



Go further, faster®

Leveraging DITA to help users

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Agenda

- What are users bothered about?
- Glimpse of user habits
- Information types
- Basic elements of topics
- What can go into concept topics
- Ingredients of reference topics
- Structure of a task topic
- Other aspects of topics
- Metadata for quick access
- References
- QnA



What are users bothered about?

- Goal!
- Quickly find and access the relevant info
- Successful navigation
- Consistent information
- “No” to features?
- Scanning the content
- Content in different output formats
- Customized documentation
- Do not want to revisit the documentation



Glimpse of user habits

"I think the fundamental issue is not the rate of adoption of the e-reader, or whether publishers will survive in their current form, or what their role will be in the future," Olson comments. "The fundamental question at the very bottom of this is, will people read books at all?"

Source: <http://hbswk.hbs.edu/item/6369.html>



Information types

- Topic
- Classification of a content unit (*Key to Goals!*)
 - Task
 - Concept
 - Reference
- How does info typing help writers?
 - Focus on the user
 - Clarity and consistency at the topic level
 - The design aspect
 - Task-based content development
 - Minimalism



Basic elements of topics

- Title (*Quickly find and access the relevant info*)
 - Lead for topic container
 - Precise and concise
 - Capitalization
 - Standards based on info type
- Short description (*Successful navigation and quick accessibility*)
 - Synopsis of a topic
 - Link preview
 - Word cap
 - Independent unit with no pointers
- Body
 - Narrative for concepts
 - Lead-ins for tables and lists
 - Context and instructions
- Section
 - Sub-unit of a topic
- Example
 - Syntax for CLI users
 - System output



What can go into concept topics

- Introduction to a technology
Snapshot copies
- Description of a process
Backup process
- Overview of a task to be performed
Setting up storage systems
- Decisions that a user has to consider before performing a task
Decisions to make before you create volumes



Ingredients of reference topics

- Description of commands

ipconfig

- Explanation of interface

File > Print

- Examples

Example of upgrade process



Structure of task topics

- Prereq
 - Before you begin performing a task
 - Neither considerations nor recommendations
- Context
 - About the task
- Steps
 - Imperative structure
 - Info and examples if necessary
- Step result and task result
- Postreq
 - Things to do after you complete a task

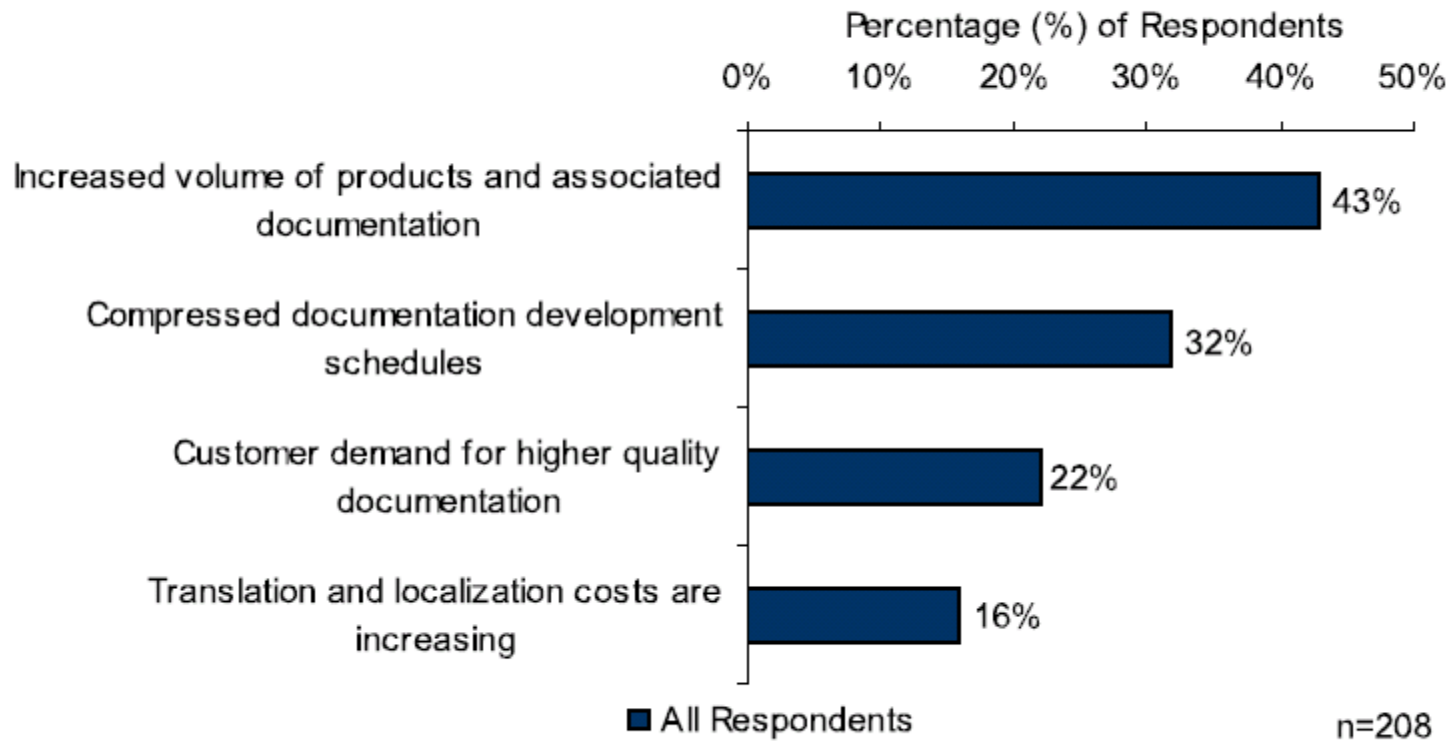


Other aspects of topics

- Notes and tips
- Unordered lists and tables (*User scanning for info*)
- Phrases for reuse (*Consistent information*)
 - Product names
 - Deliverable titles
 - Standard phrases
- Conditions (*Customized documentation*)
 - Selective display of content based on audience, output format, platform, etc.



Figure 1: Top Four Pressures Driving Content Reuse



Source: Aberdeen Group, March 2010



Metadata for quick access

- Titles
- Index
- Keywords



References

- Relationship tables
 - Topics are part of your deliverable
- Related links
 - Pointers to topics outside the deliverable or the content repository



Resources

- <http://www.ditaworld.com/>
- <http://www.infomanagementcenter.com/>
- <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/03/21/books/21mash.html>
- <http://hbswk.hbs.edu/item/6369.html>
- <http://www.aberdeen.com/>



Question Time





Thank You

Have a nice day!

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