

Understanding and Communicating the Financial Impact of XML & DITA

How to Forecast and Measure Continued ROI, Cost Savings, and Process Improvement in Content Creation, Localization, and Publishing

A JUSTSYSTEMS WHITEPAPER

You hear over and over that XML and DITA can save you time and money. Maybe you feel like you know what DITA is and you're excited. You understand that DITA incorporates industry standard writing practices but you need to know which DITA features make it economical.

Before you embark on retooling your processes, you need to project the savings that would justify such a costly transition. Your purpose should be measurable, something that you can point to and say "Here are the savings." Business reasons for transitioning to DITA include the following:

- **Increased content velocity** – move content through the write, review, translate, and publish process more quickly, efficiently, and accurately.
- **Decrease localization costs** – reduce the word count needing translation.
- **Increase consistency as you intelligently reuse** – reduce the number of topics written.

The true value of DITA is immediately clear to anyone involved in the day-to-day production of business content. This paper explores the metrics that support the case for switching from a document-based approach to a DITA topic-based approach to the production of business content.

Reuse Strategies

DITA offers several reuse strategies, each with its own model for savings. Writing for reuse, counter-intuitively, adds a small amount of time to the writing process. This small amount of time added to a topic that appears in several locations may seem to increase the cost, but it doesn't. It reduces the cost of subsequent use of the topic or the content.

Key terms to understand in determining the time and cost savings from DITA are: *topic*, *fragment*, *variable*, and *filtering*. Understanding these terms allows you to examine the future. Assign them as part of your audit and use them to help estimate the potential DITA savings. Using your own data, you can discover the true bottom-line savings provided by DITA. Simply compare the costs of producing the same content with and without the benefits of DITA.

Let's look at those term, before we dig into the metrics.

- **Topic** – a topic is a discreet and complete set of information that can stand alone.
- **Fragment** – a fragment is a piece of text, perhaps a note, a paragraph, or a section of content that can be used in multiple locations.
- **Variable** – a term or phrase that represents a product, feature, or other item that can be placed mid-text.

- **Filtering** – filtering is a process that allows you to constrain the content produced in a particular output based on the audience, platform, or product for standard DITA.

Topic Referencing

Topic referencing allows you to create a base topic that contains the common elements required for all products. This topic may never be used, as it stands, but it can be used as the source topic for each product. The contents can be referenced into product topics and then customized with the unique content required for the product.

For each destination reference topic, the majority of the writing and localization is done. The effort for each destination reference topic is shortened, allowing it to be processed faster and more efficiently, therefore costing less.

Source Reference Topic	Destination Reference Topics
<p>Præsent in pretium massa</p> <p>>Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Praesent in pretium massa. Pellentesque maximus odio libero, vel feugiat nisi bibendum in. Nullam efficitur est id est facilisis, vitae porta lacus pretium. Orci varius natoque penatibus et magnis dis parturient montes, nascetur ridiculus mus. Integer vulputate finibus ex, ut euismod massa tincidunt a. Ut at justo tincidunt, euismod odio sit amet, blandit ex. Mauris tellus lorem, aliquam at libero eu, lobortis convallis arcu. Quisque nisi erat, molestie nec vehicula vitae, elementum sit amet sapien. Nullam maximus commodo quam, eget vulputate risus semper a. Aenean tempus neque mi, et vehicula risus semper vel. Donec id turpis enim. Etiam rutrum mi</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In hac habitasse platea dictumst. 2. Aenean quis luctus risus. 3. Nullam euismod libero dolor, a euismod risus efficitur ut. 4. Sed neque ante, tincidunt sit amet porttitor id, convallis id dolor. 5. Nunc eu convallis turpis. 6. Sed ut convallis leo, id sollicitudin augue. 	<p>Præsent in pretium massa</p> <p>>Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Praesent in pretium massa. Pellentesque maximus odio libero, vel feugiat nisi bibendum in. Nullam efficitur est id est facilisis, vitae porta lacus pretium. Orci varius natoque penatibus et magnis dis parturient montes, nascetur ridiculus mus. Integer vulputate finibus ex, ut euismod massa tincidunt a. Ut at justo tincidunt, euismod odio sit amet, blandit ex. Mauris tellus lorem, aliquam at libero eu, lobortis convallis arcu. Quisque nisi erat, molestie nec vehicula vitae, elementum sit amet sapien. Nullam maximus commodo quam, eget vulputate risus semper a. Aenean tempus neque mi, et vehicula risus semper vel. Donec id turpis enim. Etiam rutrum mi</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In hac habitasse platea dictumst. 2. Aenean quis luctus risus. 3. Nullam euismod libero dolor, a euismod risus efficitur ut. 4. Sed neque ante, tincidunt sit amet porttitor id, convallis id dolor. 5. Nunc eu convallis turpis. 6. Sed ut convallis leo, id sollicitudin augue. <p>Præsent in pretium massa</p> <p>>Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Praesent in pretium massa. Pellentesque maximus odio libero, vel feugiat nisi bibendum in. Nullam efficitur est id est facilisis, vitae porta lacus pretium. Orci varius natoque penatibus et magnis dis parturient montes, nascetur ridiculus mus. Integer vulputate finibus ex, ut euismod massa tincidunt a. Ut at justo tincidunt, euismod odio sit amet, blandit ex. Mauris tellus lorem, aliquam at libero eu, lobortis convallis arcu. Quisque nisi erat, molestie nec vehicula vitae, elementum sit amet sapien. Nullam maximus commodo quam, eget vulputate risus semper a. Aenean tempus neque mi, et vehicula risus semper vel. Donec id turpis enim. Etiam rutrum mi</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In hac habitasse platea dictumst. 2. Aenean quis luctus risus. 3. Nullam euismod libero dolor, a euismod risus efficitur ut. 4. Praesent porttitor aliquam ligula, eu gravida justo lobortis sed. Praesent sodales cursus nisi eu finibus. 5. Nunc eu convallis turpis. 6. Sed ut convallis leo, id sollicitudin augue.

Writing for reuse introduces a bump in the time it takes for a writer to complete a topic. That small additional time saves time in the long run as the topics are purpose-written for reuse.

Once the reference topics are built and translated, that content is stable.

Topic Filtering

Topic filtering is similar, conceptually, to topic referencing. In topic filtering, the source topic contains all the content for a variety of audiences, platforms, or products. Using the audience, platform, or product attributes (or attributes specialized from them) you can specify the constraints for displaying any information found in the source file.

Like the referenced topic, the writing and localization work is done in the source file. This file is connected to individual maps for individual output destinations. Each output is generated using a profile that identifies which filters apply.

Source Filter Topic	Output Filtered Topics
<p>Præsent in pretium massa</p> <p>Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Praesent in pretium massa. Pellentesque maximus odio libero, vel feugiat nisi bibendum in. Nullam efficitur est id est facilisis, vitae porta lacus pretium. Orci varius natoque penatibus et magnis dis parturient montes, nascetur ridiculus mus. Integer vulputate finibus ex, ut euismod massa tincidunt a. Ut at justo tincidunt, euismod odio sit amet, blandit ex. Mauris tellus lorem, aliquam at libero eu, lobortis convallis arcu. Quisque nisi erat, molestie nec vehicula vitae, elementum sit amet sapien. Nullam maximus commodo quam, eget vulputate risus semper a. Aenean tempus neque mi, et vehicula risus semper vel. Donec id turpis enim. Etiam rutrum mi</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In hac habitasse platea dictumst. 2. Aenean quis luctus risus. 3. Nullam euismod libero dolor, a euismod risus efficitur ut. 4. Sed neque ante, tincidunt sit amet porttitor id, convallis id dolor. 4. Praesent porttitor aliquam ligula, eu gravida justo lobortis sed. Praesent sodales cursus nisi eu finibus. 5. Nunc eu convallis turpis. 6. Sed ut convallis leo, id sollicitudin augue. 	<p>Præsent in pretium massa</p> <p>Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Praesent in pretium massa. Pellentesque maximus odio libero, vel feugiat nisi bibendum in. Nullam efficitur est id est facilisis, vitae porta lacus pretium. Orci varius natoque penatibus et magnis dis parturient montes, nascetur ridiculus mus. Integer vulputate finibus ex, ut euismod massa tincidunt a. Ut at justo tincidunt, euismod odio sit amet, blandit ex. Mauris tellus lorem, aliquam at libero eu, lobortis convallis arcu. Quisque nisi erat, molestie nec vehicula vitae, elementum sit amet sapien. Nullam maximus commodo quam, eget vulputate risus semper a. Aenean tempus neque mi, et vehicula risus semper vel. Donec id turpis enim. Etiam rutrum mi</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In hac habitasse platea dictumst. 2. Aenean quis luctus risus. 3. Nullam euismod libero dolor, a euismod risus efficitur ut. 4. Sed neque ante, tincidunt sit amet porttitor id, convallis id dolor. 5. Nunc eu convallis turpis. 6. Sed ut convallis leo, id sollicitudin augue. <p>Præsent in pretium massa</p> <p>Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Praesent in pretium massa. Pellentesque maximus odio libero, vel feugiat nisi bibendum in. Nullam efficitur est id est facilisis, vitae porta lacus pretium. Orci varius natoque penatibus et magnis dis parturient montes, nascetur ridiculus mus. Integer vulputate finibus ex, ut euismod massa tincidunt a. Ut at justo tincidunt, euismod odio sit amet, blandit ex. Mauris tellus lorem, aliquam at libero eu, lobortis convallis arcu. Quisque nisi erat, molestie nec vehicula vitae, elementum sit amet sapien. Nullam maximus commodo quam, eget vulputate risus semper a. Aenean tempus neque mi, et vehicula risus semper vel. Donec id turpis enim. Etiam rutrum mi</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In hac habitasse platea dictumst. 2. Aenean quis luctus risus. 3. Nullam euismod libero dolor, a euismod risus efficitur ut. 4. Praesent porttitor aliquam ligula, eu gravida justo lobortis sed. Praesent sodales cursus nisi eu finibus. 5. Nunc eu convallis turpis. 6. Sed ut convallis leo, id sollicitudin augue.

Variables

Variables allow you to insert words or phrases into the content. You can use this for placing specific product names into a common description or for inserting a feature name or command if it differs for different products or platforms.

For example, if you had a sentence that references the name of a product (“Lift `<ph keyref="product"/>` from the packaging using the handles provided.”) the processor looks for a corresponding definition with replacement text values in the map, such as:

```
<keydef keys="product" product="APP">
  <topicmeta>
    <keywords>
      <keyword>Product 1</keyword>
    </keywords>
  </topicmeta>
</keydef>
<keydef keys="product" product="APL">
  <topicmeta>
    <keywords>
      <keyword>Product 2</keyword>
    </keywords>
  </topicmeta>
</keydef>
```

You can also embed phrases that are product-specific, such as in the following example:

```
<p>The Calibration dialog is available for the <ph product="APL">Feature 1, Feature 2, and Feature 3</ph><ph product="APP">Feature A</ph> of the <ph keyref="product"></ph>. </p>
```

This results in two different sentences depending on the settings for the product keyword:

The Calibration dialog is available for the Feature 1, Feature 2, and Feature 3 of the Product 2.

The Calibration dialog is available for the Feature A of the Product 1.

Note that this practice may make your localization costs reflect that the sentence is unique in each product’s documentation.

Fragments

Fragments are almost the opposite concept from referenced and filtered topics in that fragments are smaller than topics and are shared in several locations in the same document or across documents. A good example of a fragment is a note, caution, or warning.

Today’s Metrics

Do you know what it costs you to produce a single topic? To provide a true cost savings estimate and an accurate return on investment (ROI), you need to know the path you’re on and where you’re going.

Much of this information relies on a document audit that, among other things, determines how much sharing you have between various versions of your documentation. A simple document audit provides a way to track the topics using the standard DITA attributes used for filters and flags for conditional processing. It helps identify if you need to specialize one or more of the attributes to create custom filtering options.

Topic Name	Topic Type			Audience			Platform			Product		
	Concept	Task	Reference	Novice	Intermediate	Advanced	PC	Mac	Linux	Product 1	Product 2	Product 3
	<input type="checkbox"/>											
	<input type="checkbox"/>											

Current industry norms, for writing teams, indicate that, on average, writers take 3-8 hours to write a topic. We’ll keep this simple and stick to three topic types: concept, task, and reference. Generally, a DITA topic is up to 250 words of content. Task topics take the longest to write. We’ll assign task topics 5 hours of writing, a concept topic 4 hours, and a reference topic 3 hours to write. The writing time in these estimates may or may not match what you discover when you drill down into your metrics.

Operator Guide Topics	Average Topic Word Count	Development Hours
Task	250	5h
Concept	125	4h
Reference	65	3h

Discover accurate values for your business when you drill down into your own development costs. Use your own data in the calculations.

These costs do not include the overhead of working on a project. They do not include time for activities such as:

- Project management
- Project meetings
- Designing documents at the outline level
- Analysis of the user tasks to be documented
- Implementing complex systems such as context-sensitive help
- Testing

Ideally, designing the documents and analyzing the user tasks happen at a higher level than the average writer who receives their assignment of topics to write.

Introducing Localization

As an example, a fictitious device company produces five products distributed across two platforms. The products share many features. The company produces sets of four manuals consisting of an Operator Guide, a User Guide, a Hardware Guide, and a Programmer Guide for each product. They are looking at expanding into new markets with a requirement for destination language versions of each guide in the set.

Current North American Requirements		Additional European Requirements
Publication	Number of Products	Number of New Languages (FGS)
Operator Guide	3	3
User Guide	3	3
Hardware Guide	3	3
Programmer Guide	3	3
Total Publications	12	48

The **Total Publication** values are simple calculations. The original English version are 12 publications, which is the **Number of Products** (3) times the number of publications (4). The translation requirements result in the addition of new languages (3) times **Number of Products** (3) and the number of publications (4), plus the English base (12).

For European languages we'll use \$0.20/word for a base translation cost. When applying these calculations to your own situation, check with the translation firms you plan to use and get their translation costs. This may vary by language. For the purposes of this example, we are using these word counts: a task topic is, on average, 250 words, a concept topic is half that at 125 words, and a reference topic is half that again at 65 words. The total word count, then, is the number of topics times the word count summed up. Each product manual contains similar content customized for the particular platform and product.

Use your own values to determine your current or projected costs for writing and translating. Build up a solid base for your estimated return on investment and long-term savings.

Operator Guide Topics	Topic Count	Average Topic Word Count	Total Word Count	Localization Costs per Language
Task	46	250	11500	\$2300.00
Concept	15	125	1875	\$375.00
Reference	9	65	585	\$117.00
Total	70		13960	\$2792.00

The word count is **Topic Count * Average Topic Word Count**. The localization cost is **Total Word Count * 0.2** (the cost/word we are using).

Estimating for the Future

When you conduct a content audit to determine how you will break your content into DITA, you can take advantage of the features listed above to identify potential reuse scenarios and cost savings. Each of the features presents its own opportunity for cost savings through reuse, content-velocity, and localization.

Reuse Savings

Using the sample and metrics given above, we'll look at the reuse savings for **topic referencing**, **topic filtering**, and **variables**. Each of these add to the overall savings you can experience with DITA. Superior to copy and paste, DITA maintains the link between the master content and the production versions. This controls the content and leads to savings in the localization thread.

The smartest approach is to start with the most complex and content-heavy product and shave the other products out from that warehouse. The model used throughout the examples assumes that each product has unique topics and reused topics in varying numbers. You will replace these numbers with your own and establish your own cost savings analysis.

Topic Referencing

In the example shown above, the writers referenced content from a master topic into a production copy that they then customized with the unique content required by the product in production. The production content has some work time associated with it, as does the master topic. Localization is handled differently than it would be if you were writing unique topics, even using copy and paste, for each instance of the content.

Let's look at the costs of the operator manuals for two of the products. This is the initial look at the costs and does not include any DITA-based savings. The average cost per topic is based on our estimates for writing content as shown in the table below. You'll note that the development times are similar for each product, as there are no savings derived from the document model for development.

Topic Type	Topics	Development Time	Product 1 Development Time	Product 2 Development Time
Task	46	5	230	230
Concept	15	4	60	60
Reference	9	3	27	27
Totals			317	317

There are no savings, even with copy and paste, as writers spend the time searching for and fixing the content. The content is not written to be reused and is, therefore, likely product-specific and require effort to bring the topic contents into line with the new product.

The first metric to add is time for writing for reuse. This affects all our source or master content. The first time any topic is written, it is written for potential reuse later in another product or manual. We'll add 10% of the average topic cost in hours for tasks, 50% for concepts, and 20% for reference topics. Reusing the content costs half an hour in selection and inserting new content.

Topic Type	Unique Topics	Reusable Topics	Reuse Development Time	Product 1 Development Time (hrs)	Product 2 Development Time (hrs)
Task	15	31	5.5	253	98
Concept	14	1	6	90	84.5
Reference	8	1	3.6	32.4	29.3
Totals				375.4	211.8

- **Product 1 Development time** = (the number of topics (unique + reusable) * the development time). All topics are written for potential reuse, even ones with no currently identified reuse potential. The Reuse Development Time is the standard development time plus the additional cost of writing for reuse stated above.
- **Product 2 Development time** = (the number of unique topics * development time) + (reusable topics * half an hour for selection, mapping, and review/update with unique content).

That comparison is a little unrealistic as it assumes that the unique topic content is the same in both products. That is rarely true. In the table below the **Product 1** values are compared against a **Product 2** with a different number of unique topics. The table below uses the same calculations as the table above. In both cases, the unique topics use the writing for reuse values stated above. You'll see that regardless of the extra cost of changing how writing is done, the cost savings begin to percolate through the subsequent reuse of topics through each product right away. This savings increases when you add products, delivery channels, and additional languages. It makes sense, therefore, to use your content audit to determine which product is the best candidate as the original source for reusable topics.

	Product 1			Product 2		
	Unique Topics	Reusable Topics	Development Costs (Hrs)	Unique Topics	Reused Topics	Development Costs (Hrs)
Task	15	31	253	23	31	142
Concept	14	1	90	15	1	90.5
Reference	8	1	32.4	9	1	32.9
Totals	37	33	375.4	47	33	265.4

Topic Filtering

Topic filtering produces very similar results with some small additional savings as the writers do not need to customize the reused topics in situ. For example, early on, it may take writers more time to search and map content topics, perhaps reviewing the content to ensure the topic is appropriate for the product and publication. As writers grow more confident and comfortable with the DITA-based content, they will be able to find and reuse topics quickly and easily.

	Product 1				Product 2			
	Unique Topics	Reusable Topics	Filtered Topics	Development Costs (Hrs)	Unique Topics	Reused Topics	Filtered Topics	Development Costs (Hrs)
Task	10	31	5	253	18	31	5	239.5
Concept	10	1	4	90	14	1	1	84.75
Reference	8	1		32.4	9	1		32.9
Totals	28	33	9	375.4	41	33	6	357.15

- **Product 1 Development Cost (Hrs)** = the total number of topics for each type (unique + reusable + filtered) * standard development time for reusable content of the type.
- **Product 2 Development Cost (Hrs)** = (Unique Topics * standard development time for reusable content of the type) + (Reused Topics * 0.5) + (Filtered Topics * 0.25).

Some of the reusable topics will be referenced and customized, some will be referenced and filtered, it depends on which technique fits the situation. Some of the unique topics may become filtered with the use of variables.

Variables

If we look at some of the unique topics, we may find that they are considered unique because they name specific products or features. By using variables, we can move some of those topics into the filtered content column. This reduces the cost of writing and translation.

Topic Type	Unique Topics	Filtered Topics	Reusable Topics	Reuse Development Time	Product 1 Development Time	Product 2 Development Time
Task	10	11	25	5.5	253	70.25
Concept	11	3	1	6	90	67.25
Reference	6	2	1	3.6	32.4	22.6
Totals					375.4	160.1

With variables and filtering, the cost of creating and using content decreases again. Variables and filtering allow you to reuse more topics.

- **Product 1 Development time** = (the number of topics (unique + filtered + reusable) * the development time).
- **Product 2 Development time** = (**Unique Topics** * development time) + (**Filtered Topics** * .25 hour) + (**Reusable Topics** * .5 hour).

Production Costs

A good portion of both writing and translation costs are spent in layout and presentation, desktop publishing tasks. DITA eliminates much of this day-to-day work with the introduction of automated production.

Writers and translators can spend as much as 35% of their time applying formatting. Working in XML and DITA eliminates this task and allows the writers to focus on the information itself. Time savings from this will reduce your development time, thus improving your time-to-market as it increases the velocity of content creation, implementation, and translation.

XSL, the language used to transform XML content into publications, can be run independently or from within most authoring tools. DITA takes the focus off the look-and-feel of the output and brings it to bear on the content itself. Writers are more productive as writers.

Translation Savings with DITA Content

Working in the document-model, translation costs include the following:

- **Match** – content that has been translated exactly as it appears.
- **Fuzzy matches** – content that is nearly a match. Perhaps it has been copied and modified slightly to fit a new product or feature.
- **New content** – content that has not been translated.

Assuming the matches are based on the sentence, you may adjust your sharing techniques to ensure that content is as consistent and as flexible as possible for reuse in various situations.

Once again, XML saves you in translation through the elimination of the formatting task requirement.

Unlike the writers, the translators do not, necessarily, spend more or less time on specific topic types; translation is based on word count, more than the topic's type and content. The speed at which any particular translator is going to perform the translation depends on their skill level and familiarity with the subject matter.

If we use the topic sizes defined earlier (task = 250 words, concept = 125 words, and reference = 65 words) and we assume that the average number of words translated per hour is 150 the equation below gives us the average hourly cost for translation:

- Topic word count/150 words = translation hours

The formatting and processing needs of the whole-document model affect your translation costs in terms of time-to-market. To facilitate an accelerated content creation process, you want to eliminate what you can from the time it takes to process the translation. Removing formatting eliminates that extra time spent formatting for presentation. By being able to identify and send only content that requires translation results in additional savings.

	Product 1			Product 1 Translation Costs	
	Unique Topics	Filtered Topics	Reusable Topics	(\$)	(hr)
Task	10	11	25	\$2300.00	76.7
Concept	11	3	1	\$375.00	12.5
Reference	6	2	1	\$117.00	3.9
Totals	27	16	27	\$2792.00	93.1

We’re looking at two values for translation, the monetary cost and the time to market.

In this comparison, **Reusable Topics** provide exact matches and are not sent for translation. Only **Unique Topics** and **Filtered Topics** are sent. Unique topics contain new content and filtered content provides some exact matches and some fuzzy matches. For **Filtered Topics**, we’ll use a fuzzy matching translation cost of \$0.15/word and we will assume the entire topic is a fuzzy match.

	Product 1			Product 1 Translation Costs		Product 2 Translation Costs	
	Unique Topics	Filtered Topics	Reusable Topics	(\$)	(hr)	(\$)	(hr)
Task	10	11	25	\$2300.00	76.7	\$912.50	35.0
Concept	11	3	1	\$375.00	12.5	\$331.25	23.3
Reference	6	2	1	\$117.00	3.9	\$97.50	13.3
Totals	27	16	27	\$2792.00	93.1	\$1341.25	71.7

- **Product 1 Translation Costs (\$)** = ((**Unique Topics** + **Filtered Topics** + **Reusable Topics**) * topic word count) * .2
- **Product 1 Translation Costs (hr)** = ((**Unique Topics** + **Filtered Topics** + **Reusable Topics**) * topic word count)/150
- **Product 2 Translation Costs (\$)** = (**Unique Topics** * topic word count * .2) + (**Filtered Topics** * topic word count * .15)
- **Product 2 Translation Costs (hr)** = ((**Unique Topics** + **Filtered Topics**) * topic word count) * .2

Calculating the ROI

Without knowing your current costs, it is nearly impossible to target savings. But the cost of retooling can be estimated and compared to projected costs for developing DITA-based content. Establish a baseline before you implement your new system, this will give you the starting point for justifying the transition.

When calculating the Return on Investment (ROI), these costs must be taken into consideration:

- Direct labour hours per page. This can be based on the 250 words per page definition which translates well into topic-based estimates.
- Average page counts per topic type. You can learn this through a detailed deep dive into your current documentation.
- Cost per art file. You may find that this cost remains stable.
- What percentage of the content do you plan to revise before the next release? Measure the potential churn rate.
- What percentage of the content in future releases will be new content? This helps you identify the carry-forward rate that you can expect.
- Number of future releases or variations to be released. This forecasts the volume of work and the potential opportunities for content reuse.
- What percentage of the content can be used by other products? Is it ready to be shared now, or does it need to be worked?
- What percentage of the content can be used in other documents for this product? Look for instances where different channels share content.
- What is your current reuse rate? Do you currently engage in opportunistic reuse?
- Number of output formats. For most output formats, production is automated; you can accrue savings both with existing and new delivery channels.
- Your current costs for file processing (pre and post).
- Your current costs for translation DTP.

Identify Savings at Every Step in the Process

AUTHOR Reduce authoring workload	Reuse content and reduce the time spent authoring by 20-40%. See significant improvements in the productivity of your documentation team.
AUTOMATE Identify topics for updating	For every dollar spent externally, you can save as much as 75-100% by minimizing unnecessary rewrites. Make it easy to identify which updates affect others downstream. Focus your resources precisely.
LOCALIZE Reduce localization workload	Reduce translation costs by 25-50%. With DITA you focus on new and changed content, thereby avoiding charges for content that has been translated.

<p>REVIEW Reduce approvals required</p>	<p>Accelerate the review process by sending only new or updated content to reviewers. Improve the approval process, making it auditable, by tracking document evolution.</p>
<p>PUBLISH Reduce formatting workload</p>	<p>Render documents automatically. Save 50-100% of your current desktop publishing (DTP) costs. Let the system do the formatting for you.</p>
<p>DELIVER Increase brand consistency & accuracy</p>	<p>Automate and focus your team’s efforts for both quantitative and qualitative results. All the improvements and workflow efficiencies that come from reuse and automated publishing ensure that your documents are always accurate and consistently branded.</p>
<p>LAUNCH Accelerate time to market</p>	<p>Get to market faster in more languages to increase global revenue and market share. Experience increased productivity throughout your content lifecycle.</p>

Building a Case for DITA

Once you’ve completed the assessment of the current situation and established a baseline, established the potential savings, estimated the cost of transitioning to DITA, secure the approval necessary by presenting a comprehensive business case to the executive showing them the business value of DITA. Make your before and after calculations clear and easy to connect to real-world values that make sense to the executive. Use actual data from your documentation team’s efforts, highlight the challenges faced by the documentation team, and demonstrate where DITA brings time and money savings into the equation. Connect DITA to goals such as a faster time-to-market and cost savings in global delivery.

As we have demonstrated, there are immediate savings with DITA. What we haven’t shown is the exponential growth of those savings over time with the addition of products and markets and channels for delivery of content.

Partnering for Success

JustSystems’ XMetaL Global Content Delivery solution offers the combination of software and consulting services to help you move through the entire process from auditing your current situation through to implementation, staff training, and organizational change management.

Our consultants are leaders with deep experience in areas including XML and DITA, content management, integration, and workflow. Having worked with some of the world’s largest and most content-rich organizations, our consultants will work with you to ensure your success.

JustSystems' XMetaL Global Content Delivery solution can include the following services:

- **ROI Analysis** – Before embarking on your project, identify savings and profitability gains using the model introduced in this report, and helping you expand it further. For your content lifecycle, this includes identifying savings from the creation and review tasks, translation costs, publishing requirements, and management. Our consultants can work with you to render this as an effective business case.
- **Vision, Strategy, and Planning** – Our consultants will help you focus your content strategy on positive business effects. They will help with the identification of the business, technical, and end-user requirements that lead to concrete, measurable goals. Our consultants can work with you to design your information architecture and the transition plan to get you there. Finally, our consultants can recommend the best technologies for a successful implementation.
- **Business Process Improvement** – Our consultants can work with you to identify potential improvements in your workflow with a thorough analysis of your business processes, staff, content, data, and systems. Based on real-world data, they can then make recommendations for optimizing your strategy.
- **Solution Engineering System Integration** – Our consultants provide recommendations and system implementation, configuration, customization, and integration of XML authoring, component content management, publishing, and globalization management systems. They'll also work with you to migrate your legacy content into the new system.
- **Organizational Change Management** – A critical factor in success is the effective transition of your staff. Our consultants will help you manage change and garner enthusiastic support from staff involved in the new content or data workflow.

Moving Forward

DITA provides a unique opportunity to save time and money while improving the quality of the content provided to your customers. Employing DITA, because of its standard architecture and deep anchor in the best of industry standards, helps ensure your content is consistent across all products and delivery channels. DITA helps both the contributors and the writers support ambitious business goals.

Build your business case with real-world numbers and turn your situation from “Can we afford to?” to “Can we afford NOT to?”

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About JustSystems

JustSystems is a leading global software provider with decades of successful innovation in office productivity, information management, and consumer and enterprise software. With over 2,500 customers worldwide, the company is continuing a global expansion strategy based on its xfy enterprise software, XMetaL content lifecycle solutions, and its pioneering work in enabling XBRL financial reporting technologies. JustSystems is one of the 2008 KMWorld 100 Companies that Matter in Knowledge Management, a 2008 EContent 100 member, and was recognized on the 2008 KMWorld Trend-Setting Product list for XMetaL. Major strategic partnerships include IBM, Oracle, and EMC.

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