March 2018

Simply XML March 2018 Newsletter

This is the Simply XML Newsletter written by Doug Gorman, Founder and CEO of Simply XML, often under the counsel of his canine colleague/muse, Frank.

We continue the year with high expectations for enterprise content management.

We would like to encourage you to pass this along to others and, if they want, they can subscribe with the following link [Subscribe to the Simply XML Newsletter].

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.

Enterprise Content Management is No Joke

Frank: Hey Doug, what are you working on?

Doug: I'm writing a newsletter article about enterprise content management and I want to make

it interesting.

Frank: Why don't you add some relevant humor? People always like a good laugh.

Doug: Good idea Frank. "Hey Google….. Tell me a joke about Content Management."

Google Home: Alright, Doug, here's one………. The Past, the Present, and the Future walked into a bar to talk about Content Management…………It was tense!

Doug: That's a funny one.

Frank: Why is that funny?

Doug: I'll explain.

The Past

In the past, people wrote "stuff" by hand. They used pictures on cave walls, then handwriting with printing or cursive. Later on, typewriters (a.k.a manual printers) were used to create better-looking and more useful text. The written information was often printed on paper and stored in file cabinets. It was moved between readers in different locations by physical mail.

The Present

Most writing is now accomplished on a computer with the content saved and transmitted digitally. Some digital content is converted to HTML which is a format mark-up used to make it look better and be more accessible on the Web. Technical writers are highly skilled, trained in structured authoring with an increasingly large array of technical tools available. For important content, especially Technical Publications, there is content management. Content management is most often implemented with a base architecture called XML with shared repositories, metadata, managed workflow, and single source publishing. On average, it costs thousands of dollars per person to implement all of these technologies in Tech Pubs. For the rest of the organization, there are personal computers, but not much of this expensive technology. Besides, most enterprise authors have performance metrics that do not involve deep learning about technology or XML.

The Future

In the future content management will be ubiquitous across the enterprise. Content management will include all the functions presently available in Tech Pubs and organizational productivity will increase. Customers and internal staff will get just the right amount of information, when they need it, on whatever device they like, in their chosen language. Average

incremental Implementation costs will be a few hundred dollars per staff member for everything.

It is Tense

It is tense because large organizations see the benefits of enterprise content management. However, when they extrapolate the costs of what they have already spent on incremental staff, technology, consultants, and training--in Tech Pubs to the broader enterprise,-- their C-Level executives get upset stomachs and say, "NO". It is tense because organizations are stuck in a world of great-looking PDF documents that are static. It is tense because enterprise content is not tagged with useful metadata. Everyone knows that customers and internal staff can benefit from better information, but the costs of this across the enterprise have been prohibitive.

**Frank**: That is not so funny, Doug!

Doug: Well, Frank, the joke is quite funny until you apply it to enterprise content management and unpack the *tense* piece. That is precisely where Simply XML sees an emerging and bright future. High performing, financially successful organizations recognize that:

- For most jobs, useful information is a key success component..This usually includes the ability to both develop and use information.
- Non-technical staff have jobs to do and do not have the inclination or time to learn the XML/DITA Tag set and how to apply its nuanced possibilities.
- Enterprise authors write in MS Word and will not use a technical XML editor.
- Great communication begins with a focus on a few information types that support reader performance – Procedure, Process, Principle, Reference, Concept, and Image.
- MS Word can do anything and that is the problem. Authors need to work with a constrained version of Word with XML/DITA hidden underneath. Rather than tossing it out, smart organizations are leveraging MS Word to modernize content creation with reuse and single source publishing.
- Leveraging sunk investments in repositories and MS Word, enterprise content management is achievable across the enterprise. This can be achieved at an incremental technology and training materials cost per person measured in the hundreds of dollars and not the thousands of dollars.
- There is an important role for each of many authoring and repository tools across the organization and they can work well together with a common DITA/XML architecture for content.
- Enterprises must implement DITA/XML and content management with a "Keep It Simple Smart-person" mentality.
- And the Future is now available in the Present.

Frank: That's no joke, Doug. Nice job. Do you want a cookie?

Big Bodacious BOTs, But.....
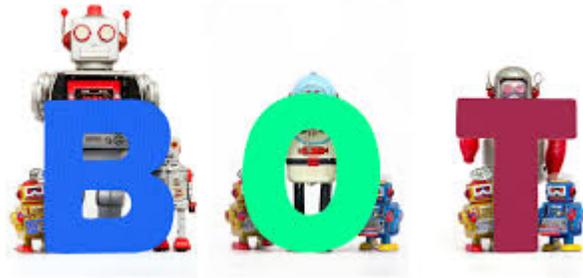
Frank: That was a pretty good article we wrote, Doug, the one about ECM. What are you considering for the second newsletter article?

Doug: I started to write about BOTs and an approach that would broaden their internal and external use. I decided to turn it into a white paper that is available on our Web site and through the link at the end of this article.

Frank: Are you thinking of replacing me with a BOT?

Doug: No, Frank, but I am thinking that we should love BOTs and BOTs should love our realistic approach to structured writing, Content Mapper, and Simply XML.

White Paper Abstract

The White Paper presents the case that there is a fork in the road to BOTs.
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One road leads to highly targeted use of BOTs. It involves highly specialized information whose core development and existence is for Technical Publications. Travel on this road involves expensive tools for authoring and content management. This may be a perfectly appropriate road for some.

The other road leads to a broader use of BOTs for internal and external content. Readers have questions related to more general internal and external needs that BOTs can access. This approach leverages existing tools as well as structured content created by non-technical staff—internally in marketing, sales, policies and externally by customers

and sales prospects.

Frank: What's the But?????

Doug: The **"But"** is that the broader approach is only realistic and effective if organizations **Keep IT Simple Smart-person.**

To Download the Simply XML White Paper: Big Bodacious BOTs, But…. [Click Here!](#)

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 March is about taking the first step..

In Life:

You have to keep moving forward. All great journeys begin with a first step. It doesn't have to be, as Neil Armstrong said when he first walked on the moon, " One small step for a man, one giant leap for mankind." You can move forward in some aspect of your life every day.

IN XML:

You can take a small step by letting your authors work in MS Word, implementing structured authoring with the information consumer's needs and performance in mind. You can implement a modern content architecture and keep the ugly but very useful XML/DITA behind the scenes.

There's a reason we call it Simply XML.

Simply XML provides simple, easy to use solutions for creating and publishing great 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

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