

SDL Acquisition of Xopus

Frequently Asked Questions

FAQs

What is Xopus?

Xopus is a simple to use online XML editor that is designed for people who need to contribute or review content in XML but who are not technical writers or familiar with XML. The editor requires “zero-install and zero training”, making it easy to rollout and use by a variety of departments in corporations beyond the traditional technical writing organization.

Why did SDL decide to acquire Xopus?

The Xopus acquisition addresses two critical trends in the structured content technology sector.

First, through the increasing speed of DITA adoption, there is a growing need for roles beyond technical writers to contribute and review content in XML. One of the barriers to DITA and XML adoption is the complexity of the XML editing experience. Advanced XML editing tools are required for technical writers, and these requirements are addressed by tools such as JustSystems’ XMetaL, PTC Arbortext Editor and Adobe FrameMaker. But for subject matter experts, engineers, trainers, support personnel, marketing staff, scientists, lawyers and a host of others in various roles in the enterprise, a simpler experience is required for XML review and content contribution to proliferate. Xopus provides just such an interface.

Second, companies adopting structured authoring processes (with DITA and S1000D) are beginning to think about how to dynamically deliver their content and engage their community of customers and content consumers. Some have turned to wikis for this process. While wikis allow for collaboration they don’t provide a way to leverage structured content. With Xopus, SDL can now offer a review platform that supports XML and has wiki-like benefits for review processes that include the crowd in content creation and collaboration.

The ability for large communities of users to create and review XML content in a user friendly way, without losing the inherent richness of the XML structure, has great value to an organization. Xopus solves this long standing problem.

Will SDL continue integrating with other XML tools?

Yes. Technical writers need robust XML authoring tools and SDL will continue to support integrations to the industry leaders.

Today, SDL offers an out-of-the box integration between SDL Trisoft and JustSystems’ XMetaL, PTC Arbortext, and Adobe FrameMaker (support for FrameMaker 9 to be released next month). The company also integrates SDL Global Authoring Management System with those same authoring tools and will continue to support those integrations as well as add additional ones in the future.

Will Xopus continue to support integrations with other content management systems?

Yes. SDL takes an open-technology strategy in the market and believes our products should be made available as components in our customer’s enterprise eco-system. Xopus has existing integrations with other content management systems - an important part of the Xopus business model - and those integrations will continue to be encouraged and supported.

What are the business drivers to structured content, in general?

We see a number of business drivers that are moving structured content into the mainstream, including:

- Reduce content creation and localization costs by 30-50%
- Make content easily shareable across the enterprise
- Create more consistent, accurate, and timely information
- Improve customer experience through tailored and interactive customer documentation
- Empower business agility to respond to changing market conditions and customer expectations
- Support automated, multi-channel delivery (print, PDF, web, interactive multimedia) dramatically reducing content delivery costs
- Allow XML content creation upstream at the source (e.g. engineering, technical marketing)

What are some of the Xopus benefits?

Xopus enables a broader audience to contribute comments and content to increasingly distributed structured authoring processes. With several thousand users worldwide in the high-tech, life sciences, manufacturing and government sectors, Xopus is already extending the business benefits of structured authoring to a much broader set of users and roles than would otherwise be possible. Here are some of the specific ways the Xopus editor extends these benefits:

- Empowers authoring in a simple Web experience, with no local software client to manage, with support for increasingly distributed authoring environments
- Offers a simple-to-use experience similar to word processing applications with full XML support
- Provides interactive, dynamic and rich authoring environment to develop interactive documents
- Delivers the benefits of wiki-like accessibility and ease-of-use but retains the advantages of structured content and control, eliminating the need for conversion or retagging
- Eliminates the manual cut and paste and retagging of content changes and comments associated with PDF based review processes
- Allows upstream content contributors to create XML from the start, before delivery to technical writers
- Prevents writers from accidentally breaking the XML structures
- Enables “what you see is what you get experience” (WYSIWYG) for work on web deliverables
- Empowers organizations to create feedback loops from customers through interactive live content experience
- Reduces IT and rollout overhead with “zero-install/zero training”

How does Xopus bridge the gap between structured content and wikis?

One of the interesting challenges in companies today is how to benefit from structured content and reuse while taking advantage of some of the benefits of ease-of-use and collaboration in a Wiki. Xopus provides a bridge between these two methodologies. Wikis provide easy access to content and a platform for collaboration and review in a web interface. But Wikis do not provide any mechanism for creating and editing structured content, reusing content or achieving the benefits of single sourcing. SDL intends to integrate Xopus into SDL Trisoft, the DITA Component Content Management system, SDL Contenta, the CSDB specifically designed for S1000D, and SDL LiveContent the dynamic publishing solution. Together this end-to-end solution takes advantage of structured content but also empowers collaboration, crowd authoring, and community contributions via an easy to use web-interface.

What is Crowdsourcing and how does that fit into SDL's vision of structured content?

Today and in the past, organizations would publish technical manuals as PDF and never know whether the content was read, how useful the content was, or how consumers interacted with the content. SDL LiveContent provides the ability to dynamically deliver the content to the web or other devices with feedback that makes it possible to find out what customers think and how they used the content. The software can track what customers do with your content (e.g. what topics did they read or not read, what searches were run) and allow them to comment and even contribute to the content. These are important factors for bringing your customers into a community that interacts with you. Xopus embodies this vision by providing an easy-to-use web experience that empowers the community to comment on content and contribute to it.

What is SDL's XML product suite vision?

SDL's vision is to make structured authoring easy and ubiquitous in the enterprise. With Xopus we extend the division's product suite by providing an easy-to-use XML editor that complements powerful XML authoring tools for high-powered technical writers. In Phase I, Xopus will be integrated with SDL's suite of structured content technologies. A prototype integration is already available with SDL Trisoft, our DITA Component Content Management system. Xopus will also be integrated with SDL LiveContent, providing a platform for community interaction and crowdsourcing. In Phase II, we envision integrating Xopus with other products in SDL's GIM suite.

How will Xopus fit into the SDL business structure?

SDL Xopus will become part of SDL's Structured Content Technologies division. The current CEO, Laurens van den Oever, will become Director of Structured Authoring Solutions, reporting to Kevin Duffy, CEO of the division. Xopus is located in the Netherlands and the development center is conveniently close to the SDL Web Content Management division in Amsterdam and the SDL Trisoft development center in Mechelen, Belgium.