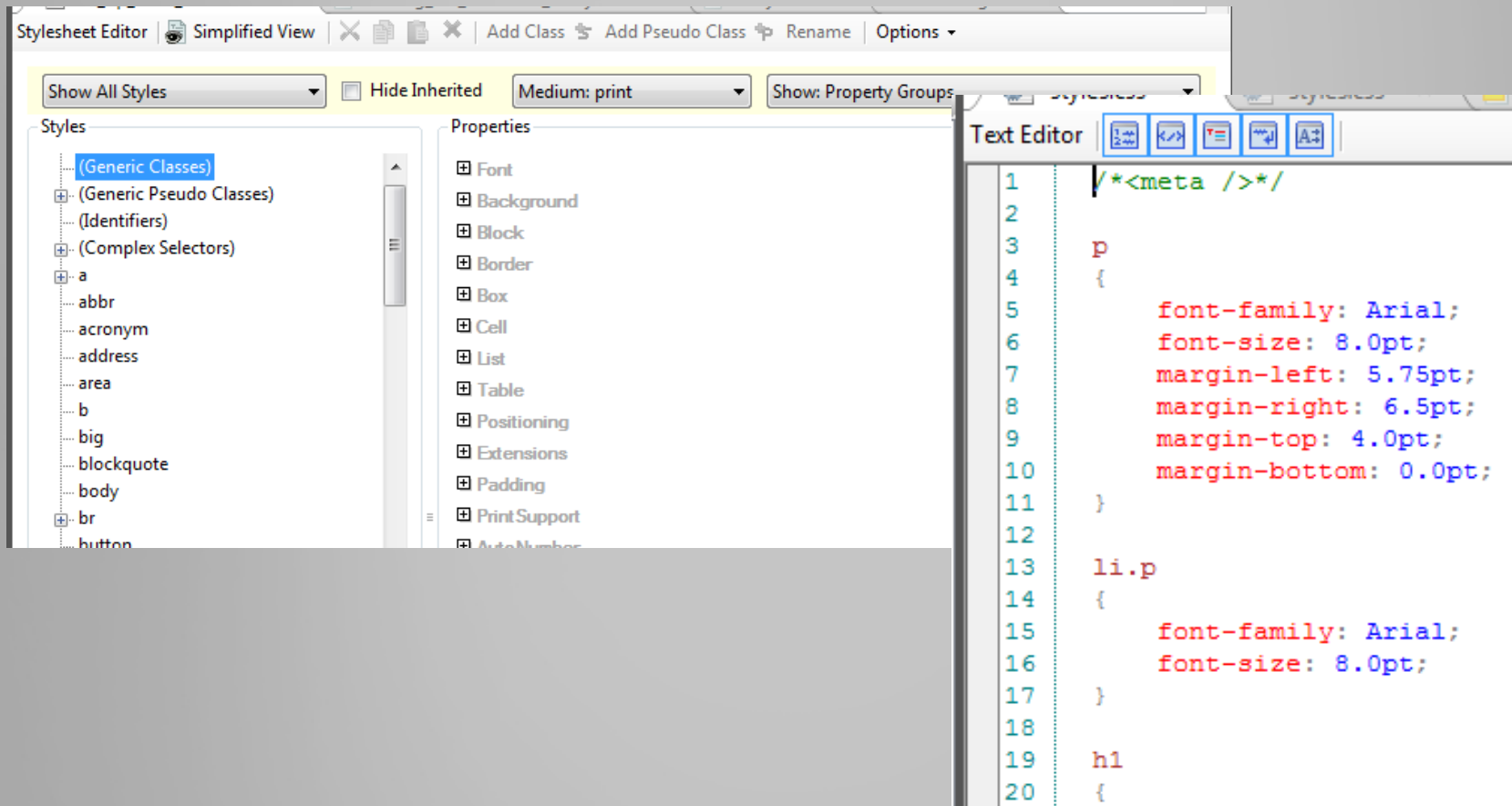
# What You Need to Know



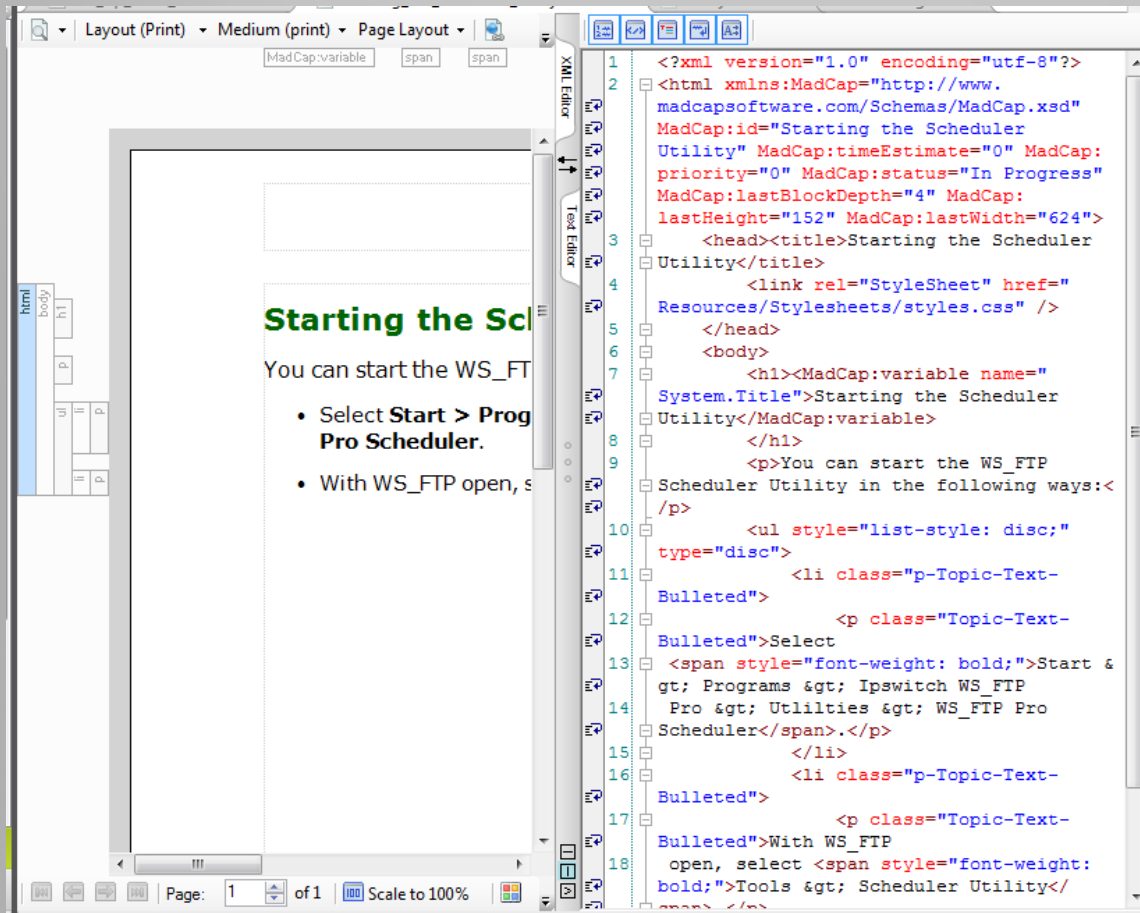
# XHTML



# CSS



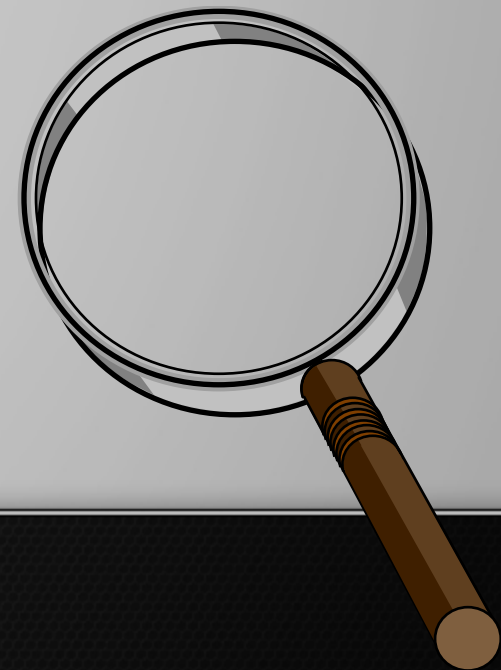
# Flare's Text Editor/Code Viewer



# Plus

- A lot of patience.
- And a healthy sense of fear.

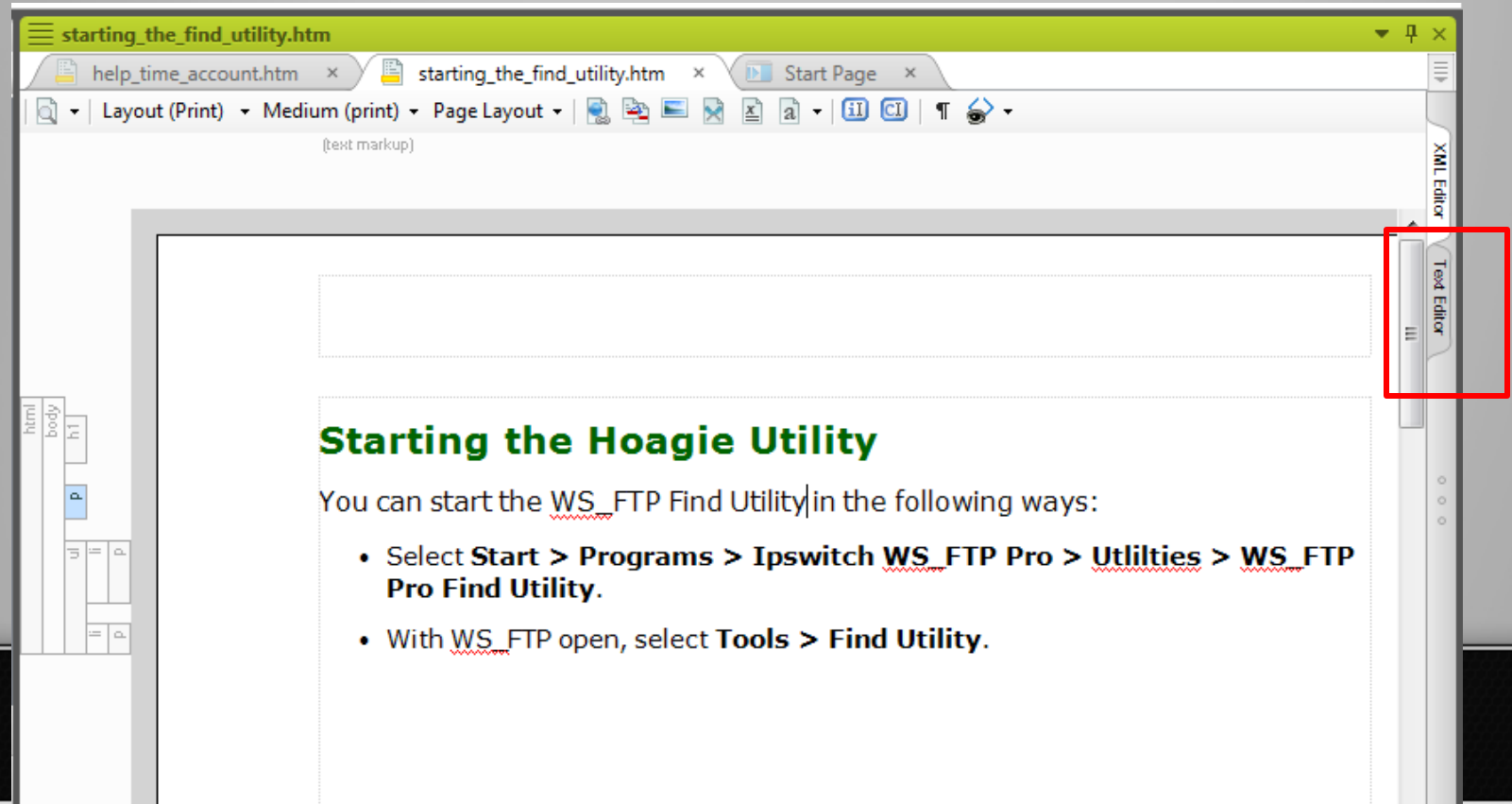
# How To Do It With Flare – the Mechanics





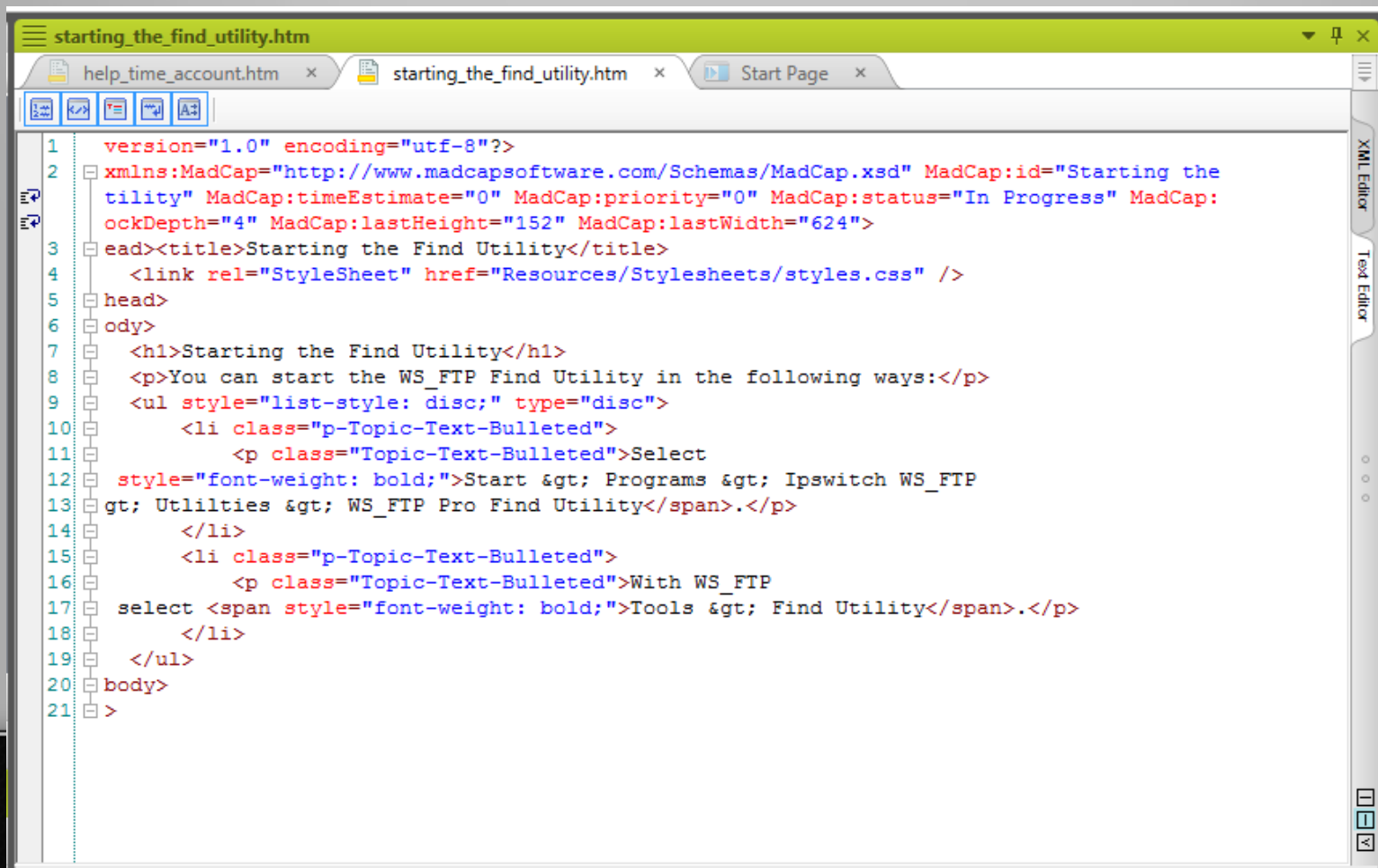
# Accessing the Code – Method 1

- 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.



The screenshot shows a web browser window with the title bar "starting\_the\_find\_utility.htm". The address bar shows three tabs: "help\_time\_account.htm", "starting\_the\_find\_utility.htm", and "Start Page". The main content area displays the XML code for "starting\_the\_find\_utility.htm" in a full-screen view. The code is as follows:

```
1 version="1.0" encoding="utf-8"?>
2 <?xml: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 ockDepth="4" MadCap:lastHeight="152" MadCap:lastWidth="624">
5 <head><title>Starting the Find Utility</title>
6 <link rel="StyleSheet" href="Resources/Stylesheets/styles.css" />
7 </head>
8 <body>
9 <h1>Starting the Find Utility</h1>
10 <p>You can start the WS_FTP Find Utility in the following ways:</p>
11 <ul style="list-style: disc;" type="disc">
12 <li class="p-Topic-Text-Bulleted">
13 <p class="Topic-Text-Bulleted">Select
14 style="font-weight: bold;">Start &gt; Programs &gt; Ipswitch WS_FTP
15 &gt; Utilities &gt; WS_FTP Pro Find Utility</span>.</p>
16 </li>
17 <li class="p-Topic-Text-Bulleted">
18 <p class="Topic-Text-Bulleted">With WS_FTP
19 select <span style="font-weight: bold;">Tools &gt; Find Utility</span>.</p>
20 </li>
21 </ul>
22 </body>
23 </>
```

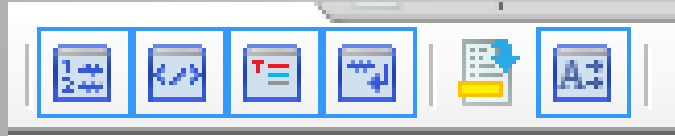
The code is displayed in a full-screen view with a green header bar at the top. The browser's address bar shows the current page is "starting\_the\_find\_utility.htm". The code is formatted with syntax highlighting, showing XML tags in blue, attributes in red, and text in black. The code is numbered from 1 to 23 on the left side. The right side of the browser window shows a vertical toolbar with icons for XML Editor and Text Editor.

# 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

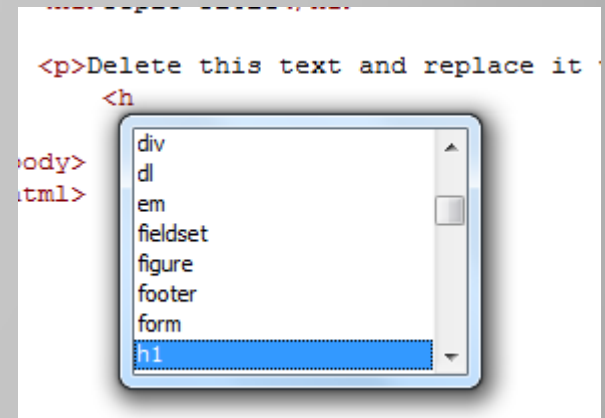
- Show... colors – To apply different colors to parts of the code. Leave on.
  - Comments – Green
  - Style tags (like h1) – brown.
  - Properties (like font-family) – red.
  - Values (like Arial) – blue.
  - Text – black.
- Word Wrap – To turn on word wrap. Leave on.

# 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:



```
<p>Delete this text and replace it  
<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.

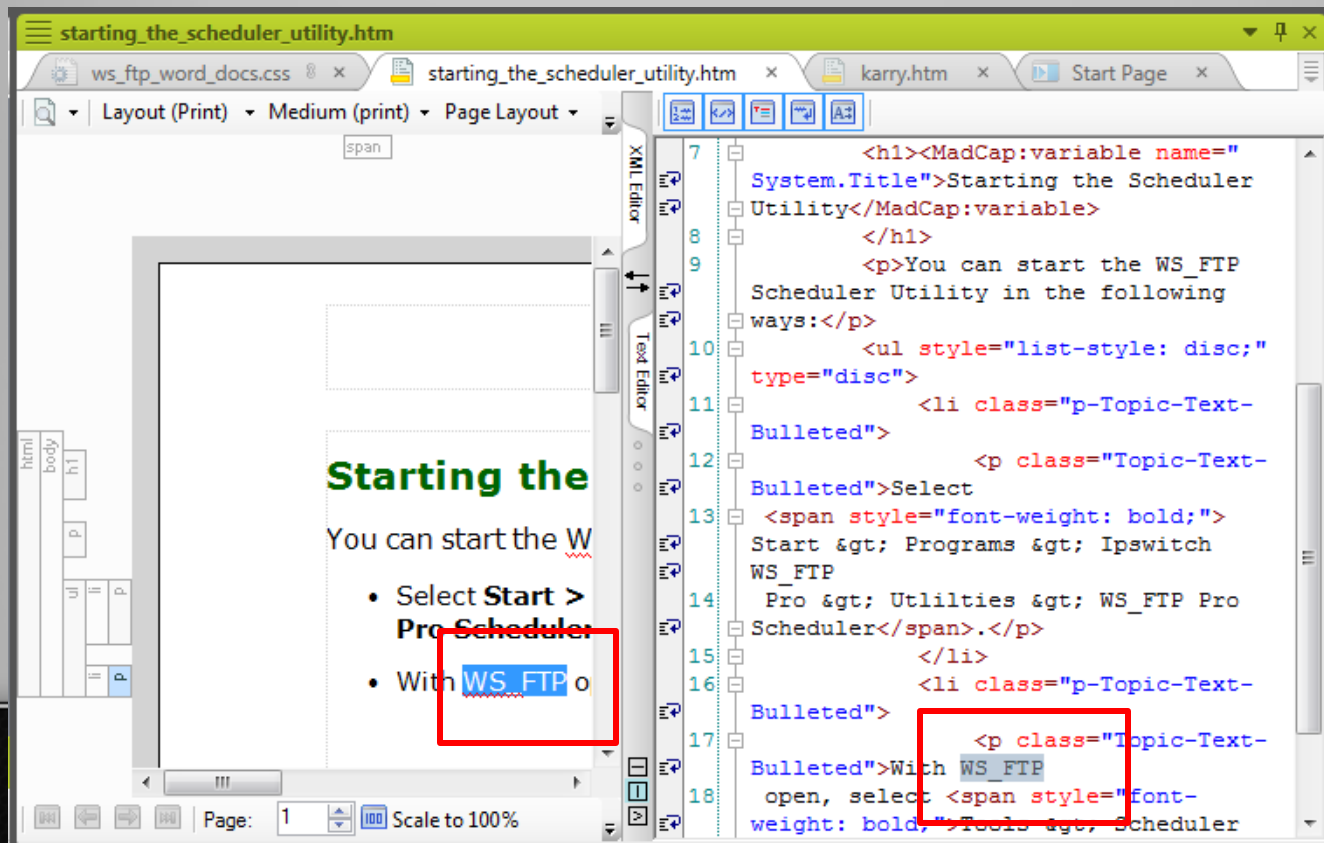


## Method 2 (cont'd)

- What about external 3<sup>rd</sup> 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”.

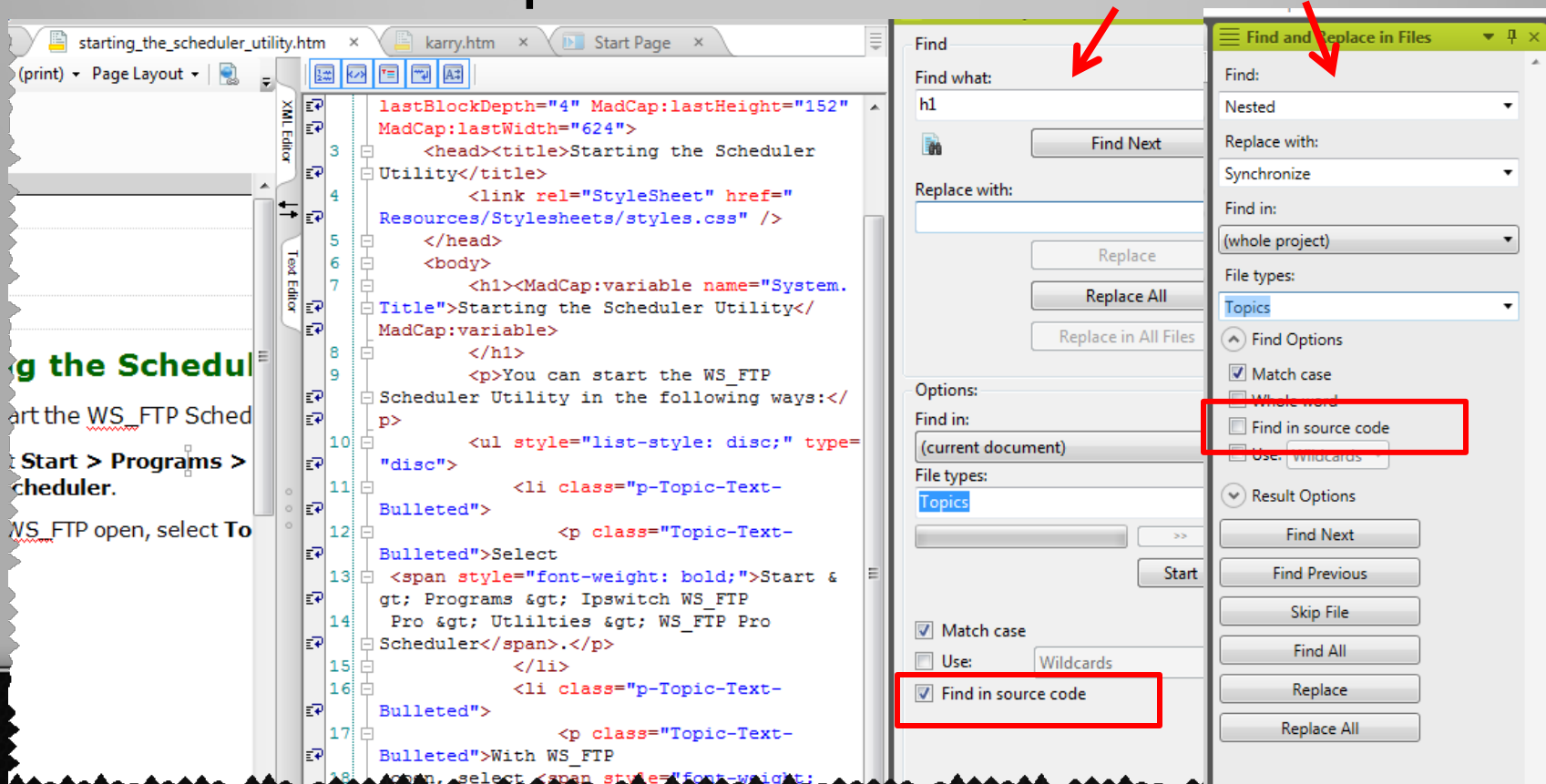
# Helpful Feature #1

- Cross-pane highlight retention.
  - Works in either direction.



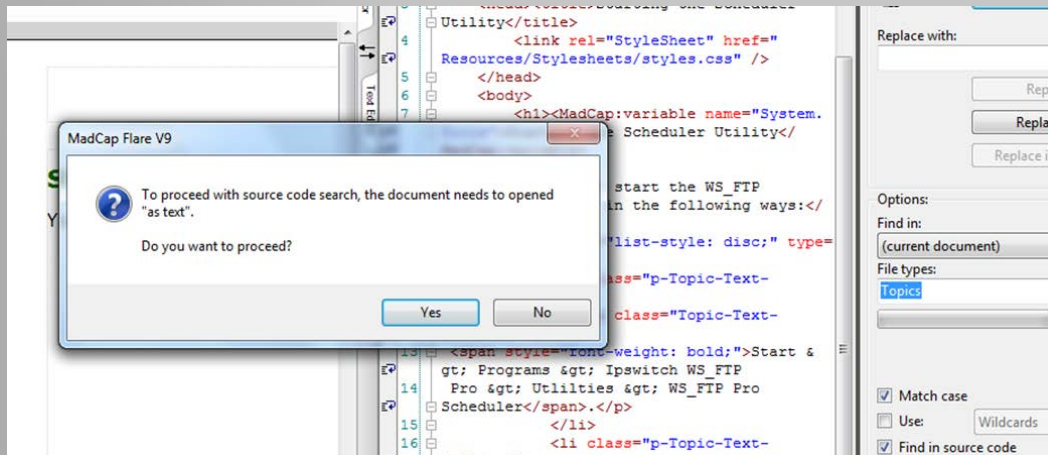
# Helpful Feature #2

- 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)

```
9      <h3><span style="font-weight: normal;">The</span>  
    Transfer History tab<span style="font-weight: normal;">  
    of the Information Window displays a list  
10    of successful transfers. </span><span style="font-  
    weight: normal;">This  
11    list can be sorted by clicking on the column headers.</  
    span></h3>
```

- 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.



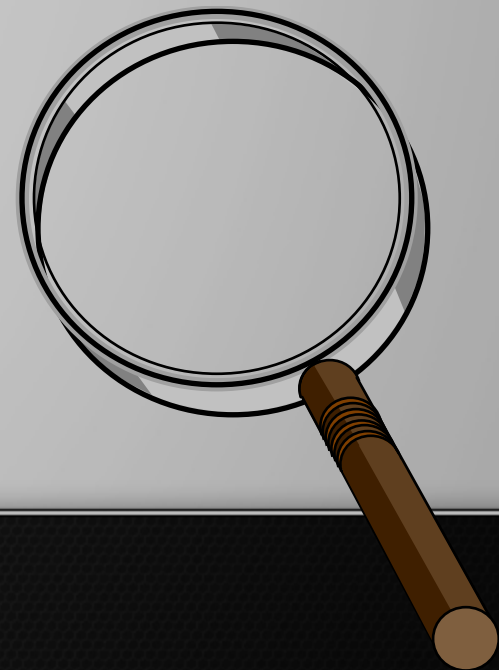
## Helpful Feature #3

- 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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# Thank you... Questions?



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