Introduction to DITA

for Word users

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https://github.com/ctalau/

It may look familiar

XML looks similar

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```

It really does!

Source of a Word Document

It looks as nice!

Gardenia

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia.

Gardenia is a 🔗genus of about 250 species of flowering plants in the coffee family, **Rubiaceae**, native to the tropical and subtropical regions of Africa, southern Asia, Australasia and Oceania. Several species occur on the island of Hawaii, where gardenias are known as *na'u*.

The genus was named by Carl Linnaeus after Dr. Alexander Garden (1730-1791), a Scottish-born American naturalist.

They are evergreen shrubs and small trees growing to 1–15 metres (3.3–49 ft) tall. The leaves are

Similar basic functionality

- Formatting:
  - Bold/Italic/Underline, Tables, Links, Lists, Code, Drag and Drop
- Objects:
  - Images, Videos, Equations
- Spellcheck & Autocorrect
- Review functionality:
  - Comments & Change tracking
- Publishing: Generate PDF & HTML
- Integration with Sharepoint, Templates

DITA-specific: formatting

- Semantics
  - Not only monospaced but "Java code"
  - Not only bold, but file path, API name, keyword, etc.
- Editing interface optimized for editing, not publishing
  - Inline form controls

DITA: embedded objects

- Image Map
- Embedded CodePen
- Embedded map
- Tabbed code blocks, even nested inside tabbed content

DITA: spell checking

- Spell checking ignores code blocks
- Schematron
  - Advanced structure checks
    - No list with one entry
    - No bold in title - use italic to emphasize
  - Mixed content & structure checks
    - No URL that starts with "http"
    - No "C:\\" or "D:\\" in file paths
  - Also supports quick fixes

DITA: review

- Change tracking
  - Can track structural changes as well. E.g. image positioning.
- Compare two versions of a file side-by-side

DITA: profiling

- A procedure has a particular step that is performed differently depending on the user
- Washing machine SpinBoot 1200, SpinBoot 1200s.
  - The products are the same, just that one has an extra setting to schedule the washing cycle after 3, 6 or 9h.
  - Manual is 95% the same except from one button.
    - Just add an "if product=1200s" around that section and you have two manuals with only one file.

DITA: reuse

- Use variables for product names
  - You can reuse the content for a similar product
  - The company may be acquired and the name may be changed

DITA: reuse

- Library of legal notices
  - Approved by the legal department
  - Each year they have to be changed in all the manuals

DITA: reuse

- Products are modular - Docs should be too
  - A car manufacturer has 3 models of infotainment systems that are added on each car.
- Pros:
  - More personalized manual
  - When a new feature is added, only change in one place

DITA: publishing

- Publishing:
  - Convert to Word
  - PDF customizable with CSS
  - WebHelp with feedback
  - Docs portals
  - Epub, CHM, Windows Help, etc.

DITA adoption plan

- Convert to Word and keep existing workflows until a critical mass is reached
- Convert all docs to DITA
  - Customize tools to convert docx/odt to DITA
  - Customize publishing to match previous design or take the opportunity to re-design
  - Content still needs to be split in small topics → some manual work that can be made over time

THANK YOU!

Any questions?

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