

Evaluating Author-it



Welcome

- ▶ Ask questions any time
- ▶ Use *6 to mute or unmute your phone



About SDI



- ▶ Founded in 1978
- ▶ U.S. offices in NJ (headquarters), NC, NH, MD, IN, and AR; new international offices in Hungary, India, and China
- ▶ Focus on *Making Information Perform!*
- ▶ Authorized Reseller and service provider for Author-it since 2003
- ▶ Three divisions:
 - SDI Intelligent Solutions provides information technology solutions (including Author-it) for our clients
 - SDI Managed Solutions provides traditional documentation services: technical writing, graphics, editorial, course development, training and web design, DITA training and front office/back office services for global clients
 - SDI Government Solutions provides services for government and Department of Defense clients

About Author-it



- ▶ The Company:
 - Based in New Zealand
 - Founded in 1996
 - Current release: Author-it 5.0
- ▶ The Philosophy:
 - Manage content components for single sourcing
 - Make reuse easy
 - Fit the way real writers work
 - Publish automatically to multiple output formats
- ▶ The Technology:
 - Object-oriented libraries
 - Jet or SQL Server database

Our Agenda

- ▶ The argument for content reuse and single sourcing
- ▶ Making the business case
- ▶ Defining your requirements
- ▶ Alternative Solutions
- ▶ Do you need XML?
- ▶ Conducting a pilot project with Author-it
- ▶ Basics of creating, managing, and publishing reusable content with Author-it



Why Single Sourcing?



Author-it Features and Benefits

- ▶ Collaborative authoring with secure access control
- ▶ Support for consistency in authoring
- ▶ Automated publishing (print, web, help, HTML presentations, and DITA XML)
- ▶ Content management features
- ▶ Import existing content
- ▶ XML support for content exchange and localization



Author-it Design and Technology



- ▶ Content is stored as objects in a relational database
- ▶ Each object has a unique ID
- ▶ History and relationships are tracked
- ▶ Reusable objects include text, graphics, index entries, hyperlinks, books, and other types of content
- ▶ Reuse of content is easy and manageable - drag and drop
- ▶ Minimize overhead of working with the database

Author-it Components



- ▶ Base User License (floating) provides core functions (authoring, content management, and publishing)
- ▶ Optional modules:
 - SQL Server Connector
 - Xtend (authoring memory)
 - Author-it Live (web editor, integration server, and publishing server)
 - Website Manager - manage web site staging and experiences
 - Project Manager
 - Localization Manager (users and locales)
 - Offline Authoring
 - MIF Import Filter

Single Source Authoring

- ▶ Publish to different media (print, web, help, presentations)
- ▶ Reuse content in different documents
- ▶ Make changes to content in one place
- ▶ Provide collaborative authoring environment
- ▶ Track relationships among content objects



Multi-Channel Publishing

- ▶ Publish to the Web
- ▶ Publish to Help
- ▶ Publish to standard print formats
- ▶ Publish HTML presentations



Benefits of Single Sourcing

- ▶ Greater efficiency in authoring
- ▶ Better consistency and control
- ▶ Division of labor
- ▶ Opportunities for learning and growth
- ▶ Increased value of content across the organization



Making the Business Case



Organizational Benefits of Content Reuse



- ▶ Create content once, and share it among:
 - User documentation
 - Training
 - Sales and marketing
 - Customer support
 - Internal policies and procedures
- ▶ Improve collaboration among different departments
- ▶ Improve consistency of content across the organization
- ▶ Provide consistent formatting and branding throughout the organization
- ▶ Highlight the value of content development and management

Estimating the Cost of Your Current Approach



- ▶ How much content is duplicated in different documents?
- ▶ How long would it take a writer to apply a required change to all copies of the information?
- ▶ How much time do writers spend on formatting?
- ▶ How much time do reviewers and managers spend on document reviews?
- ▶ What is the standard cost for writer, reviewer, and manager time?
- ▶ What is the cost for multiple translations of the same content?
- ▶ What is the cost of formatting by translation vendors?
- ▶ Legal liabilities due to incorrect information?

Direct Savings

- ▶ Reduced labor costs
- ▶ No reformatting
- ▶ Faster review and approval cycle
- ▶ Reduced translation costs



Secondary Savings

- ▶ Faster retrieval of source content
- ▶ Greater consistency and accuracy of content
- ▶ Secure access control
- ▶ Improved formatting consistency and branding
- ▶ Faster time to market
- ▶ Project management aids



Organizational Benefits

- ▶ Improved flow of content across departmental boundaries
- ▶ Better communication and collaboration among departments
- ▶ Consistent information for customers, reducing operational issues and requirements for customer support
- ▶ Opportunities to deliver more customized deliverables for specific customers and partners
- ▶ Enhanced opportunities for innovation and new information products



AuthorIt®

Investment

- ▶ Analysis of content and workflow
- ▶ Cost of software licenses and support
- ▶ Installation and configuration
- ▶ Importing legacy content
- ▶ Creating custom publishing templates for print and electronic deliverables
- ▶ Learning curve for writers to use new tools
- ▶ Training



Defining Your Requirements



Content Analysis



- ▶ What types of documents do you need to create and maintain?
- ▶ What legacy content needs to be imported?
- ▶ What is the potential for reuse?
- ▶ Model the deliverables you need to produce:
 - Types of output (print, web, help, ...)
 - Information Architecture: Plan a "lego" approach to building your deliverables from content components
 - Format requirements
- ▶ Identify house style and writing conventions

Working Environment

- ▶ Schedule (implementation & deliverables)
- ▶ Sharing the plan with stakeholders:
 - Lower cost of production
 - Faster turnaround
 - More efficiency
 - Less time on review & approval
- ▶ Work flow
- ▶ Integration and delivery issues

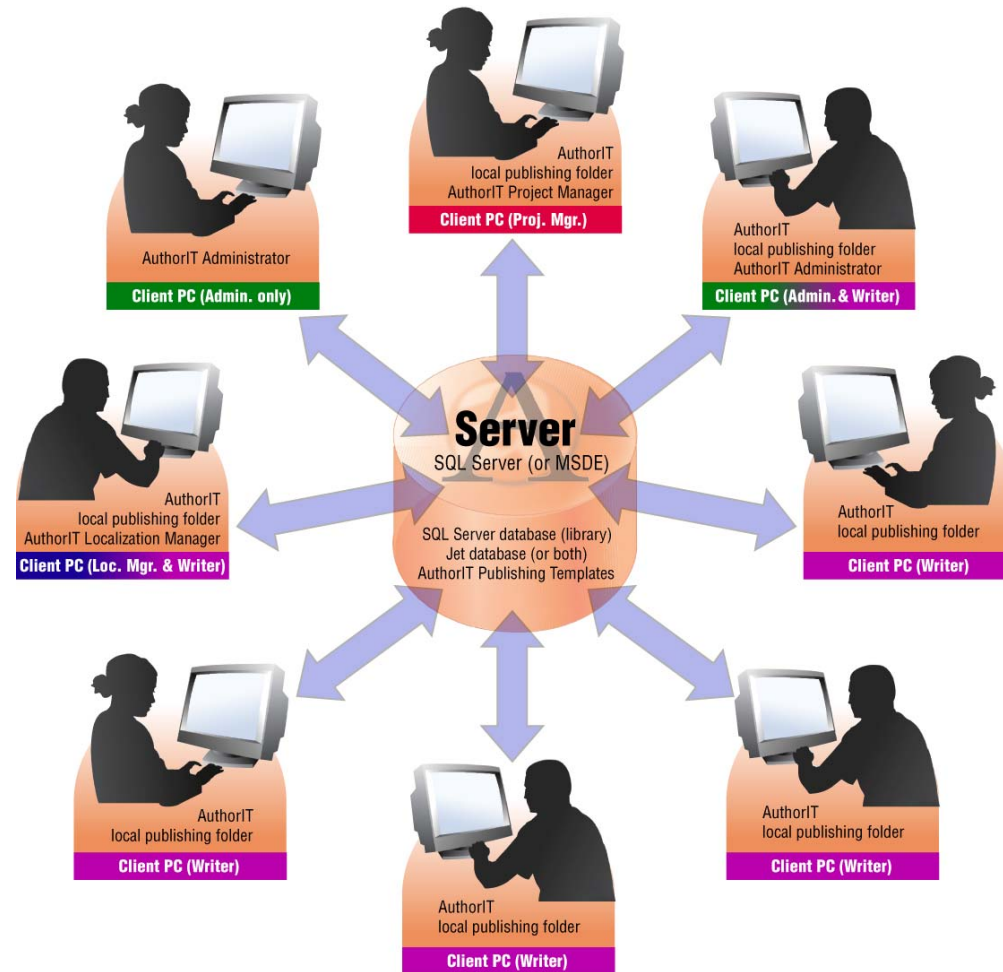


Configuration

- ▶ What offices are supported?
- ▶ Work force:
 - In the office
 - At home
 - Contractors
 - Global offices
 - Translation managers
- ▶ Local or Wide Area Network?
- ▶ System and network requirements



An Example Configuration



Alternative Solutions



Desktop Publishing Applications

- ▶ Word, FrameMaker, RoboHelp, etc.
- ▶ Typically designed for one type of output
- ▶ Content and formatting are entangled
- ▶ To produce other types of outputs, perform conversion and reformat (repeatedly)
- ▶ No content management
- ▶ Little support for standards and structure



Do You Need XML?



- ▶ XML is just one approach for single sourcing and content reuse
- ▶ Author-it uses a database approach:
 - Faster storage and retrieval
 - Content management facilities built in
 - XML for content exchange
- ▶ XML requires a large financial commitment, a large degree of system integration, and a long time frame
- ▶ Author-it can be implemented less expensively and more quickly, but provides most of the benefits of an XML solution
- ▶ Author-it is also much more fun!

What XML Provides (or Not)

- ▶ XML is an authoring solution
- ▶ XML provides:
 - Separation of content from format
 - Publishing based on stylesheets (engine not included)
 - Content portability (to other XML editors)
 - Enforcement of structure from a Document Type Definition or schema
- ▶ XML does not provide:
 - Content management
 - Ease of use
 - Ease of reuse
 - Publishing engine





What Author-it Provides (or Not)

Author-it provides:

- ▶ Structured content creation
- ▶ Separation of content from format
- ▶ Automated publishing based on stylesheets (engine included)
- ▶ Content portability (to other desktop publishing applications)
- ▶ Content management
- ▶ Ease of use
- ▶ Ease of reuse
- ▶ Standard styles and authoring templates

Author-it does not provide:

- ▶ Enforced structure from *arbitrary* DTD or schema
- ▶ Painful editing environment

Conducting a Pilot Project with Author-it



Evaluation Licenses

- ▶ Can perform a complete pilot with evaluation licenses
- ▶ Request evaluation licenses from your reseller
- ▶ Include base user licenses and any optional modules needed
- ▶ 90 day limit (can be renewed)
- ▶ "Evaluation" string in published output
- ▶ Some other limitations (but not functionality)



Implementation Stages

- 1 Analysis
- 2 Pilot
- 3 Define roles, groups, and users
- 4 Import existing content
- 5 Create custom publishing templates
- 6 Increase reuse
- 7 Increase automation
- 8 Expand reuse throughout the organization



Pilot Process (Any New Application)

- 1 Define goals
- 2 Choose small, non-critical project
- 3 Basic training?
- 4 Import and validate content
 - a Customize import rules
 - b Identify any needed cleanup
 - c Define scope of effort for migration
- 5 Add new content
- 6 Publish using standard Author-it publishing templates
- 7 Identify workflow issues
- 8 Identify custom publishing requirements
- 9 Evaluate end-to-end workflow
- 10 If necessary, evaluate translation process
- 11 Evaluate the pilot: successes, challenges, changes needed

Basics: Creating, Managing, and Publishing



Demo

- ▶ Importing
- ▶ Creating content
- ▶ Publishing
- ▶ Reuse



Beginner's Tutorial

- ▶ Available in *Getting Started with Author-it*
- ▶ <http://www.author-it.com/index.php?page=documentation>



Questions and Discussion



Followup

- ▶ Request evaluation licenses for Author-it (including optional modules)
- ▶ Schedule a call to discuss your requirements and get license and service information
- ▶ Information about upcoming webinars, training, and other Author-it services is available at <http://www.sdicorp.com/authorit>
- ▶ Also check our website for PDF and recording of this webinar



Check for Future Events!

- ▶ <http://www.sdicorp.com/authorit>
- ▶ We welcome your suggestions for additional webinars!
- ▶ Send comments or suggestions to jhawkins@sdicorp.com

