![Simply XML logo]

December 2016

Simply XML December 2016 Newsletter

This is the Simply XML Newsletter written by Doug Gorman, CEO of Simply XML, often under the counsel of his canine colleague, Frank. We welcome our new friends from MIT's Center for Information Systems Research, Lavacon Las Vegas, and DITA Europe. We hope you enjoy these newsletters, but if you want to opt out, please unsubscribe at the bottom of the page. We would love to hear your comments. Email us at hello@simplyxml.com.

Happy Holidays!

Predictions for 2017

Frank Gorman(channeled by DG)

Doug: Please get to work, Frank. Are you sleeping?

Frank: I am awake and I am working.

Doug: What are you doing? It looks like you are sleeping (AGAIN!).

Frank: While you've been keeping our customers and prospects happy at the end of the year, I've been thinking about the future and looking forward to 2017.

Doug: OK, Frank. We are listening. Sit up and predict what the future holds.

Frank's Predictions for 2017

1. Simply XML will have another record year. Revenues will at least double. (Doug: I like that one a lot, Frank.)
2. DITA will either die in Tech Pubs or be very healthy in the back room of the enterprise, largely out of sight. Prospects have regularly opened the conversation with, "We don't want DITA."..... Or..... "DITA is way too complicated." DITA has clearly achieved an important place in the technical publication areas, but enterprise participants in the content supply chain don't want DITA. They want information reuse, flexible publishing, and an easy to implement writing standard. Enterprise authors need an easy to use writing standard, not 640 or even 100 DITA elements. All departments have a primary function to perform and their goal is not to implement DITA. If DITA doesn't move out of sight, it will join SGML as a complex, expensive technology used only by technologists. And that would be a shame.
3. Lightweight DITA will become more of a goal than a thing. Early in 2016, Simply XML created a Lightweight DITA implementation of Content Mapper. This involved building up the functions of a subset of the DITA tag set to work with Content Mapper and our Microsoft Word User Interface. The technical editing tool suppliers have also supported Lightweight DITA by constraining the functionality of their products. While the goal of these efforts is exactly the same, simpler DITA for non-techies, there is often a requirement or two that goes beyond the Lightweight DITA specification. We have seen this in 2016, where authors want simplicity but need complex tables. We gave them our Simply DITA with only DITA Topic and DITA Map. So Lightweight DITA has legs as a starting place to help an organization get the benefits of DITA outside of Tech Pubs, but it often needs an extra bell or whistle.
4. PC-based versions of MS Word will continue to be the primary authoring tool for the enterprise, including for technical content. The Office 365 cloud-based versions of Word are limited in functionality due to their architecture. Web-based authoring tools can help, but only for those who want their simplicity of authoring only in the cloud. Simplified versions of Oxygen, XMetaL, and Arbortext still seem complicated to professionals. Programming structures like mark-down or HTML authoring will only be viewed as simple by those who already program with those facilities.
5. Other XML-based technical architectures will come to the enterprise, but also behind the scenes. It won't be DocBook or S1000D, but it could be something new, even our Simply Structured document type. The bottom line here is that only a few people care what the back end is. The important thing is what can be done with a simple writing standard for the enterprise with XML under the covers.

6. Content Management Software vendors will see that the important modern functionality they provide, including shared access, work flow, metadata, and publishing will also need to thrive behind the scenes in order to succeed at the enterprise level. We can point to at least 5 CMS vendors that agree!

7. Finally, I predict that there will be content peace and technology peace. Content will unite under a common XML architecture. Technology peace will permit each author to use the authoring tool of choice to generate that common architecture. Under this architecture, each author will work at the level of granularity that he/she needs for content, and nothing more.

Thanks for your wisdom, Frank. Here's a cookie. It's time to celebrate the holidays with another great year and more cookies to look forward to.

Simply XML 2016 in Review

By Doug Gorman

2016 www.simplyxml.com

I appreciate that Frank did the heavy lifting on the Newsletter this month and that allows me to make the 2016 review nice and simple.

We travelled the world physically and web-wise with GoToMeeting. We do not have customers in the Arctic Circle or Antarctica, but we've got the rest of the world covered. Here's a review of some of our work. You can dig into these newsletters and conference presentations in the resources section of our web site. http://www.simplyxml.com/resources.php

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    - Quick Tip -- Question What We Know That We Know

Conference Presentations

We led some sessions and met some great people at conferences including two MIT Conferences, two Lavacon Conferences, and two DITA Conferences.

Over the years, we have always done our best to have some fun and to get our point across. Here are some of our themes:

- When Pigs Fly -- Structured Authoring, MS Word and XML
- Good to Great XML Adoption
- Teaching Old Dogs New Tricks
- Working in a Modern Family
- The Monster Under the Bed
- Getting From Here to There

More and more organizations seem to be listening.

Thanks for a great year.

Simply Tips and Tricks

All of our newsletters provide quick tips and tricks to help you simplify the XML world and beyond. Our tip for December focuses on peace.

In Life:

Try to balance work, family, and friends, but take some time for yourself. Find a peaceful place to relax or just "be."

With Simply XML:

You can achieve content peace and technology peace in 2017.

1. Adopt a writing standard that works for the whole organization.
2. Implement an XML architecture underneath your writing standard.
3. Hide the XML. (Whether DITA, Simply Structured, or something else) so that your authors can focus on creating great content.
4. Give your authors and your technology staff the tools they each need to move your organization forward.

We hope that Content Mapper and Simply XML will be an important part of your future as you achieve content peace.

There's a reason we call it Simply XML.

Simply XML provides simple, easy to use solutions for creating and publishing XML content. Creating, managing, and publishing content with our XML editor, Content Mapper, minimizes costs and ensures efficiency across your organization. Learn more at www.simplyxml.com.

Request a Free Trial of Content Mapper

Simply XML, LLC.
Tel: +1 (781) 801-9255
Email: hello@simplyxml.com
www.simplyxml.com