

**MDS SCIEX**
www.mdssciex.com
**INDUSTRY**

- Manufacturing
- Analytical Instrumentation

CHALLENGES

- Improve customer access to product information
- Adopt single-source publishing to effectively reuse content across documentation
- Accelerate the review and approval process for new product materials
- Eliminate product shipping delays by speeding availability of current documentation

SOLUTION

- Automated Electronic Publishing
 - Electronic Document Delivery
- MDS Sciex is implementing a single-source publishing process built around XML, Adobe FrameMaker software, and XyEnterprise's Content@ content management system.

RESULTS

- Shortened time to create documents from weeks to days
- Accelerated document review cycles by as much as 60%
- Reduced product shipping delays with timely availability of product documentation
- Deployed a powerful XML editor at the fraction of the cost of other authoring tools
- Improved customer service by providing rapid access to product information on paper and CD

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH

- Front Runner Publishing Solutions, a provider of customized training and professional publishing solutions for government and business

www.front-runner.com


MDS Sciex

Leading manufacturer improves customer service and speeds document creation with single-source publishing system based on XML and Adobe® FrameMaker® software

Overview

MDS Sciex develops analytical instruments that support vital activities including researching medications to combat diseases and conducting environmental tests to identify soil and water contaminants. Headquartered in Ontario, Canada, with more than 500 employees, MDS Sciex is the analytic instruments and technology solutions division of MDS, Inc., an international health and life sciences company. The company's highly sophisticated devices require expert implementation and maintenance to ensure optimal performance. To support these goals, MDS Sciex's documentation staff develops detailed product operations and maintenance manuals. The manuals are created using an automated publishing workflow that MDS Sciex implemented with guidance from Front Runner Publishing Solutions. The system is built around Adobe FrameMaker software, XML, and XyEnterprise's Content@ content management system.

Challenges

The documentation group at MDS Sciex works year-round to update existing product materials and to author documents for new products. "Our systems are extremely complex, so our customers need continuous access to accurate, up-to-date information," says Rhys Griffiths, information architect at MDS Sciex.

With many products and dozens of user and maintenance manuals containing between 20 and 600 pages, ensuring the timely availability of documentation is challenging. Developing the complex, visually detailed manuals requires a team of dedicated writers who work closely with technical experts throughout the company. Documentation drafts are typically routed on paper to five to eight technical specialists for review, with edits returned to document authors.

"We realized that the best way to streamline document creation was to better leverage our already approved content," explains Griffiths. Because the documentation group previously did not have access to a full repository of approved content, staff could spend hours creating information for new manuals, even if that content was available in another manual. Document reviewers also encountered inefficiencies when commenting on materials, because they frequently had to spend time reviewing already approved content.

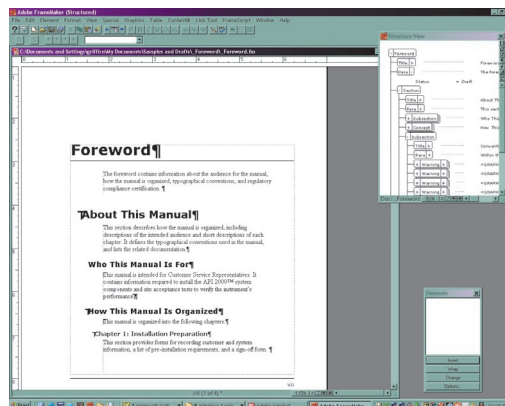
"Moving to single-source publishing was essential," says Griffiths. "We needed to make it easier for the writing staff to reuse content and also eliminate the time that technical experts spent re-reviewing previously approved content." Central to achieving this goal was deploying an accessible repository for storing XML content and then linking that content to electronic templates created in Adobe FrameMaker software.

Solution

With help from Front Runner, an Adobe Authorized Training Center and provider of custom publishing solutions, MDS Sciex is implementing a single-source publishing process built around XML, Adobe FrameMaker software, and XyEnterprise's Content@ content management system. "Through training, template development, document conversion, and ongoing technical support, we helped ensure the transition to new publishing processes was as painless as possible," says Bernard Aschwanden, publishing technologies expert at Front Runner.



The MDS Sciex new single-source publishing process, built around XML, Adobe FrameMaker software, and XyEnterprise's Content@ content management system, enables staff to efficiently assemble product documentation. With FrameMaker, staff can automatically number pages, create interactive cross-references, and generate table of contents and indexes to make documents easier to navigate.



“XML editors can be cost-prohibitive. FrameMaker delivers a great mix of features and affordability.”

Rhys Griffiths,
Information architect,
MDS Sciex

Content in the new system is fragmented and reused at the paragraph level, enabling MDS Sciex staff to efficiently assemble product documentation. “By making content available in paragraphs, we have more flexibility to build chapters with exactly the right detail,” says Griffiths. For example, when updating documentation for new products, MDS Sciex staff can take as much or as little information as needed from existing materials. Paragraphs of approved XML content from Content@ can be imported into the appropriate FrameMaker templates. If new information is required, the writing staff can use FrameMaker to author content in XML and save the information to Content@.

In addition, powerful authoring capabilities in FrameMaker further streamline document creation. With FrameMaker, staff can automatically number pages, create interactive cross-references, and generate table of contents and indexes to make documents easier to navigate. The smooth integration of FrameMaker with Adobe Photoshop® and Adobe Illustrator® software—two applications that MDS Sciex uses to prepare graphics for manuals—also simplifies document creation.

Final materials are converted from FrameMaker to Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF) for printing and delivery on CD. Technical writers use Quadralay's WebWorks Publisher to convert documents to interactive, online help documents.

Results

MDS Sciex employees can now create product documents faster and more reliably than ever before. Because they can reuse content, the writing staff can produce entire chapters and accomplish processes in days that could have taken weeks. In addition, the company anticipates that its single-source publishing processes will shorten review cycles by as much as 60% because reviewers now have less new content to approve.

“The advantages of fast, efficient document authoring are evident company-wide,” says Griffiths. “We don't have to delay product shipping because documentation isn't ready, and we have improved service by providing customers with faster access to updated materials.” An added benefit of using FrameMaker is the software's affordability. “XML editors can be cost-prohibitive,” he says. “FrameMaker delivers a great mix of features and affordability. It is also superior to other XML editors for layout and rendering PDF files.”

Today, MDS Sciex is expanding customer access to high-quality product information and better coordinating documentation delivery with new product releases. Final product materials in Adobe PDF can be printed and mailed, and the fully searchable files can be placed on CD. The company is also creating interactive online help manuals. “Single-source publishing using FrameMaker and our XML-based processes gives us the agility to keep pace with our product releases and to meet customer demand for timely product materials,” says Griffiths.

SYSTEMS AT A GLANCE

- Adobe FrameMaker
- Adobe Illustrator
- Adobe Photoshop
- Quadralay WebWorks Publisher
- XyEnterprise Content@

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