

# From FrameMaker to FrameMaker

Growing a DITA-Capable Department

Larry Owen - Software AG USA, Inc.

Elizabeth Fraley - Single-Sourcing Solutions, Inc.

GET THERE  
FASTER

## Single-Sourcing Solutions



Our approach is to provide just the right amount of assistance to take customers from planning to production.

### Who we are

- Single-Sourcing Solutions was founded in 2005
- The Arbortext-dedicated distributor of PTC's complete Dynamic Publishing solution in the West:
  - Arbortext Content Manager
  - Arbortext Architect
  - Arbortext Editor
  - Arbortext Styler
  - Arbortext IsoDraw and IsoDraw CAD Process
  - Arbortext Publishing Engine
  - as well as other Arbortext associated products.
- Our customers cover a vast range of verticals from Aerospace & Defense, Automotive and Industrial, Technology, Services & Government, Publishing, and Life Sciences.
- Our team has over 25 years in Technical Documentation publishing, editing, and conversion experience.
- Over a 8 years experience with the Arbortext toolset.
- Over 10 years experience in the practical development and deployment of mission-critical, custom XML development.

### Our team will help you jump start your program by:

- Assessing your specific needs for the near term and long term
- Developing customized stylesheets
- Collaboratively working with you to create the optimum learning path for your team
- Acting as a mentoring resource as your internal team gains momentum
- Converting legacy data to support your changing publishing needs
- We will convert 100 pages at 50% discount so you can evaluate us

## Software AG

- The world's largest independent provider of business infrastructure software
- One of the 25 largest enterprise software vendors
- 3600 employees operating in 50 countries
  - Global Headquarters - Darmstadt, Germany
  - U.S. Headquarters - Reston, Virginia
- Celebrating our 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary year

## Software AG Documentation Group

- Staff of 30 writers and managers
- Offices in four countries
  - Darmstadt, Germany
  - Sofia, Bulgaria
  - India
    - Bangalore
    - Chennai
  - United States
    - Reston, Virginia
    - Denver, Colorado
    - Alviso, California
    - Bellevue, Washington
    - Plus some lucky telecommuters
- Two widely divergent methodologies

## Can this Marriage be Saved?

### The U.S. Doc Team

- Legacy FrameMaker
- Distributed output generation
- Primary output is PDF
- VCS is Perforce

### The Darmstadt Doc Team

- XMetaL and XML (SAGDOC)
- Automated server-based output
- Primary output is HTML
- VCS is CVS

## Yes, absolutely!

- Doc integration working group
- DITA will be our common ground
  - Open standard with wide acceptance
  - Common language, whichever editor we use
  - Common VCS (okay, we would have done that anyway)
  - Ability to share content with other groups

## Why choose FrameMaker?

- We can continue to output high-quality PDF
  - Our current users expect full-featured PDF documentation
    - Complete guides, not single-concept documents
    - Hypertext-linked TOC, index, and cross-references
  - Even when the primary content is online help....
  - Through DITA, we can offer more HTML content to new users
  
- One editor is enough, thank you
  - FrameMaker is an XML editor?
  - Writers can focus on learning structured documentation
  - Writers will still have to juggle DITA and legacy content

## The FrameMaker XML Penalty - 2005

- ↪ **Geek alert!**
  - ↪ Knowledge of FrameMaker templates
  - ↪ Knowledge of the Document Type Definition (DTD)
  - ↪ Element Definition Document (EDD)
  - ↪ XML read/write capability
    - ↪ Read/write rules
    - ↪ FrameMaker Developer Kit (FDK)
    - ↪ Extensible Stylesheet Transformations (XSLT)
  
- ↪ No official FrameMaker support for DITA

## The FrameMaker and DITA Today

- ↪ **FrameMaker 8 (and later) supports DITA**
  - ↪ Knowledge of FrameMaker templates
  - ↪ Knowledge of the DITA DTD
  - ↪ Knowledge of EDDs
  - ↪ XML read/write capability
- ↪ **DITA-FMx**
  - ↪ FrameMaker plug-in
  - ↪ Joint offering by Leximation and Silicon Software
  - ↪ Enhanced usability
- ↪ **The lightning proof of concept**



## The DITA Development Project

- ↪ The decision to go forward - August 2008
- ↪ The commitment:
  - ↪ Build out the DITA structure application
  - ↪ Develop roll-out strategy and plan
  - ↪ Develop and deliver initial training (FrameMaker-DITA 101)
  - ↪ Get initial projects under way by December 2008
- ↪ Key roles:
  - ↪ Management
  - ↪ Project management
  - ↪ Technical development
  - ↪ Information architect (we are not there yet)

## Some Basic Assumptions

- A chapter-based orientation
  - Level 1 of the DITA Maturity Model
  - Fits well in our PDF-centric world
  - Easier acceptance by writers
  - Currently, there is little reuse of content
- Selective migration of documents
  - Based on translation priorities
  - Generally, user's guides first
  - Some documents or products may never be migrated
- No specializations, no way, no how!

## Getting Ready for DITA

### ▸ FrameMaker template simplification

- Removal of admonition tables
- Clean-up of tables in general
- Culling of paragraph and character styles

However, the basic template looks mostly the same.

### ▸ Rethinking Graphics

- Composite graphics and XML do not mix
- Call-outs need to be translation friendly

Solutions? If you know a good one, please share it with us.

## Migrating Legacy Content

- Do it ourselves?
  - Brute force
  - The FrameMaker conversion table
- Our solution is - **Single-Sourcing Solutions**
  - For us, this is the cost-effective way to go
  - Prior relationship in conversion to DocBook

## Conversion: Preparation

---

### Create maps for the simple things

- Character formats
- Paragraph formats
- “Topics” to proper DITA topics

### Maps for the simple things

- Graphics
- Restructuring content
- Dividing up information
- Cross references
- Text Inserts
- Conditional Text
- Equation handling



## Conversion: Prework

---

### Identify chunks and information content in the source

- Topic boundaries
- File names
- Topic types

### Communicate these decisions

- Automatically
- Let the source be the guide

### Before converting, we deliver preconversion reports to validate

- Topics, types, count
- Character and paragraph styles used in document under conversion
- Filenames, collisions
- ID conflicts



## Conversion: Source to DITA

---

### Turnaround time

- Our minimum turnaround time is 3 business days – Shortest is 1 day!

### We support many different output options

- Multiple chapters
- One file with nested topics
- Topic files split automatically or by file markup
- Output is always Standard DITA, usable in any authoring product that supports it

### Our conversion improves as sample size grows

- Decrease conversion errors
- Eliminate undesirable output
- Uncover unexpected template usage
- Customers can change their minds!

### What comes in goes out!

## Post-Conversion Actions

- Exactly what you might expect:
  - Make sure elements are used properly
  - Redo cross-references
  - Insert graphics (the new versions, of course)
  - Pretty up the tables
  - Resolve contents of required-cleanup element
  
- Make note of items to be tweaked for the next batch of files to be converted.



## But Wait, There's More!

- Establish and document guidelines
- Staff the hotline
- Provide templates and snippets to make content development easier
- Provide supplemental how-to information (FrameMaker-DITA 102)

## How Are We Doing?

- New content development in previously migrated documents
- New content development in a completely new module
- First DITA content will be delivered in June 2009

## What's Next for Us?

- Continue to execute against our migration plan
- Get some experience with topic-oriented content
- Evaluate the DITA OTK (HTML, Eclipse help)
- Evaluate FrameMaker 9
- Develop expertise in XSLT (and maybe the FDK)

Questions?

???

 software<sup>AG</sup>



Thank You!

GET THERE  
FASTER