

8 Ways to Improve Your Editorial and Production Processes - And See Dramatic Results!

*Proven strategies to reduce turnaround time,
improve project status reporting, obtain better
content reuse, improve staff morale,
and simultaneously publish
to print and digital output formats!*



Introduction

Whether you are publishing trade books, reference publications, or journals, there is a high likelihood that you are struggling with productivity concerns. There are a number of issues we have observed that most publishers deal with in their daily operations, including:

- ◆ Content may be stored in a variety of different file folders and repositories, making it difficult to find and retrieve relevant content.
- ◆ It is often difficult to ensure that an author or editor is working with the most current version of a manuscript. It is difficult to track changes to content as they go through an editorial review.
- ◆ A large amount of manual effort is involved to track status of editorial and production projects.
- ◆ Publishers are struggling with the challenges of leveraging the available features of digital delivery through eBooks and mobile apps.

This white paper will explore 8 proven strategies to streamline your editorial and production environments, including:

- ◆ Migrating to an XML-based content environment to allow for true single-source publishing to multiple output formats (both print and digital)
- ◆ Implementing a full-featured repository to provide version management and access control for all XML source files and related digital assets
- ◆ Adding more sophisticated search features to your work environment, enabling better content reuse
- ◆ Creating automated workflows to facilitate automated routing of tasks to appropriate users (located anywhere in the world) and to provide detailed and customizable reporting of project status
- ◆ Moving from a book-based paradigm to a component-based content structure to allow for easy assembly of content assets into new revenue-generating deliverables
- ◆ Leveraging multimedia and interactivity to bring eBooks beyond the boundaries of simulating your print books

- ◆ Identifying staff with technical aptitude to champion the implementation of new technology solutions
- ◆ Maintaining a healthy balance between in-house publishing technology platforms and outsourced services

8 Strategies to Streamline Your Editorial and Production Processes

#1: Migrate your content to XML

For years, the publishing industry has been extolling the virtues of an "XML-first" workflow. The benefits of moving to XML are numerous: format-neutral XML content can easily be rendered to print and electronic output formats, metadata and attributes can increase the intelligence and searchability of your content, independence from the proprietary formats of commercial tools from Adobe and Microsoft, ability to chunk content into smaller components, and Unicode compliance to allow for smooth localization of content into a myriad of languages. So, why haven't more publishers adopted the use of XML-based platforms?

Because it's hard to do! Traditionally, migrating content to XML means a significant investment of time, money, and staff expertise to ensure that you maximize the value of your content. It typically means buying new technologies and training staff (not to mention external authors and production service partners). It can take months or years, and yet many of these implementation projects still fail.

But, when a migration of content to XML is done correctly, **it's worth it.** Standardizing your content in XML is the first step in the journey to a streamlined and automated process that can dramatically reduce your operational expenses and open up a multitude of new revenue generating opportunities by leveraging the content you already have in newly packaged deliverables. The good news: as XML-based technologies have matured, there are now options to implement an XML foundation while

many of your users continue to use tools like MS-Word and InDesign!

The keys to successful XML migration are:

- ◆ Establish a vision of what you want to do with your content assets
- ◆ Assemble a cross-functional team of your content experts to participate in the content migration process
- ◆ Find an experienced service partner to help you with content modeling, conversion of legacy content, and selection/integration of the most appropriate technologies to meet your vision while minimizing impact to your existing infrastructure

Summary: XML migration is a significant investment of time and money, but when done correctly, the benefits far outweigh the costs. And, as XML-based technologies have matured, it is now possible to implement an XML foundation while allowing many users to continue to use "comfortable" tools, such as MS-Word and InDesign.

#2: Implement a single-source repository for all of your assets

Does this scenario sound familiar? Many publishers have an assortment of places where historical content files are stored: shared network drives, image repositories...even file cabinets stuffed with paper and CD-ROMs! Once you factor in that the people who need access to this content may be geographically dispersed and are likely to be sharing files over email for review, it quickly becomes a nightmare to figure out who has the most current version of a document in their possession. This can often lead to many inconsistencies and inaccuracies in your content deliverables.

A content management system (CMS) can provide the ability to store the "one true source" for your content objects. A good CMS will provide necessary features, such as *access control* (to make sure that only people with appropriate permissions can view or edit files) and *version*

control (to ensure that you are only working with the most recent version of the content and can easily see what has changed between versions). For publishers, the best choice for a CMS is usually one that is built on the foundation of an XML database (to reap the benefits of XML, as explained in Point #1), with the ability to store both XML content assets and other multimedia digital assets, such as video and images.

The good news: with the advent of cloud-based technologies, a robust XML-based content management is easier than ever to implement and is also extremely affordable.

Summary: A single-source XML-based content management system will make it easier to share files among your editorial and production staff, while ensuring that everyone is always working on the correct version. These systems are now affordable and easy to implement, due to the advantages of the cloud-based subscription models that are available.

#3: Reuse more content through better search tools and richer metadata

Many publishers miss out on the opportunity to fully leverage their content assets by repurposing content topics into new revenue-generating deliverables. The main reasons for this are:

- ◆ lack of a suitable technology infrastructure to be able to search across all content assets for content that meets specific criteria (see Problem #2 above)
- ◆ content is not "rich" enough to be classified into categories or taxonomies for easy searching

The solution continues along the same themes already described: by migrating your content to XML, you can simultaneously enrich the content by adding additional metadata fields within the XML markup. Similarly, the implementation of an XML-aware content management system will provide you with the proper tools to search across the XML content and quickly find topics that are relevant to your search criteria.

Summary: The combination of rich XML content and an appropriate CMS technology infrastructure will allow the flexibility to easily assemble new content collections.

#4: Automate your workflows

How do your editorial and production staffs track the status of ongoing projects? In our experience, publishers typically track projects manually with spreadsheets or log files. As a result, much time and labor is expended to track time and to determine status of projects.

Many CMS solutions have automated workflow features to route tasks to assigned staff and to keep track of project status. Automated workflow tools provide many advantages, including:

- ◆ a consistent approach for assigning resources and schedules to projects
- ◆ ability to easily track project status from a system query from any location
- ◆ full audit trail capabilities

Summary: Automated workflow tools save time and increase consistency for users who are tracking project status manually with spreadsheets or log files.

#5: Break away from the book paradigm - content components are key to success!

Most publishers are only beginning to realize the potential for digital content delivery. Today, the majority of eBooks are merely electronic representations of their hardcopy counterparts (e.g., "flip the page"). The more sophisticated examples may contain some video or audio to leverage the power of digital content.

What if you could easily query all of your content assets and assemble a custom digital book with all topics related to a specific subject? The path to this functionality is straightforward. If you have migrated your content to XML, you can easily "chunk" your books into a set of

discrete topics that can easily be reassembled into new products. A robust CMS will allow you to track where specific content topics are used (and reused). And if your content has been enriched with metadata, then it becomes easy to find relevant content.

Summary: If your content remains trapped within books, you cannot fully realize the benefits of content reuse. Set your content free by breaking it into individual topics, which can then be easily reassembled into new revenue-generating deliverables.

#6: Make your eBooks interactive!

Most consumer eBooks are merely an electronic representation of the printed page. What if your eBooks provided a fully interactive experience, rather than just support for flipping pages? Professional content consumers would greatly benefit from a more interactive presentation format, such as:

- ◆ Supplementary video and audio content
- ◆ Support for interactive tests/quizzes to determine mastery of the content
- ◆ Group annotations and bookmarks
- ◆ Sophisticated search features to quickly navigate through thousands of pages to find relevant content

Summary: Take your digital content beyond the confines of the printed page and leverage the power of your eReaders and mobile devices to create a fully interactive user experience for your content consumers.

#7: Find the champions on your team!

By now, you may have realized that many of the suggestions listed here involve the implementation of new technology. However, it's also important to know that many technology implementation projects fail! One major reason for this is that a proper team was not assembled to manage the intricacies of installing new systems while editorial and production schedules are still being maintained.

Almost every editorial and production team has at least one member who is the “technical guru”...a person with a good understanding of modern tools and a willingness and patience to provide training and advice to others. Seek these people out and make them key members of your implementation team. They can help you to achieve quick success with initial pilot projects, and they will become internal champions to help the rest of your team through the period of change.

Summary: Find the people on your team with technical savvy and make them key members of your technology implementation team. They will greatly increase the odds for a successful migration to XML, content management, and single-source publishing environments.

#8: Maintain a healthy balance between in-house publishing technology and outsourced services!

Technology alone will not guarantee success. Just as many publishing houses have learned that sending all work offshore does not always provide the anticipated results, it is also true that you will not necessarily be able to accomplish all of your objectives with your internal staff, even with the benefit of new technology solutions.

The most successful approach is to find the right balance for your organization between in-house content management and publishing tools and tasks that can be outsourced to service providers who have shared access to these tools. This methodology can allow you to more fully realize the new efficiencies and lower costs of a combined hybrid work environment. Your core team can focus on managing the editorial and production processes more efficiently by using new in-house technology, while tasks that are not mission-critical can be delegated to lower-cost service partners. (Remember, you will be able to easily track the status of delegated tasks through automated workflow!)

Summary: The right combination of sophisticated XML-based content management/publishing technology and cost-effective outsourced services can greatly improve the efficiency of your editorial and production processes.

Case Study: Leading Independent Publisher

The Challenge

A leading publisher of academic and reference publications (approximately 1500 titles/year) made a decision in 2010 to move to an XML-based platform. They were facing a number of challenges, including:

- ◆ A need to create multiple file formats to satisfy their print and ebook needs (print PDF, Web PDF, Epub, Mobipocket)
- ◆ A desire to create those formats from a single source, without post-production conversions or multiple composition paths
- ◆ A desire to make the revision process and new editions easier to produce

The Solution

This publisher implemented an XML-based content management system that included automated workflow and single-source publishing tools for automated generation of PDF, HTML, and eBooks. In order to ease the transition into this new environment, they adopted some best practices, including:

- ◆ Setting up an XML data model based on the type-setting short tags already being used by production staff
- ◆ Continuing to use MS-Word as the authoring source file

The Results

As a result of this implementation, the publisher saw some dramatic results:

- ◆ Production process stayed similar to the traditional approach, but approximately 70% faster!
- ◆ eBooks became more functional at a fraction of the cost of offshore conversion.
- ◆ Currently pushing over 400 titles/year through an almost completely automated production environment.

Conclusion

As the publishing industry has moved to a model that increasingly relies on digital content, the pressures have mounted to find new ways to reduce expenses, generate new revenue streams, and streamline operations. One approach that has been proven to enable publishers to achieve these goals is a well-balanced combination of in-

house technology based on an XML content management platform, coupled with outsourced services. When done correctly, the results of a successful technology implementation and a strong business partnership with a well-qualified service provider will lead to lower costs, exciting new revenue potential, and highly efficient business processes.

About Manipal Digital

The Manipal group - with an 87-year business lineage and over \$1B in annual revenue - has a portfolio of businesses that includes Printing Solutions, Media & Entertainment, and Education and Healthcare. With over 75 years of experience in printing technology and solutions, Manipal is often called the Print Capital of India.

Manipal Digital, an extension of the Manipal Group's Printing division, is in the business of processing and distributing content across all channels – **Print, Mobile, Web, Video** and **Technology**. We provide end-to-end services across the publishing value chain, from content creation, layout & design, conversion, to distribution and analytics.

Our Digital Imaging and Publishing Pre Press Services include typesetting and composition of books, magazines and journals, ad designs, flyers and brochures, as well as illustration and artwork.

On the mobile and web services front, we provide multi-format, multi-platform eBook production. We have the expertise to efficiently handle eBook conversion, enhanced eBooks, and books as apps across Android, iOS and Windows platforms. We provide a range of services in 2d/ 3d animation, and web and interactive content development to ensure that the content is published in a format best suited to both traditional and new media platforms.

Manipal Digital is NOT just another offshore service provider! In addition to our services, we also offer several innovative technology solutions that are designed to address specific needs and pain points within the publishing workflow – XML-based automated workflows, Customized Word to XML automated conversion, Customized eReader and Distribution platform, Augmented Reality based sales platform, and Digital Asset management systems.

With our services and solutions spread across Content creation, Conversion, Distribution & Analytics and single-source delivery to Print and Digital output formats, Manipal Digital offers a **One Stop Shop** experience to global Publishers.

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