



SalesPage Technologies, LLC

Kalamazoo, MI

<http://www.salespage.com>

SalesPage Uses MadCap Flare and Analyzer to Produce Documentation 25 Percent Faster

INDUSTRY

- Customer Relationship
- Management Software

“

With Flare, we are able to complete our print documentation and online Help projects at least 25 percent faster, and our online Help is a great deal more responsive, with a much more robust and reliable search component.”

Nancy Hutson Hale | SalesPage Technologies, LLC

Goals:

- Provide responsive online Help that can be viewed using multiple browsers
- Create print documentation more efficiently
- Streamline the process of customizing content for each

Solutions:

- MadCap Flare native XML multi-channel content authoring software
- MadCap Analyzer to report potential problems and suggest improvements in Flare content

Benefits:

- Online Help and print manuals completed 25 percent faster
- Single-sourcing enables the same Flare project to produce both online Help and print manuals
- Native XML software supports the use of multiple browsers
- Variables and conditionalized tags enable content reuse and speed customization
- Cascading style sheets cut project time and reduce errors

SalesPage Uses MadCap Flare and Analyzer to Produce Documentation 25 Percent Faster

The quality of online Help and documentation can play a direct role in each customer's successful use of a product. No company understands that better than SalesPage Technologies, LLC.

Since 1983, SalesPage has provided customers with highly customized customer relationship management (CRM) solutions based on its award-winning SalesPage foundation. Because every implementation is tailored to the individual business and technical needs of each customer, the online Help and documentation for SalesPage CRM solutions have to be customized as well.

"We are constantly updating documentation to reflect enhancements. We maintain and update at least 12 core product documentation projects, each of which is published as online Help and often in print as well. Then, for any given customer, we typically need to customize three or more of those projects," explains Nancy Hutson Hale, director of SalesPage Education Services. "With MadCap Flare, we have the single-source publishing and content reuse that enables us to deliver the documentation and online Help our customers need, when they need it."

Proprietary Tool Presents Roadblocks

For nearly a decade, SalesPage relied on a traditional proprietary Help authoring tool to create its online Help and documentation. However, the Education Services team began to run into increasing roadblocks. The previous tool only supported the Internet Explorer browser, and SalesPage customers wanted the flexibility to use different Web browsers. Additionally, the older Help authoring tool was designed for delivering online content, but it lacked the functionality the team needed to automatically generate print documentation. SalesPage authors created macros to automate part of the process. However, they still needed to spend several hours manually cleaning up the print documents.

"We looked at several products, but the decision to use Flare was an easy one," said Ms. Hutson Hale. "Flare provided much

cleaner input and output in multiple formats; we could import our existing projects and immediately take advantage of Flare's features, and Flare was more affordable than other solutions on the market."

MadCap Flare Speeds Content Development

Print output has seen the most dramatic benefits of using MadCap Flare. Using the previous authoring solution, it could take 12 or more hours to edit and format a typical 300- to 400-page print document. By contrast, Ms. Hutson Hale notes, generating the print version with Flare takes just a few minutes, and then team members usually need only spend a couple of hours editing it.

"With Flare, we are able to complete our print documentation and online Help projects at least 25 percent faster, and our online Help is a great deal more responsive, with a much more robust and reliable search component," says Ms. Hutson Hale.

Other efficiencies have included easier handling of nested steps and the use of conditional text. In the past, creating documentation that included nested levels of steps required a great deal of manual resetting. By contrast, Flare's deep support for cascading style sheets allows authors to automate the numbering and levels for nested steps, saving time and reducing errors. The use of variables and conditional tags with Flare has also helped to cut project time.

"We use conditional text heavily, since we customize our Help for the tailored applications we provide each client," Ms. Hutson Hale explains. "Each client's SalesPage application includes some of our standard feature sets and often includes custom ones as well. With Flare, we can create content that is tailored to each of our clients, but it is all from the same source."

Since 2008, SalesPage has taken advantage of the comprehensive features in Flare 4.0 for publishing long, complex print documents, as well as the analysis and reporting capabilities of MadCap Analyzer.

Analyzer has been invaluable in allowing us to make sure that our source files are as clean as possible. Using Analyzer, we can see where that's not the case and fix the content before it is ever published."

Nancy Hutson Hale | **SalesPage Technologies, LLC**

"We really like the additional print support in Flare, especially the clean output directly from Flare and the ability to define the format for standard print-only elements such as the title page. We also appreciate being able to generate an accurate index and table of contents," says Ms. Hutson Hale. "At the same time, Analyzer has been invaluable in allowing us to make sure that our source files are as clean as possible. Using Analyzer, we can see where that's not the case and fix the content before it is ever published."

Ms. Hutson Hale adds, "Since we first began using Flare in 2008, MadCap's responsive support and continued product enhancements have enabled us to provide a first-class experience for our customers through attractive, customized Help content and print documents that complement our award-winning software."