Technical documentation: standards... and best practices

Pleased to meet you

- Yves Barbion
  - Managing partner of Scripto & Teka
  - Content strategist
  - Information architect
  - DITA coach/instructor

About Teka / Scripto

- Technical writing
- Capturing critical knowledge
- Organizing content
- Consulting, training and coaching:
  - Structured authoring and information modeling (DITA)
  - Technical writing
  - Adobe FrameMaker

See also:
- www.scripto.nu
- www.teka-infopilots.com
Programme

- Directives: Machinery Directive 2006/42/EC
- IEC 82079-1: Preparation of instructions for use, general principles and detailed requirements
- NBN EN 498: Specification for dedicated liquefied petroleum gas appliances - Barbecues for outdoor use contact grills included
- Hazard statements: ANSI Z535 and ISO 3864
- DITA: Darwin Information Typing Architecture

Technical documentation

- Any associations, meanings, assumptions?

Standards

- Any associations, meanings, assumptions?
How to buy a standard, an example

- **NBN EN 62023**: 2012 Structureren van technische informatie en documentatie

---

How to buy a standard, an example

- **Quote**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Omschrijving</th>
<th>Editie</th>
<th>Taal</th>
<th>Aantal</th>
<th>Eenheid</th>
<th>Stapjes</th>
<th>BTW</th>
<th>Bedrag</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NBN EN 62023 + IEC</td>
<td>EN</td>
<td>1 PDF</td>
<td>187</td>
<td>D3</td>
<td>187.00</td>
<td></td>
<td>217.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manuele verwerkingskost</td>
<td>1 STUK</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>D3</td>
<td>30.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>30.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>247.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Dit is de prijs voor de header en de documentatie exclusief btw 21%.

Totaal EUR incl. btw: 262.67
How to buy a standard, an example

- Google “NBN EN 62023: 2012 Structureren van technische informatie en documentatie”
- First hit found on nen.nl

Types of “standards”

- Directives:
  - Machinery Directive 2006/42/EC
  - Medical Device Directive 93/42/EEC
- Official standards:
  - Generic, for example: IEC 82079-1: Preparation of instructions for use, general principles and detailed requirements
  - Product-specific, for example NBN EN 498: Specification for dedicated liquefied petroleum gas appliances - Barbecues for outdoor use contact grills included

Types of “standards”

- Open technical documentation standards:
  - DocBook
  - S1000D
  - DITA
Product-specific standards

- Example NBN EN 498: Specification for dedicated liquefied petroleum gas appliances - Barbecues for outdoor use contact grills included
- May contain sections with very specific requirements for the instructions

Machinery Directive 2006/42/EC

- Rules:
  - See § 1.7.4
- Best practices:
  - All of the best practices which apply to IEC 82079-1: single sourcing, consistency, content deduplication...
  - Conditional content
- Demo: Vertogen documentation

IEC 82079-1: Preparation of instructions for use, general principles and detailed requirements

- IEC and ISO standard
- Recent: 2012-08
- Scope:
  - "all types of instructions for use"
  - "products of all kinds (…), such as large industrial machinery, turnkey based plants or buildings."
  - "Instructions for use are an integral part of the safe operation and maintenance of a product"
IEC 82079-1: Preparation of instructions for use, general principles and detailed requirements

- What’s inside? Preview, but...

IEC 82079-1: main principles and requirements

- Consistency of information
- Quality of communication
- Location
- Quality of translations
- Recognized communication principles

IEC 82079-1: main principles and requirements (continued)

- Style guide
- Structure
- KISS
- Illustrations and supporting text

✔ Is compliance with IEC 82079-1 part of your content strategy?
Content strategy

- Kristina Halvorson (Brain Traffic): “Plans for the creation, publication and governance of useful, usable content.”
- R. Baillie/Noz Urbina: “A repeatable process that governs the management of content throughout the entire content lifecycle.”
- Rockley/Cooper: “A repeatable method of:
  - Identifying all content requirements up front
  - Creating consistently structured content for reuse
  - Managing that content in a definitive source
  - Assembling content on demand to meet customer needs”

Content strategy: questions

- Wrong question: What tools do we have to use?
- Good questions:
  - What business goals do we want to achieve? Reduce equipment downtime, meet regulatory requirements, control maintenance costs?
  - Who is the audience of the content?
  - What information does our audience need?
  - How can we optimize the current tech doc processes?
  - Where and how are we going to reuse content?
  - What will be the ROI?
  - What’s the quality of the current documentation and how can we improve it?

  ✔ Result: content strategy audit report

IEC 82079-1: consistency

- Rule: Information in instructions for use must be consistent, not only in the technical documentation itself, but also with information in other materials, for example marketing collateral.
- See also: 1.7.4.3 “Sales literature” in the Machinery Directive
- Best practices:
  - Consistency
  - Single sourcing
  - Content deduplication
Consistency

- Terminology: “Those who can’t write, write manuals.”
- Capitalization and punctuation
- Layout: corporate identity manual
- Structure: patterns (element templates or “outlines”)
- Sequence of topics and information types: Adobe Creative Suite Help Center
- Advantages:
  - easier retrieval
  - avoid ambiguity
  - translations: more perfect and “fuzzy matches”

Single sourcing

- Topic-based authoring
- Create once, reuse many times
- Content reference (“conref”): reuse by linking, NOT by copying
- Reuse instead of re-create
- Authoring memory:
  - SDL AutoSuggest
  - Acrolinx
- Max. consistency = 100% matches
  ✔ Example: heavily “conreffed” topic

Content deduplication

VISUELLE CONTROLE VAN DE VLAMMEN

Als de vlammen van de branders uit de luif staan terwijl de barbecue werkt, draait u de regelaars om totdat de vlammen niet meer enigszins vlammen. Lees het hoofdstuk ‘Problemen oplossen’ als het probleem blijft bestaan. Bij het ontsnappen van de vlammen, dient u de vlammen te controleren. (Fig. 1)

Een goede viat dient bijna volledig blauw te zijn, met wat geel bovenaan. In de vlam ongewoon kleur en grotendeels geel, dan moet u de branders uitschakelen en de ventilator op blauwklappen controleren of het hoofdstuk ‘Problemen oplossen’ lezen.
IEC 82079-1: quality of communication

- **Rule**: Instructions for use must be written (or designed) by professional technical writers who have the required skills.
- **Best practices**:
  - Train your writers and subject matter experts.
  - Get professional help.
  - Content engineering.

Content engineering

- Content...

- Intelligent content...
Content engineering

- Even more intelligent content...

Intelligent content

- Content that contains:
  - Structure: chunks of content in a given sequence and hierarchy
  - Markup: elements and attributes
  - Metadata: descriptive information about that content
- “Machines” (computers) can automatically “render” (present) that content in many different ways and on many different devices or media:
  - Print
  - Computer
  - Tablet
  - Smartphone
  - Wearables: smart glasses, smart watches...

IEC 82079-1: location

- Rule: Instructions for use must be made available with the product and/or on the manufacturer’s website
- Best practices:
  - Intelligent content
  - Omnichannel publishing
From multichannel to omnichannel technical communication

- **Multichannel:**
  - documentation available on multiple channels (print, Web, mobile...)

- **Omnichannel:**
  - Customer experience (CX) & customer journey
  - **Consistency** across all channels
  - Customers may start in one channel and move to another as they progress to a resolution
  - Customers may use channels simultaneously
  - Mobile and social aspect: findable, discoverable and shareable content
  - "webrooming"!

IEC 82079-1: user feedback

- **Rule:** Try to get feedback from your users as much as you can
- **Best practice:**
  - feedback-enabled webhelp
**IEC 82079-1: quality of translations**

- **Rule**: Instructions for use must be translated by professional translators who have the required skills
- **Best practices**:
  - Writing for translation
  - Designing for translation
  - Use a professional translation company (translation memory)

**Writing for translation**

- Think internationally: mind the translator!
- Translators are the best reviewers
- Conciseness (brevity): shorter review cycles and reduced costs
- Correct terminology and consistent wording
- Use one term for one concept
- Reuse phrases, sentences and paragraphs by reference (not copy/paste)
- Chunking
- Follow subject-verb-object word order

**Writing for translation**

- Avoid:
  - Inconsistent terminology
  - Idiomatic expressions
  - Ambiguity, e.g. homonyms (“tab”)
  - Long and complex sentences
  - Wordiness
  - Transitional text, aka “glue” (“As we considered earlier…”)
  - Repetition
  - Gerunds
  - Nouns stacks
  - Long and complex sentences

✔ Example: wordiness, transitional text and repetition
Writing for translation

- Translation tool:

Designing for translation

- Translation-friendly template design
- Typesetting
- Text expansion: text overset
- Text/tables in graphics
- Use keyed callouts on graphics

✔ Examples of definite no-noes

IEC 82079-1: recognized communication principles

- Rule: Apply recognized (technical) communication principles
- Best practices:
  - Chunking
  - Information typing
  - And many more...
**Chunking: how to**

- Use paragraphs: 3 – 5 sentences per paragraph
- Use lists:
  - Ordered (ol/li), if the order of the items in the list is important
  - Unordered (ul/li), if the order of the items in the list is not relevant
  - Steps for commands and instructions (imperative style)
- Separate the instructions in the steps from additional information, for example:
  - The expected outcome of a step (step result) or additional notes
  - The “precondition” or prerequisites
- Tables:
  - Economize on text

**What is information typing?**

- Categorizing information into groups (“classes”) according to type
- Different questions, different information types:
  - How can I...?
  - What is a ...?
  - Where can I find...?
- Keep’em separated: don’t mix information of various types
- One information type per topic
- Sort your topics by information type

**Benefits of information typing**

- Author:
  - Easier and more consistent authoring
  - Keep information types separated
  - Eliminate unimportant or redundant information
  - Prioritize topics: tasks first, concepts later
- Reader:
  - Easier and faster access to the relevant information
  - Better understanding of the information
  - Prioritize topics: concepts first, tasks later
IEC 82079-1: style guides

- **Rule**: Use a style guide
- **Best practices**:
  - Structured ("guided") authoring
  - Style guide usage

Structured ("guided") authoring

- Way of writing in which one or more authors use a common, limited set of components of an information model:
  - Formatting components: "styles" or "formats"
  - Structural components: "elements"
- Authors are "guided" in the information model (structure), using:
  - Templates (non-XML)
  - Document Type Definitions (DTDs) or Schemas (XML)
  - Guidelines or style guides
- Tool-agnostic!
- ✔ Demo: structured authoring in an XML and a non-XML environment

Style guides and guidelines

- Required "on top of" DITA or any other standard(s)
- **NOT**: your corporate identity manual (formatting)
- Style guides:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Dutch</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Microsoft Manual of Style for Technical Publications (MSTP)</td>
<td>Microsoft Language Portal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apple Publications Style Guide</td>
<td>Onze Taal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IBM Style</td>
<td>VRTtaal.net</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chicago Manual of Style</td>
<td>taaladvies.net</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The DITA Style Guide by Tony Self</td>
<td>taaltelefoon.be</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Style guides and guidelines

- Conflicting guidelines: mind the audience!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Microsoft Manual of Style</th>
<th>Apple Publications Style Guide</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>dialog box</td>
<td>dialog</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>log on, log off</td>
<td>log in, log out</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>clear</td>
<td>deselect</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

On the **Tools** menu, click **Options**, and then click the **Edit** tab.  
(12 words)

Choose **Tools > Options > Edit.**  
(4 words)

Style guide integration tools

- Integrate your style guides into the authoring process
- Controlled language
- Guided authoring on phrase or word level
- Writing for translation
- Tools:
  - acrolinx acrocheck
  - SDL AuthorAssistant

IEC 82079-1: KISS principle

- **Rule:** Keep it simple stupid (no comma), or: keep it short and simple
- **Best practices:**
  - Minimalism
The origin of topic-based authoring: minimalism

- Minimalism: instructional design technique
- John Carroll
- Identifying the smallest amount of instruction that:
  - Allows for the successful completion of a task
  - Provides basic knowledge of a concept
- Manuals are not written to be read: “users” not “readers”

Key principles of minimalism

- Support actions
- Document tasks, not tools, functions or “features”
  - Not: “Using the SpellMaster tool”
  - But: “Checking the spelling”
- Help users anticipate and avoid errors
- Let users explore
- Say once, lock down

✔ Examples

See also
- http://users.edte.utwente.nl/meij/minimalism.htm

IEC 82079-1: illustrations

- Rule: Use clear illustrations at the relevant positions in the text
- Best practices:
  - Chunking
  - Provide just enough detail
  - Integrate the graphics in the text
Illustrations

- Integrate illustrations in your topics
- The more, the merrier
- Illustrations, flow charts, pictures, diagrams,...
- Visual memory
- Examples:
  - Enfocus PitStop Help
  - Illustrations

Screen shots (or pictures)

- To “screen shot”...
- Less is more!
- Time stamp (versions): update-proof documentation
- Translation/localization

Alternatives to screen shots

- Or not to screen shot

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Folder pane</th>
<th>Thread pane</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Message pane</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Real-life example: Instant PDF Help > Viewing Jobs
Hazard statements ("admonishments")

- ANSI Z535 and ISO 3864
- DIN 4844-2
- Safety labels: danger – warning – caution
- DITA 1.2:
  - machineryTask fully conforms with the requirements of ANSI Z535 and ISO 3864-2
  - hazard statements and their signal words (IEC 82079-1)
- Safety symbols:
  - ISO 3864-2
  - ISO 7010
  - IEC 60417

IEC 82079-1: structure

- Rule: Use a consistent structuring method
- Best practices:
  - Use an information modeling standard...

What is an information model?

- An information model is a formal description of the structure and all the components of your information product:
  - structure, not layout
  - components: ordered and unordered lists, examples, paragraphs, admonishments (caution, warning, danger...), tables, illustrations
  - information product = document type or deliverable, for example press release, letter, user guide, service manual, knowledge base article etc.
What is an information model?

- An information model has **rules** for structuring the content
- Examples:
  - A topic needs to have a title
  - A topic can have only one title
  - A topic can be subdivided into multiple sections
  - A section can have a title, but section titles are optional
  - An unordered list needs to have at least 2 list items
  - The maximum number of steps in a task description is 9
- Authors can learn about these rules
- Compliance to these rules can be checked programmatically (= "validation")

Information model illustrated

Separate content from presentation: layout vs. structure
Layout (formatting) vs. structure: the iceberg metaphor

Layout

Structure

“Tools” to separate content from presentation

- Themes (Word)
- Stylesheets: css, xsl-fo
- Templates: FrameMaker, InDesign...

Where can you get information models?

- Perform analysis and create an information model from the ground up
- Use information models (“templates”) that come with authoring tools
- Buy proprietary information models
- Use open standards:
  - DocBook
  - S1000D
  - DITA
What is DITA? An XML Architecture!

- Darwin Information Typing Architecture:
  - Darwin: an information model for structured authoring that can be specialized and evolved to account for your particular authoring needs
  - Information Typing: task, concept, reference
  - Architecture: set of DTDs and Schemas, but more...
- XML architecture:
  - eXtensible Markup Language
  - 528 elements with attributes

What is DITA? An information modeling methodology!

- Innovative philosophy and methodology for:
  - Analyzing content
  - Designing and authoring content
  - Organizing and structuring content
  - Presenting or publishing content
  - Managing content
- New, cost-effective way of working
What is DITA? An OASIS standard!

- OASIS: Organization for the Advancement of Structured Information Standards
- Not-for-profit, international consortium that produces open standards
- OASIS DITA Technical Committee (TC):
  - define, maintain and promote the use of DITA
  - participants: Adobe, IBM, Intel, Microsoft, Nokia, Oracle, SAP, Sun...
- Subcommittees:
  - DITA Translation Subcommittee
  - DITA Learning and Training Content Specialization Subcommittee
- www.oasis-open.org

What is DITA? A file format

- .dita
- File format, based on a standard
- Promotes the exchangeability of content
- Similar to the JPEG standard for digital images
- Supported by many different tools: editors, CCMSs, rendering engines...

History of DITA

- March 2001: First developed by IBM
- March 2004: IBM donated the DITA technology to OASIS
- June 2005: Formal open source standard DITA 1.0 published
- August 2007: DITA 1.1 approved as OASIS standard.
  - New: Bookmap specialization
- 2011: DITA 1.2
  - New: structured learning, creation of Learning Objects with DITA, which are compatible with eLearning standards such as SCORM
- 2016: DITA 1.3
Traditional workflow: creating documents

Expert (SME) —> Information —> Technical writer A

Expert (SME) —> Information —> Technical writer B

New workflow: topic-based authoring to create reusable content components

SMEs and content designers ("technical writers")

Repository

DITA TOPICS

Topic 1
Topic 2
Topic 3
Topic 4

DITA MAPS

Information product A
Information product B
Information product C

DELIVERY FORMATS

Multichannel publishing

PDF

Key features of DITA

- Extremely modular, topic-centred content
- Information typing: task, concept, reference, and more...
- Inheritance (Darwin): task, concept and reference share a common base structure whose characteristics they inherit
- Linking: links between topics maintained using relationship tables ("reltable")
- Single sourcing: referenced content using the conref attribute
- Variants: conditional publishing using DITAVAL profiles
- Multichannel publishing: DITA Open Toolkit: a FREE, java-based publishing engine, available on sourceforge.net
- Technique for specialization: define new topic types or new elements
The core set of DITA information types: concept, task and reference

- Concept
- Task
- Reference

And others?

DITA units of information: topic and ditamap

To install the software
1. Close any applications which are open on your computer.
2. Insert the installation disc into your CD drive.
3. Follow the on-screen instructions.

Various types of content where DITA can fit

- Technical documentation:
  - User guides, maintenance manuals...
  - Online help
- Marketing collateral:
  - Brochures
  - Data sheets
  - White papers
- Web content
- Tutorials and e-learning
- Knowledge centers
- Structured wikis
To share a file using FileLink

**PREREQUISITE**

The file you wish to share using FileLink should be on a Nomadesk drive (Windows) or disk (Mac OS).

1. Locate and select the file you wish to share:
   - In Windows Explorer, right-click the file.
   - In the Finder (Mac OS), Control-click the file.
   - On myNomadesk.com (your online Nomadesk Dashboard), right-click the file.

2. Choose Nomadesk Tools > Send FileLink for Windows Explorer and Mac OS or File Link on myNomadesk.com (your online Nomadesk Dashboard).

3. If necessary, select the option to receive an email when someone accesses the file. You will then receive emails in which you can see who has accessed the file and when.

4. Select the number of days during which the file has to be available for downloading.
Introduction to the Darwin Information Typing Architecture (DITA)

DITA for **white papers**

DITA for **Web content**

DITA for **tutorials and e-learning**
DITA for **knowledge centers**

![DITA Infocenter](image)

**Using DITA Infocenter Help**

Two-pane structure

DITA Infocenter has the classic structure of a help system. The left pane has three views, Table of Contents, Index, and Search. The right pane, controlled by tabs at the bottom, displays the selected topic.

DITA’s features and benefits

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>Your benefits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Integrated in many common (XML) editors and content management systems</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exhaustive, well-documented and publicly available information model</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus on content design, not on formatting</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Your benefits**

- Wider choice of tools
- Lower pricing of the tools: economies of scale
- Easier exchange of content
- No need to reinvent the wheel (or the information model)
- No need to document, maintain and update a custom information model
- Standardization
- Increased productivity
- Better planning and management of resources

DITA for **structured wikis**

- Lightweight markup ("markdown")
- Powerful search
- Labels (keywords)
- Favorites
- Watch & notify watchers
- Tools:
  - Page history: versions
  - Share
  - Export to Word and PDF

**Building a DITA-Wiki hybrid**

*A New Approach to Reuse and Personalized Content*
### DITA’s features and benefits (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>Your benefits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reuse by referencing content, not by copying</td>
<td>■ No copied variants of the same content</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>■ Consistency</td>
<td>■ Lower review/translation costs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multichannel publishing to a myriad of output formats: PDF, HTMLHelp, X</td>
<td>■ Easier repurposing of content</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>■ Wider offer of content deliverables</td>
<td>■ Streamlined publishing routines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>■ Wider offer of content deliverables</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>■ Integrated content development process</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>■ Increased productivity through real reuse (referenced content)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>Your benefits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Continuous review and translation reduces the “publication and global-</td>
<td>■ Lower translation and desktop publishing costs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ization gap”</td>
<td>■ Faster time to market</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conditional publishing: filtering or flagging content based on proc-</td>
<td>■ Ability to produce tailor-made documentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>essing-time criteria such as target audience, platform or product.</td>
<td>■ Time savings from better reuse of content</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supports the principles of minimalism</td>
<td>■ Improved user experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>■ Shorter review cycles</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>■ Lower review/translation costs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilitates exchanging content with other departments or organizations</td>
<td>■ Good basis for a unified content strategy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Who is using DITA in Belgium?

- Agfa Healthcare
- Barbecook (Saey Home & Garden)
- Esko
- Artilium
- fifthplay (Niko)
- Atlas Copco
- MasterCard
- Dewulf
- Gatewing
- Komatsu
- SWIFT
- Toyota/Lexus
- TomTom (Tele Atlas)
Who is using DITA outside Belgium?

- See ditawriter.com

DITA-aware tools

Types of tools

- Authoring tools (editors):
  - desktop DITA editors
  - browser-based DITA editors
  - Word-based DITA editors

- Management tools:
  - component content management systems
  - translation management systems

- Publishing tools (DITA "processors")
Types of tools

Create
- author
- review
- translate

Manage
- DITA-aware CMS
- Translation management system

Publish
- DITA processor

DITA-aware authoring tools

- Desktop DITA editors
- Browser-based DITA editors
- Word-based DITA editors
Desktop DITA editors

- Adobe FrameMaker 7.2 or later (+ DITA-FMx for extended and better DITA support)
- JustSystems XMetaL Author
- PTC Arbortext Editor (aka “Epic”) for “corporate” users
- oXygen XML Editor and XML Author
- Syntext Serna
- XMLmind XML Editor

Browser-based DITA editors

- JustSystems XMAX
- DOT.net-based ActiveX control
- integrated in DITA CMSs like Bluestream XDocs and IXIASOFT
- DITA Exchange by Content Technologies
  - based on SharePoint and InfoPath Forms Services
  - primarily targeted at non-XML-savvy Subject Matter Experts (SMEs)
- SDL Xopus
- Codex
- FontoXML DITA Edition

Word-based DITA editors

- Customizations of Microsoft Word to constrain content to valid DITA
- Quark XML Author for Microsoft Word
- DITA Exchange Word Editor
- Simply DITA
- Sharepoint integration
Publishing DITA content

The DITA Open Toolkit (DITA OT)

- **FREE** Java-based publishing engine, available on sourceforge.net
- Cross-platform: Windows, Linux/UNIX, Mac OS
- Uses Apache Ant, a Java-based software tool for automating software build processes
- Open-source, “reference implementation” of the OASIS DITA standard
- “reference implementation”:
  - ≠ ready-to-use product which gives you high-quality output ‘out of the box’

What does the DITA OT do?

- Transforms DITA content (maps and topics) into output formats (“targets”)
### Output formats of the DITA OT

- Aka “output targets” or “transatypes”
- PDF via XSL-FO
- XHTML
- HTML Help (CHM)
- Eclipse Help
- JavaHelp
- And more, using Help Authoring and Publishing Tools (“HATs”):
  - FrameMaker + DITA-FMx
  - WebHelp (WebWorks ePublisher, RoboHelp, chm2web...)
  - Adobe AIRHelp (RoboHelp)
  - EPUB

### DITA-aware publishing tools

- Adobe FrameMaker + DITA-FMx (DITA2PDF)
- Adobe Technical Communication Suite (TCS) with RoboHelp
- Omni Systems DITA2Go
- Madcap Flare
- chm2web
- WebWorks ePublisher
- JustSystems XMetaL Author: webhelp + DITA-OT output targets
- oXygen XML Editor and XML Author: webhelp + DITA-OT output targets

### DITA2PDF Diagram

- FrameMaker
- Acrobat Distiller
- Word
- DITA Open Toolkit
- Antenna House
- FOP Render X
DITA and translations
How DITA can help to close the globalization gap

What can be the impact of DITA on translations?

- Higher quality
- Savings in translation costs
- Faster time-to-market
- Close the “globalization gap”
- Why/how? Because DITA supports the best practices of content design

Globalization gap, version 1
Globalization gap, updates

So, in conclusion...

- Standards do matter
- Make compliance with the standards part of your content strategy
- Use the standards to transform technical documentation from a necessary evil into a profit factor

About Teka / Scripto

- Technical writing
- Capturing critical knowledge
- Organizing content
- Consulting, training and coaching:
  - Structured authoring and information modeling (DITA)
  - Technical writing
  - Adobe FrameMaker
- See also:
  - www.scripto.nu
  - www.teka-infopilots.com