



Choosing DITA and Componize

Linear writing versus structured & modular writing (DITA)

Drawbacks of linear writing	Benefits of structured writing
Authoring	
Cross-references inserted and maintained manually	Cross-references inserted and maintained automatically
Copy and paste information (50% redundancy*)	Reusing the exact same information
Manual updates of layouts and branding adaptation (up to 70% of the author's time)	Automated updates by applying style sheets
Manual check and repairs of publishing outputs (broken links and cross-references, styles, variants)	Nearly instantaneous and parallel publishing (no link checks necessary)
Manual update and change of branding on each document	Separation of content and form means one change on style sheets and instantaneous re-publishing is sufficient
Multiple updates on each published document	Automated updates on the source and republishing
Manual pasting of images	Linking and reusing images
Multiplying image libraries per format or resolution	One image format to handle (automated reformatting when publishing)
Fastidious assembly and modification of the information architecture	Easy assembly of documents using reuse and links (preview information and images)
Unified user experience	
User experience with the information is different depending on the authors, the document output, and branding	Unified user experience with structured information, single sourcing, and branding applied at the time of publishing
More control on versions	
No automated version follow-up on granular information	Automated version follow-up on granular information (compare, revert, historicize)



Drawbacks of linear writing	Benefits of structured writing
Less tools but more choices	
One tool to edit and publish one or two output formats	One tool to edit ALL formats, including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Web (XHTML) • E-book (EPUB) • PDF • Web help • CHM • RTF • InDesign™ • XML • Custom outputs...
Special tools to create and compile each output format	One tool to publish all output formats
Eliminate errors	
Consistency errors in the information	Consistent information with reuse (instead of copy/paste)
Consistency errors in versions in different versions	Consistent information with reuse throughout versions
Terminology inconsistencies	Consistent terminology with reuse
Manual maintenance of documentation per output (duplicate content)	Conditional publishing to leverage information according to variants (audiences, products, options...)
Enable collaboration	
Difficult search in the information corpus	Facilitated searches and filters with metadata
Linear document does not allow team collaboration	Faster time to market by parallelizing authoring, review, sign-off, and translation tasks
High translation costs, for each document, in each output format	Enter new markets with the same translation budget by reusing already translated topics
Translation costs to extract and inject text from multiple proprietary formats	One source means no costs for extracting/injecting text
Difficult maintenance of multilingual terminology	Terminology perfectly consistent with reuse
Difficult maintenance of legal warning	Easy maintenance and republishing of legal warnings, aligning with the organization policy
Difficult maintenance of safety warnings	Easy maintenance and republishing of legal



Drawbacks of linear writing	Benefits of structured writing
	warnings, aligning with the organization policy
Difficult maintenance of volatile information, such as interface messages, coding examples...	Easy maintenance with reuse, or inject directly the information in the content
Exchange formats and tools choice	
Information trapped in various proprietary tools and formats, making exchanges difficult	Information as an open standard is perennial and enables a wider choice of tools
Information trapped in a proprietary format, making it difficult to swap with outside the company	Information as an open standard enables easy sharing and integrating information from other sources using the same format (from suppliers, subsidiaries, new units...)
Multimedia to embed manually on draft web files	Direct linking to videos in the source format

Component Content Management versus Version Control

Drawbacks of version control systems	Benefits of a Component Content Management System
Authoring and media management	
No automated maintenance of links	Automated link maintenance, rewritten if necessary
Modifying the library structure breaks links	Easy modification of the library structure
Renaming files breaks links	Renaming files is supported
Cannot identify where a file, an piece of information, or a term is (re)used in the documentation	Identify in a click where a content is used
Mandatory to open each file or image to check its content	Preview instantaneously files, images, and videos
Mandatory to open each file to check its metadata	Preview metadata instantaneously and search metadata
Mandatory to open image files with a graphic tool to check its properties	Preview of instantaneously images and properties
More output formats	



Drawbacks of version control systems	Benefits of a Component Content Management System
Cannot publish at the same time multiple outputs, styles, or variants	Componize can publish up to 15x faster multiple documents using the same resources
Cannot allow an author to lock a file for modification	Automatically reserve a file to an author
Collaboration	
Cannot automate collaboration processes (publishing, mailing, other actions...)	Automate the publishing processes
Cannot automate reviews, sign-offs, and translations.	Automate processes for reviews, sign-offs, for groups and individuals
Cannot show who is doing what at a set time	Check latest modified documents, publications, workflow status, content analysis...
Filters and searches	
Cannot identify compliance errors or link errors	Identifies directly files with errors and provides shortcut for faster adjustment
Cannot filter the resources included in a deliverable (map)	Can reuse automatically all files, images and resources used in a deliverable (map)
Cannot filter files depending on metadata	Filter instantaneously files based on custom classification

Structured writing versus Wiki

Drawbacks of wikis	Benefits of structured writing
Authoring and media management	
Difficult to help authors write consistently and topic-based information (no constraints)	Native information architecture helps create topic-based information
Difficult to help authors follow information structures and information types	Writing is guided depending on the information template (task, description...)
Fastidious assembly and modification of the information architecture	Easy assembly of documents using reuse and links (preview information and images)
No image or media libraries	Media library enabling preview, metadata extraction, search, and reuse



Drawbacks of wikis	Benefits of structured writing
More output formats	
Restricted number of exchange formats between information systems/storage	Open and standardized format
None or a few publishing format	Choose multiple publishing formats
Cannot change easily the branding	Can use different style sheets
Collaboration	
Cannot manage easily contributors and permissions on various pages	Robust and agile rights and permissions management on contributors ,groups and subgroups
No automated processes and workflows for review and sign-off	Automated workflows and processes for reviews and sign-off
Cannot manage full life-cycle, information obsolescence and archiving	Manage content life-cycle from end-to-end
Enhance information findability (and reuse)	
Cannot expose what is available as content	Expose the content and display alternate navigations in the information structure
Exchange format and wider tools choice	
Information trapped in various proprietary tools and formats, making exchanges difficult	Information as an open standard is perennial and enables a wider choice of tools and publishing formats

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