



Case Study

DITA Helps Nautilus Manage Brand and Global Presence

As a global fitness products company that had grown through a series of strategic acquisitions, Nautilus corporation faced a growing number of key challenges. These included managing the production and publication of its assembly, owner's and service manuals as well as translating the content into 8 languages.

After an audit of the company's tools and processes, the decision was made to move to XML and DITA as a solution to Nautilus' authoring requirements as a global company. SDL Trisoft Component Content Management (CCM) system was selected by Nautilus to help implement the DITA solution and the results were impressive.

Featured Solutions:

SDL Trisoft Component Content Management (CCM) system

DITA

Arbortext Editor

Arbortext Publisher

Case Study

Nautilus has achieved a leading position in the marketing, development and manufacturing of branded health and fitness products sold under such well-known names as Bowflex®, Nautilus®, Schwinn® Fitness and StairMaster®. At the same time, the acquisition of these various businesses had brought inconsistent tools and processes into the company. This made it difficult to provide an efficient and unified approach to the production of user guides for the company’s health and fitness equipment. Each business unit was producing documentation in different layout tools such as InDesign, Quark and Microsoft Word. The inconsistent tools and processes made it difficult to manage content that now had to be consistent across the branded equipment and to achieve a master brand that the company considered important. Cutting and pasting could only keep the content consistent for so long. To complicate matters, Nautilus was taking its branded products global and saw the costs of translation rocket as it expanded into eight languages.



To address these challenges, Nautilus’ Brian Schmitt, Manager of Technical Documentation, conducted an audit of the company’s tools and processes and realized that something had to be done. Realizing that the company needed a new strategy for managing content, Mr Schmitt developed a three-prong plan that would consolidate the company’s tools and methods, move to a structured-based authoring process and eliminate desktop publishing costs from translation. The first step was to envision the solution. The key was to move to XML and structured authoring, which would have two positive benefits. First, it would free the content from layout, making it easier to reuse the same content across the brands. Second, by moving content out of layout applications

and into XML, the team could push publishing to the end of the process. This would eliminate the cost of translation vendors carrying out layout work on translated content (“DTP”) and thus address the escalating costs in global markets.

While the vision was clear, the choice of tools was not. Mr Schmitt had previously been involved in content management deployments in Silicon Valley and knew that such deployments could be messy and costly if he did not choose the right solution. Two key events assured him that the vision was achievable within a budget he thought Nautilus management would support.

First, a new standard had emerged called DITA (“Darwin Information Typing Architecture”) that made the adoption of XML for writing organizations more straightforward than it had been in the past. DITA standardizes how XML can be used by technical writing teams and eliminates the costly implementation processes and customizations that often thwart content management deployments. Second, Mr Schmitt had been recently introduced to SDL Trisoft, a software vendor that specialized in DITA out-of-the-box.





SDL Trisoft Component Content Management (CCM) system could get the Nautilus technical writing team up and running with no customization and with minimal deployment effort. SDL Trisoft already had a number of larger enterprise customers utilizing DITA and XML-based authoring and who had seen the Return on Investment (ROI) that could be achieved using such a method. After meeting with the SDL Trisoft technical team and being impressed with their skill-set and solution, Mr Schmitt had the outlines of a solution that he could present to management.

After presenting a strong business case to senior management, Mr Schmitt was authorized to pursue the SDL Trisoft DITA-based solution. With budgets in place, his team set about training on authoring tools, DITA and the SDL Trisoft system. In addition to SDL Trisoft, the Nautilus team selected Arbortext Editor as its authoring tool and Arbortext Publishing Engine for rendering the XML content into publications. “SDL Trisoft played a particularly important role as a mentor for my team” commented Mr Schmitt. “The SDL Trisoft team not only delivered a strong out-of-the-box DITA solution, but it also provided expertise and strong support for my group as we began implementing the new process.” In particular, SDL Trisoft helped the Nautilus team deploy the Arbortext Publishing Engine.

SDL Trisoft, along with Arbortext Editor and Arbortext Publishing Engine (PE), is now up and running at Nautilus. The organization has started translation projects using the new system and has already cut translation costs by 40%. “This is the first step,” commented Mr Schmitt. “Now that we have implemented DITA, our vision is to push content dynamically to the Web to address customer support questions. DITA and SDL Trisoft are great enabling technologies.”

Challenges

- Diverse tools and processes through acquisitions
- No method to reuse content across brands
- Escalating translation costs particularly around layout work (“DTP”)

Featured Solutions

- SDL Trisoft Component Content Management (CCM) system
- DITA
- Arbortext Editor
- Arbortext Publisher

Results

- Stopped cut and paste methods
- Supported master brand strategy
- Eliminated desktop publishing costs
- Cut translation costs by 40%



SDL Trisoft is one of the worldwide leaders in Component Content Management (CCM) systems for technical writing organizations. SDL Trisoft's software empowers global organizations to single-source content, easily sharing, reusing and personalizing content in various publication formats and in multiple languages across global markets.

Through efficiency gains, SDL Trisoft customers are able to speed time of information to global markets, drive down the cost of content development and translation, provide more agility for the overall business, and increase customer satisfaction through access to better information.

SDL Trisoft customers include a number of large consumer electronics and mobile communications companies as well as the following: Atlas Copco, DAF, Océ, Mitsubishi, NetApp, Still, Linde Material Handling, Nautilus, and VMware. SDL Trisoft headquarters are in Mechelen, Belgium.

Find out more on SDL Trisoft please visit
www.trisoftcms.com

