Information 4.0 and MadCap Flare

PRESENTED BY:
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The webinar will be recorded and emailed to all registrants

Use the Question Panel in GoToWebinar to ask questions throughout the webinar
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  – Internationally recognized content consultant.
  – Certified – Flare, Mimic, Viziapps, others.
  – Working in online since ‘86, mobile since ‘98, XML and CSS since ‘99, apps since ‘11.
  – Certified app consultant and trainer.
• What’s Industry 4.0 / Information 4.0?
• Can it be implemented today? Using Flare?
• How will it affect Flare authors?
• Four major issues for tech comm
What’s Industry 4.0 / Information 4.0?
What’s Industry 4.0?

- Emerging model for factory automation and data exchange out of Germany.
  - See https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Industry_4.0
- Based heavily on:
  - iiRDS (International Standard for Intelligent Info Request and Delivery) - https://iirds.tekom.de/
  - Plus RDF, IoT, AI, deep learning, the cloud, more.
Industry 4.0 and Tech Comm

• One Industry 4.0 design principle – “assistance systems… support humans by aggregating and visualizing information… for making informed decisions and solving urgent problems on short notice.”

• Sound familiar?
So What’s Information 4.0?

• “…informational component of Industry 4.0”
  – https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/information-40-response-requirements-industry-andy-mcdonald
  – Conceptual umbrella for current and new tech comm technologies and methodologies.
  – Evangelized by Andy McDonald, Ray Gallon in Europe.
  – Information 4.0 Consortium – information4zero.org/
7 Characteristics of Content

- Independent of format and business rules.
- Molecular – “Info molecules” self-assemble into “compounds” based on “state vectors”.
- Dynamic – Continuously updated.
- Offered – Available if needed.
- Ubiquitous – Online, searchable, findable.
- Spontaneous – Triggered by contexts.
- Profiled automatically.
Can It Be Implemented Today? Using Flare?
Independent

- Content separated from:
  - Formatting – for use on multiple platforms.
  - Tool-specific features – ditto.
  - Business rules – for use for multiple applications.
Independent – Using Flare?

• Content separated from:
  – Formatting – CSS.
    • Local formatting 🚫
  – Flare-specific features – Clean XHTML target.
  – Business rules – Controlled via conditionality.
Molecular

- Topic-based authoring – “fragments”.
  - Requires software and hardware power, *very* rigorous project standards and management.
  - Possibly AI for large numbers of fragments.
- “Assembly into compounds”.
  - Requires extensive RDF metadata.
- “State vector”.
  - Temporary context-states.
Molecular – Using Flare?

• Supports topics, snippets and variables.
  – But large numbers of fragments need project standards, management, and documentation.

• Conditionality = fragment compounding.
  – But can’t add RDF tags via the GUI yet.

• State vector – contextualization = CSH+.
  – No support for other types of contextualization yet – requires some sort of external scripting.
**Dynamic**

- Continuously updated.
  - Effectively in real-time.
  - Content must be in open databases rather than behind a firewall or local.
  - Compilation may be a bottleneck.

- Needs fast, reliable network access.
  - With local storage fallback.
Dynamic – Using Flare?

• Batch target editor allows near-continuous updating in near real-time.
• Targets must be built on servers, not locally or behind a firewall.
• Build time may affect the dynamism – need to minimize build times.
• May need to use Clean XHTML output.
  – Which may complicate project design.
Offered Rather Than Delivered

• Breaking content into small molecules that can be called in response to a user query or question.
Offered... – Using Flare?

- Flare supports this now via CSH.
- Needs to support other calls, as yet undefined.
Ubiquitous

• Available everywhere, across multiple devices.
• Online, searchable, and findable.
Ubiquitous – Using Flare?

- Responsive design = ubiquity across today’s devices and platforms.
  - What about tomorrow’s, like bots?
- Puts extra emphasis on SEO, content structure.
- Seems to rule out hard-copy and PDF.
Spontaneous

• Triggered by “contexts”.
  – Goes far beyond traditional CSH to include:
    • Device orientation.
    • GPS and beacon-based location detection.
    • External states like temperature.
    • More.
  – Needs context detection, transmission, processing, and, again, metadata.
Spontaneous – Using Flare?

• TBD because of the need to run a build through Flare or at the command line.

• No way now for a user request to trigger a build.
  – Would need a script that detected the context change and requested the build.
  – Any takers?
Profiled Automatically

• Can mean *user* profiling but can also mean audience or context profiling or more.
• Requires continuous, heavy use of analytics.
• Like Cognizant’s “data halo”.
**Profiled... – Using Flare?**

- Flare can create targets at a near-individual level but this takes a lot of effort.
- Also requires real time or near-real time builds – see “Spontaneous” above.
• Can it be implemented today?
• Not in its idealized smooth form but:
  – Flare supports some of the base technologies today.
  – Can go further with programmer involvement, like spontaneous “on-demand” generation.
  – Ditto methodologies like structured authoring (depending on your definition of “structured”).
How Will It Affect Flare Authors?
Content Creation

• Think topics and fragments, not documents.
• Consider dynamic wording – e.g. click/tap.
• Structure content organizationally.
• Structure content semantically – metadata, taxonomies, ontologies, etc.
• Write and structure content for output to multiple “gateways,” including bots.
Technology

• Need greater technical familiarity and skills.
• Need to follow:
  – Coding best practices.
  – Standards, including structural standards.
    • DITA?
• Need a broader view of “contextualization.”
• Molecule creation and mgt. may demand AI-based tools – our job becomes curatorial.
Tools

- Need to keep our tools up-to-date.
- Start thinking about new tools, like natural language parsers to create question-response pairs for bots.
- Crucial need for training in proper tool use.
  - Peer-to-peer training often just perpetuates errors.
Four Major Issues
• Does it support my company’s strategic and business direction?
• Does it have top management support?
• Does my company’s culture support this?
• Are things clearly defined in my company?
• See my blog at [http://hyperword.blogspot.com/](http://hyperword.blogspot.com/) for periodic updates on the issues.
Summary

• Much of Information 4.0 still conceptual.
  – It may end up called “Content 4.0” or the like.
• But it represents an increase in the technical side of tech comm.
  – Like adding geolocation from the app world.
• It offers multiple paths for tech comm and Flare in the years ahead.
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Thank you... Questions?

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