

Comparing DITA support in XMetaL and FrameMaker

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Agenda

- Authoring experience
- Generating output
- Conditional processing
- conrefs
- Map files
- Specialization
- Many opinions



About the presenter

- Founder and president, Scriptorium Publishing, 1996 to today
- Co-Author: FrameMaker, WebWorks Publisher, and technical writing books
- Degree in international affairs and German, Duke University
- Adobe Certified Expert, FrameMaker
- Certified Technical Trainer (CTT+)
- Realistic, results-oriented consultant



A note about Scriptorium

- Affiliated with Adobe as Adobe Authorized Training Center
- Affiliated with Just Systems as a Certified Services Partner
- Nonetheless, I think you'll find this presentation quite candid about each tool's strengths and weaknesses.



Questions

- Please ask questions.
- Feel free to ask in German (if you prefer) and I will translate.
- I may defer some questions to the end of the presentation.
- A PDF version of the slides is available upon request.



FrameMaker highlights

- High-quality PDF output
- Formatting control
- Ability to "tweak" formatting, such as page breaks
- WYSIWYG for print
- Structure view



XMetaL highlights

- Ability to edit XML directly
- Integration with DITA Open Toolkit
- Not WYSIWYG for print
- Specialization support



XMetal Author DITA Edition - [Aardvark.xml]

File Edit View Insert Paragraph Reuse Tools Table Window Help

B *I* U | [List Icons] | [List Icons] | [List Icons] | [List Icons] | [List Icons] | [List Icons] | [List Icons]

Aardvark

- Short Description:
- Aardvarks eat mostly termites.
- Do not accept the aardvarks' offer to come to deal with your termite problem. You will **not** like the results.
- Danger:** Do not feed animals snacks, scraps, or people food.

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dita / topic / body / p

Aardvark.xml

Audience = ; Rules Checking On NUM



Authoring highlights in XMetaL

- Code view
- Format-neutral WYSIOW presentation
- No invalid content allowed
- Elements grouped by type

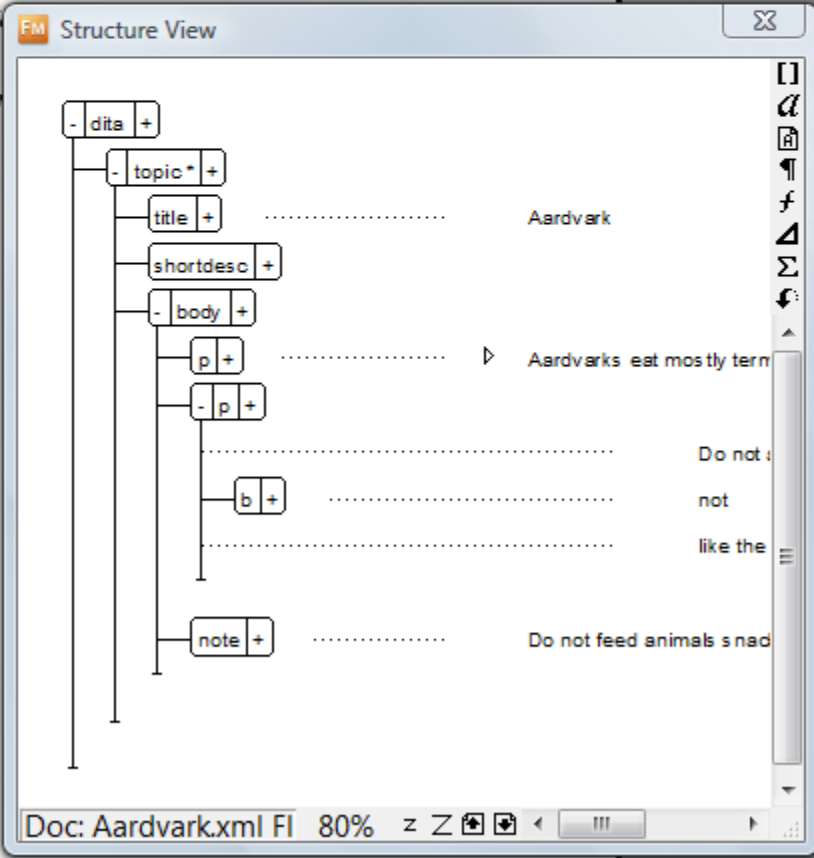


Aardvark

Aardvarks eat mostly termites.

Do not accept the aardvarks' offer.
You will not like the results.

DANGER: Do not feed animals...



FrameMaker authoring highlights

- WYSIWYG for print
- Structure view
- Document window/structure view combination
- Invalid content allowed



Generating output in FrameMaker

- PDF
- FrameMaker book from DITA map
- Conditional processing
- Open Toolkit
- HTML-based help

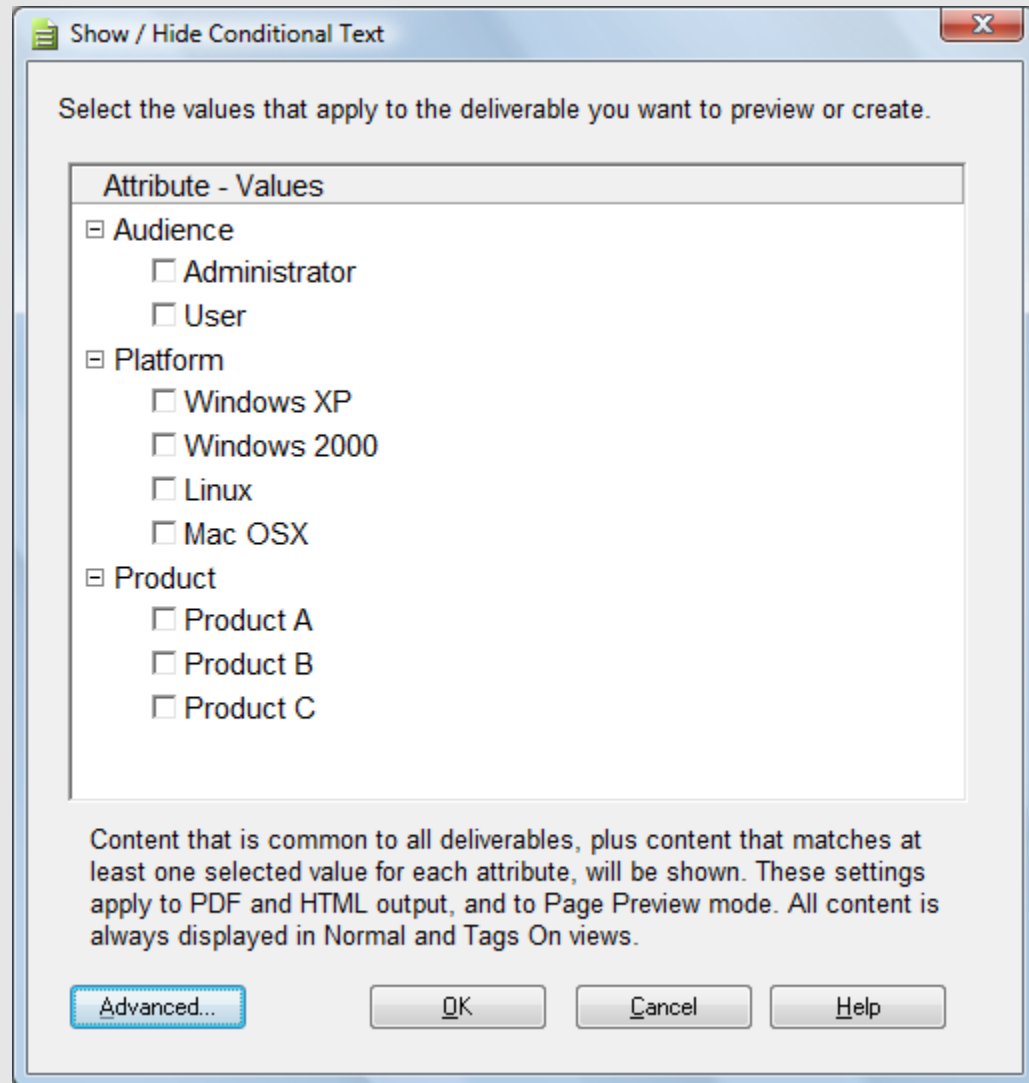


Generating output in XMetaL

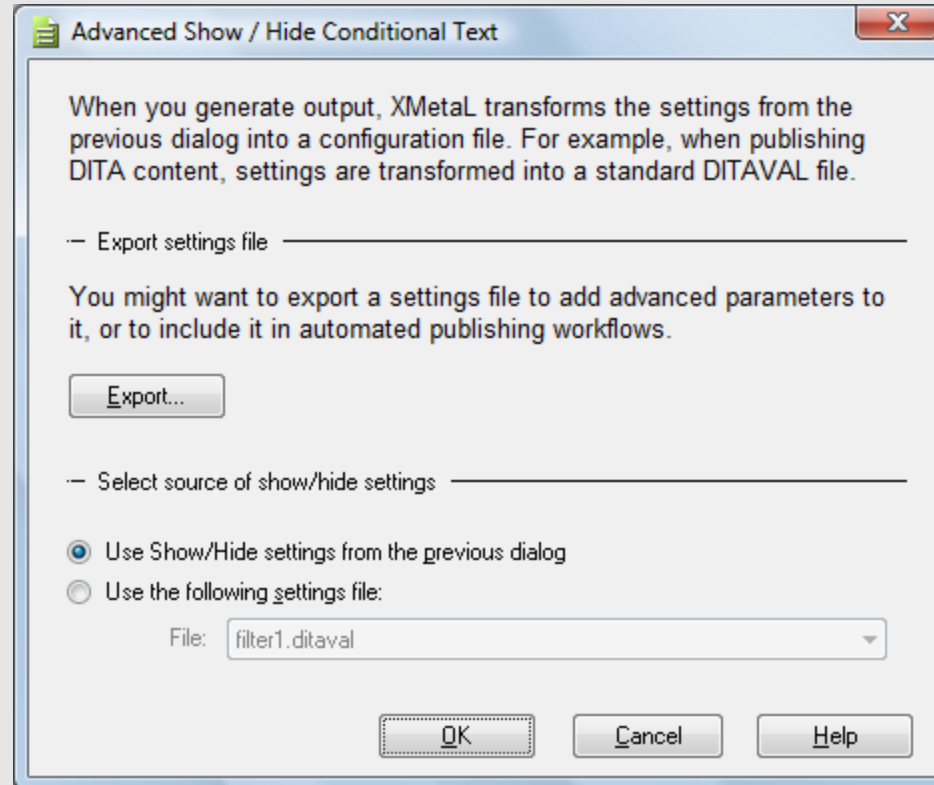
- Open Toolkit
- Conditional processing
- RenderX for PDF via Open Toolkit
- HTML-based help?



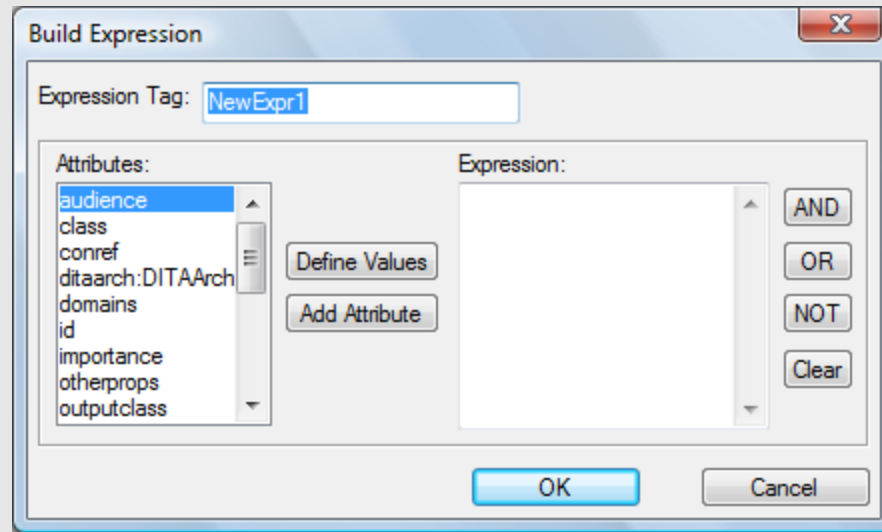
Conditional processing in XMetaL



ditaval support in XMetaL



Conditional processing in FrameMaker

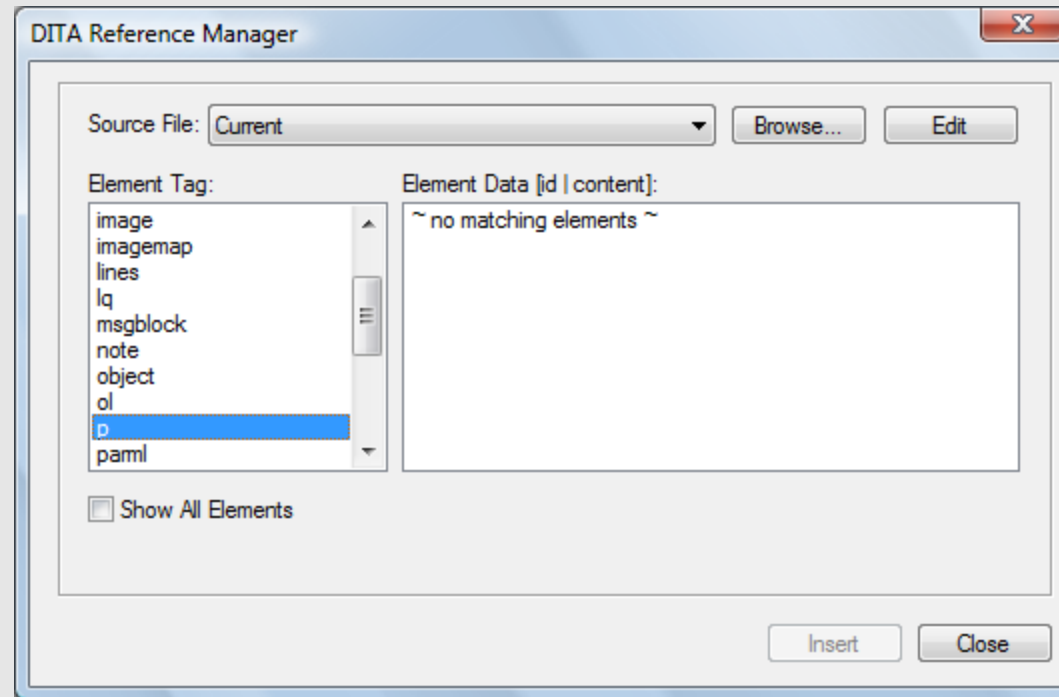


ditaval support in FrameMaker

- For Open Toolkit output only

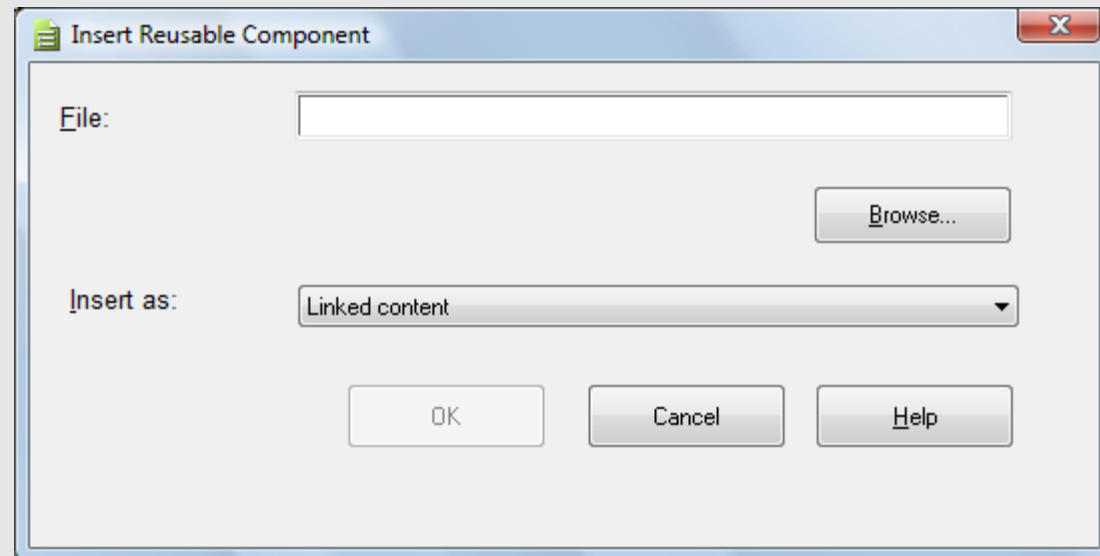


conrefs in FrameMaker

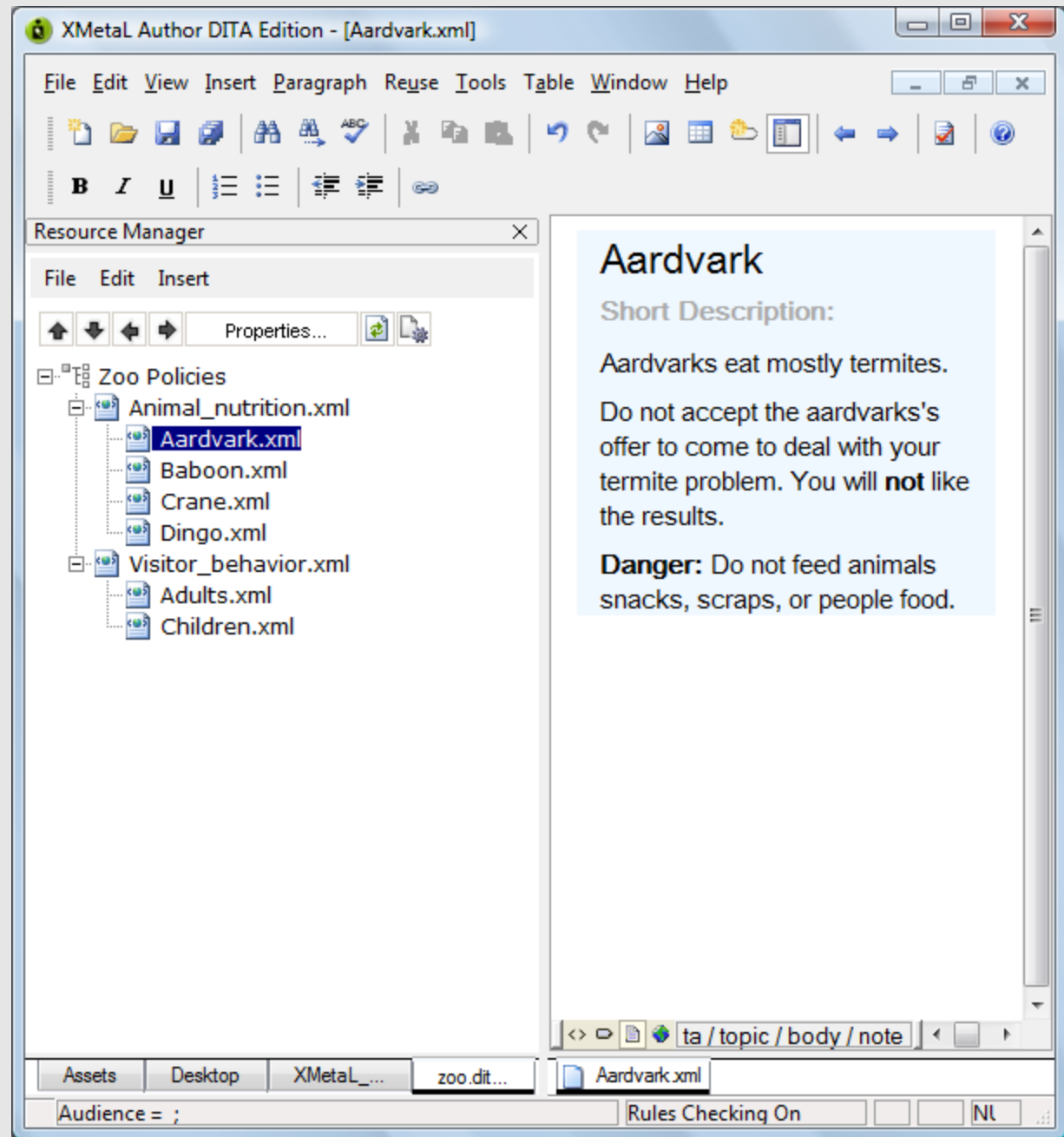


conrefs in XMetaL

- Reusable components created in new directory by default



Map files in XMetaL



Adobe FrameMaker (Structured) - [C:\Users\okeyee\Desktop\dita_img\zoo.ditamap]

File Edit Element Format View Special Graphics Table StructureTools DITA Window Help

head.0 Arial 10 pt

Adults.xml Baboon.xml zoo.ditamap

Zoo Policies

Sarah

- + (Animal_nutrition.xml)
- + (Aardvark.xml)
- + (Baboon.xml)
- + (Crane.xml)
- + (Dingo.xml)
- + (Visitor_behavior.xml)
- + (Adults.xml)
- + (Children.xml)

Structure View

```

- map * +
  title = Zoo Policies
  xml:lang = en-us
  rev = 1
  - topicmeta +
    author + Sarah
    - critdates +
      created +
      revised +
  - topicref +
    fm-topicreflabel + (Animal_nutrition.xml)
    - topicref +
      fm-topicreflabel + (Aardvark.xml)
    - topicref +
      fm-topicreflabel + (Baboon.xml)
  
```

Doc: zoo.ditamap Flow: A 100%

Flow: A E: map 1 of 1 * 101%



Specialization

- XMetaL supports
- FrameMaker does not support



Which support is better?

- For print/PDF output: FrameMaker
- For DITA authoring: XMetaL
- For print WYSIWYG: FrameMaker
- For output-neutral formatting: XMetaL

No clear winner.



How important is print publishing?

- It's much easier to produce high-end print/PDF from FrameMaker.
- Print/PDF publishing through Open Toolkit is quite difficult.
- WYSIWYG presentation in FrameMaker is a plus for print-centric workflows.
- WYSIOO presentation in XMetaL is a plus for authoring without focusing on print.



How much control should authors have?

- Because FrameMaker combines authoring and publishing, authors have more control.
- XMetaL does not allow invalid content in normal authoring; this restricts authors greatly.



Do you need cross-browser, cross-platform help?

- WebHelp or WebWorksHelp?
 - Can use FrameMaker along with third-party help converters
 - No clear workflows for non-FrameMaker DITA content.



Transition issues

- Current unstructured FrameMaker users will find structured FrameMaker easier than XMetaL.
- Developer types may prefer XMetaL.
- FrameMaker includes conversion utility. (Of course, you could convert in FrameMaker and then use the converted content in another XML tool.)



Do you need to specialize?

- You will have to implement FrameMaker support yourself.
- XMetaL supports use of specialized DTDs.



Graphics

- Many more formats supported in FrameMaker, including EPS.
- EPS is not supported out of the box in XMetaL.
- Callouts are a difficult problem.
 - Layers in graphic file?
 - FrameMaker callouts are flattened on export to XML.



Attributes

- Attributes Inspector (XMetaL) is easier to use than Attributes Editor (FrameMaker).
- But...attributes show up in FrameMaker structure view and not in XMetaL structure view.



Summary

- Your priorities will dictate which tool is a better fit for your organization.
- Each application has significant strengths and weaknesses.
- Authoring paradigms are significantly different.



Resources

- **DITA @ OASIS**
 - http://www.oasis-open.org/committees/tc_home.php?wg_abbrev=dita
- **White papers**
 - Available on CD at our booth
 - www.scriptorium.com/papers.html
- Please leave a business card or your email address if you want the handouts.



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Questions

