A HANDS-ON LOOK AT MIGRATING FROM FRAMEMAKER® TO FLARE

Wednesday, June 17, 8:00-9:30AM PDT
PANELISTS:

DENISE KADILAK
Information Architect / Team Manager
- Blackbaud develops software for nonprofit organizations with a focus on fundraising, website management, CRM, analytics, financial management, ticketing, and education administration.
- 16 years in the profession; enjoys investigating new tools, best practices, and workflows for a 22-member doc team.
- Using Flare since 2008.

UNA COGAVIN
Director | Convert Write Consulting & Services
- Convert Write Consulting & Services is a unique technical communications company that supports software start-ups with an out-of-the-box, virtual, on-demand technical publications team.
- Specializes in converting all types of legacy content to MadCap Flare and operates in the USA and Europe.
- Over 20 years of experience as a writer, content strategist, and technical communications manager. A MadCap Advanced Developer and Flare consultant.
OVERVIEW: THE MIGRATION PROCESS FROM FRAMEMAKER® TO FLARE
TERMINOLOGY: FRAMemaker® TO FLARE

- Book = Project
- Chapter = Topic +
- Paragraph tag = CSS
- Character tag = CSS
- Table tag = CSS
- Master pages = Page layouts
- Reference pages = CSS & Page layouts
- Heading levels in FrameMaker® are literal and static = Heading levels in Flare are relative to the context of the topic in the output
WHAT CONVERTS?

- TOC
- Index markers
- Glossary terms
- Cross References
- Conditionals
- Hyperlinks
- Special markers (filename & topic alias)
- Paragraph styles
- Character styles
- Table styles
- Variables
BEFORE YOU IMPORT

• FrameMaker ® files should use consistent styles

• No manual overrides

• Remove unused styles

• Generate/update the FrameMaker ® book so it knows where to find cross references, etc.

• Generate book level TOC

• Turn Distiller image downsampling off

• Understand the logical structure of the information in your files:
  • Decide where you are going to break a file into topics
  • Topics typically map to the FrameMaker ® headings (Heading 1, Heading 2, etc.)
  • The content in a topic should be able to stand on its own
AS YOU IMPORT

• The import process is quick and you can look at the outcome in the preview before committing.

• You can try the import several ways and as many times as you like.

• Trial and error will help you to make your import choices.

• You will need to make decisions based on the unique structure of the information in your FrameMaker files.

• Each topic should start with a H1 heading.

• Map styles.
AFTER YOU IMPORT

• Organize files
• Clean up CSS
• Create Page Layouts/Master Pages
• Generate Targets
• Use MadCap Analyzer to find broken links, unused styles, suggest content for snippets, etc.
PROJECT SAMPLE:
SOFTWARE FIRM, GRAPHICS APPLICATION

- User Guide with over 1,000 pages
- Rich with images, including screen shots and diagrams
- Comprised in a single FM book with 49 files/chapters
- Included 12 appendices, a glossary and an index

**Target output:** PDF

**Primary challenge:** The large number of graphics and text wrapping around the screen shots
THE CONVERSION TO FLARE PROCESS

- Prep time for the conversion: 12 hours
- Actual time for the conversion: 13 hours
- Post-conversion clean-up: 74 hours
DEMO:
Importing FrameMaker® Files into Flare
POST FRAMEMAKER®:
NEW WORKFLOWS, BEST PRACTICES AND KEY RESULTS
WHY WE MOVED

• Complex documentation requirements

• Outgrew FrameMaker®

• We needed:
  • Granular control over output
  • Template-driven tool
  • Native XML editor
NEW WORKFLOWS

• Topic-based authoring

• Maximized single-source workflow:
  • Global project linking
  • Conditions
  • TOCs
  • Run-time merge
  • Templates
BEST PRACTICES

• Create and enforce a content strategy
• Create preferred workflows
• Share resources and project level templates when possible:
  • Template project
  • Global project linking
• Look at advanced features
• Document your best practices and workflows
KEY RESULTS

• Flexibility:
  • Native XML tool
  • Impressive import capabilities

• Single sourcing most outputs

• Easier to manage and clean content:
  • MadCap Analyzer
  • Link views
  • Searchable
RESOURCES:
LINKEDIN GROUPS, FORUMS AND MADCAP SOFTWARE TECHNICAL SUPPORT
READY TO MAKE THE SWITCH?

Upgrade to MadCap Flare:
$1,148* (Save $300)

Upgrade to the MadPak Suite:
$1,978* (Save $400)

CONTACT SALES TO LEARN MORE

*Certain restrictions apply. Contact our sales team for more information.
QUESTIONS?
ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

MadCap Software Forums
https://forums.madcapsoftware.com/

Users of MadCap Flare: LinkedIn
https://www.linkedin.com/grp/home?gid=86373

MadCap Software Technical Support
http://www.madcapsoftware.com/support/maintenance.aspx

MadCap Flare Transition from FrameMaker® Guide (PDF)
http://docs.madcapsoftware.com/FlareV11/FlareTransitionFMGuide.pdf

Case Studies on Transitioning to MadCap Flare
Thank You!

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