The Journey from DITA-Based Software to MadCap Flare: A Case Study with CM Labs

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BEFORE WE GET STARTED...

The webinar will be recorded and emailed to all registrants

Use the Question Panel in GoToWebinar to ask questions throughout the webinar
Who Am I?

- Technical Writer, CM Labs
- Bachelor degree, Comp. Eng. (B.Eng. ‘04) McGill University, Montreal, Quebec, Canada
- Technical writer since 2007
What Does CM Labs Do?

CM Labs is a leading provider of simulations-based solutions.

- Automotive, construction, cranes, ports
- Realistic scenes of land, sea environments
- Vortex Studio: real-time simulation platform
- Little to no coding to create complex scenes
Vortex Studio

• Physics-based mechanical dynamics engine

• Immersive visualization system

• Professional desktop applications

• Flexible software development kit
The Old Help: CHM

Previous to MadCap Flare, we were generating Microsoft Compiled HTML Help (CHM).

- CHM already dated (lasted updated in 2001)
- Written in DITA XML, using Oxygen XML Editor
- Produced into CHM format using Doxygen documentation generator
Challenges of the Old Process

The old help generation process was difficult in a number of ways.

- Difficult content reuse
- Broken code
- Hard to re-order
- Building was a nightmare
  - Pages of instructions
  - Exact commands
  - Scripts calling scripts calling scripts
  - Time consuming
Why MadCap Flare?

What were the decisions that brought me to champion Flare within CM Labs?

- Output optimized for the web (HTML5)
- Simple to use search with good, quick results
- Easy of use (WYSIWYG, drag and drop)
  - Page preview
  - Text editor
- Quick documentation generation
  - What took >20 minutes is now 1/10\(^{th}\) of that time
- Streamlined content reviews
Besides the ease of deployment, simple and traceable reviews, and automated command-line generation, people are actually using the documentation!

Benefits

- Externally
  - Easier to find info (improved search)
  - Tutorials
- Internally
  - Onboarding
  - Reference manual
Looking into the Future

• Continue using Flare to output quality documentation that is quick to produce and easy to review

• Make use of new Flare features as they come

• If the team grows, Flare is easier to train new members
MadCap Flare vs. DITA

VIEW COMPARISON GUIDE
MadCap Flare Introductory Training Course Now Included with Your Free Trial and Product Purchase

Take advantage of our introductory web-based training course, taught by MAD Certified Instructors. A $599 training course value.

LEARN MORE --->
Thanks for listening!
Any questions? Please don’t hesitate to ask.

Links of Interest:
- Case Study: CM Labs Simulation
  https://www.madcapsoftware.com/case-study/cm-labs-simulations-uses-madc
  ap-flare.aspx
- A Guide to Reviewing Documents Using MadCap Flare, MadCap Contributor, JIRA, and Confluence
  https://www.madcapsoftware.com/blog/2017/05/11/guide-reviewing-document
  s-using-madcap-flare-madcap-contributor-jira-confluence/
- Why We Jumped from DiTA and Doxygen to MadCap Flare
  https://www.madcapsoftware.com/blog/2018/02/08/jumped-dita-doxygen-madcap-flare/