

Evolving to Find New Efficiencies

How one international technical documentation team has continued to meet documentation challenges since 2010 using DITA and the XDocs CCMS

Summary

The technical documentation team at GE Healthcare Austria initially adopted DITA and the XDocs CCMS in 2010 looking for greater efficiency in time and costs. Years later, with industry growth and product development, the team is finding new efficiencies in new versions of the XDocs CCMS.



Challenges

GE Healthcare provides a broad range of medical technologies and services worldwide. They are leaders in the field of medical imaging and information technologies, medical diagnostics, patient monitoring systems, drug discovery, biopharmaceutical manufacturing technologies, performance improvement, and performance solutions. Though the headquarters are in Chicago, Ill., there are GE Healthcare teams operating around the world.

The GE Healthcare team in Austria document medical technologies that are used in women's healthcare. This documentation team faces several challenges. In 2010, the documentation team faced the initial, internal challenge of having the costs approved for the purchase of a new DITA-enabled Component Content Management System (CCMS). Additionally, large organizations require many rounds of approvals before receiving the final clearance to purchase and implement a system that promised greater efficiencies.

Currently, the team continues to create and maintain user guides and service guides for growing product series and systems where, within each, there can be multiple generations of products—and product documentation. Even with the reuse of core content, a given product manual can still have 1600 files, which includes about 500-600 DITA files and many images. Manuals are published from the source DITA content to both PDF and help files. Additionally, the team must manage the translation of these manuals into 30+ languages. The team has also grown to include a geographically dispersed member, who documents a set of products from an office in Korea.

Solution

As pioneers in the DITA space, the GE Healthcare documentation team in Austria made the initial move to DITA and the XDocs CCMS version 2.3 in 2010 for cost efficiency and time efficiency in the creation, management, and publication of product manuals. The initial move required a degree of persistence from the

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documentation team. This persistence allowed them to adopt DITA and the XDocs CCMS, to realize cost efficiencies and time efficiencies—and to continue finding new efficiencies in new versions of the XDocs CCMS ever since.

Of the initial implementation in 2010, a technical writer at GE Healthcare Austria reports, “There are many processes to go through until we received the final clearance for the switch to DITA. Thanks to the great support from Bluestream, the rest seemed to work out without any problems.”

Since 2010, the team has seen much growth and technological advancement in the product series and systems, but they are still able to meet their challenges in creating, updating, versioning, publishing, and managing content for the manuals.

Though they still enjoy the same core functionality in XDocs, GE Healthcare Austria has upgraded their XDocs CCMS to make use of new functionality introduced into the system. When the team upgraded to version 4.0 (which includes the XDocs Localization module), they were able to reduce translation costs by 1/3 and realize tremendous savings. At publication time, the team was working with the XDocs CCMS version 4.1 and continues to make heavy use of the Localization module.

When it comes time to perform the upgrades to new versions of the XDocs CCMS, a technical writer from the team says, “Thanks to the great support of Bluestream, the transition became easy for us. They patiently helped us out, despite the limitations of tools within our company.”

As new members join the documentation team, they have adopted a learn-as-you-go approach. For example, a colleague will provide some mentorship as the new

member takes on a small learning project, such as to turn smaller word files into DITA, which weren’t meant for publishing.

A tech writer reports, “My colleagues and I still learn as we go, but working with DITA, XDocs, and Oxygen makes things easier to understand and we figure them out on our own.”

In an ever-changing world, the team will continue to face new challenges, and the XDocs CCMS will endeavor to keep evolving to meet the new challenges.

About Bluestream

Bluestream provide the XDocs CCMS, a DITA-based Component Content Management System (CCMS) – the leading single vendor solution for organizations looking to improve and enhance their information workflow. With a unique rapid to deploy methodology coupled with unrivaled functionality, Bluestream are inspiring teams of authors to create powerful user-focused content that can be flexibly delivered to any device or platform.

Bluestream customers range from Fortune 100 organizations seeking complex cross-departmental documentation solutions to small businesses containing single author teams.

Bluestream has been in business since 1997 and has customers in many verticals, among them software, oil and gas, health care, military, manufacturing, and finance.



Bluestream has solutions for all your content challenges.

- Easy delivery of content for different audiences, languages, and publish outputs.
- Out-of-the-box CMS that installs and deploys in hours, not days.
- Agile, automated and responsive content delivery.
- Complete, end-to-end, content management system.
- Flexible, supported, mature, and scalable.
- Support from decision-making through software trial, implementation, and use.
- Worldwide partners and customers on every continent mean Bluestream can support you wherever you are located.
- Scalable system that can easily adjust to any number of system users to accommodate growth in your company.

To find out how Bluestream can solve your organization’s content challenges visit our website at www.bluestream.com or contact us at 1-604-669-4469.

