

The Evolution of DITA(s)

Kristen James Eberlein, Eberlein Consulting
LLC

Keith Schengili-Roberts, DITA Information
Architect, IXIASOFT

Introductions



Kristen James Eberlein

- Eberlein Consulting LLC
- Chair, DITA Technical Committee
 - Chief cat header for DITA 1.3



Keith Schengili-Roberts

- DITA Information Architect with IXIASOFT
 - Member on the OASIS DITA Adoption and Technical Committees

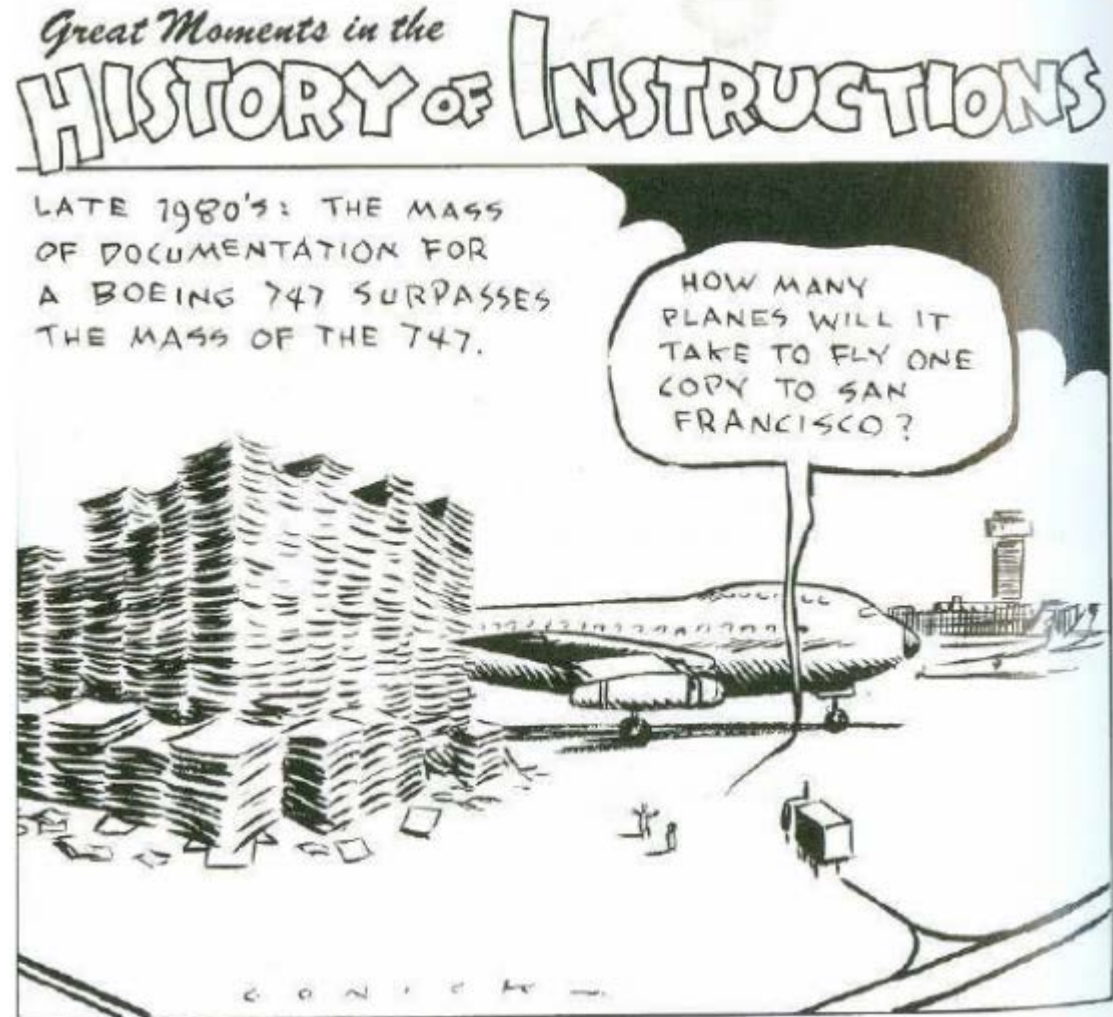
The Need for More Efficient Documentation



- In the 1980s, a Boeing 747's 129,000 parts required 31,000,000 pages of documentation

The Weighty Problem of Documentation

- Total weight of 31 million pages: 450 tons
- Total weight of a 747: 437 tons
- These factors helped push drive towards non-narrative content, XML, content reuse



IBM and the Birth of DITA

- DITA originally started at IBM as an attempt to update their internal SGML-based “BookMaster” standard
- Switch from book to topic-based content began as a way to focus on web content
 - Acknowledgement that people were not necessarily reading content as a linear narrative
- Typing came from IBM’s guide for developing technical content taken to its logical conclusion
- Was released to OASIS to make integration with other firms (including possible acquisitions) easier

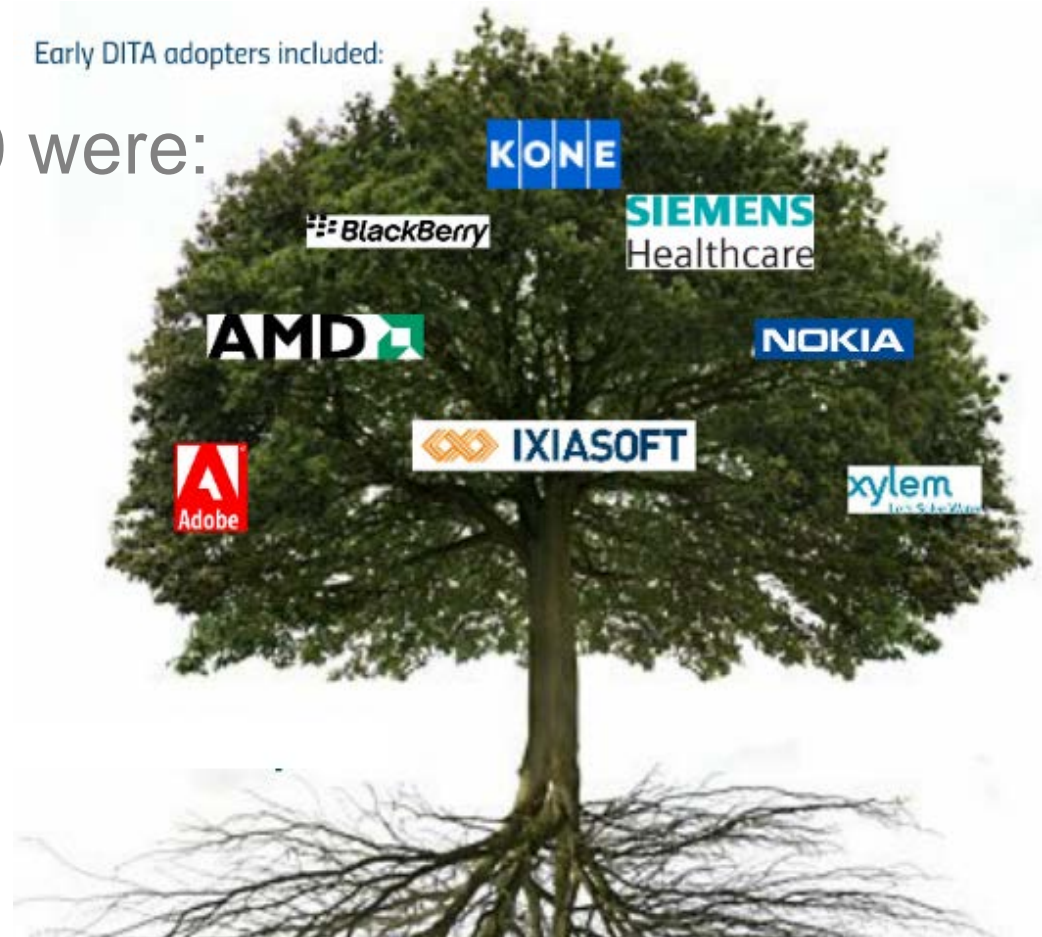


Companies Where DITA Took Root

- Among the earliest adopters of DITA 1.0 were:

- Adobe
- AMD
- BlackBerry
- Kone
- Siemens Healthcare
- Nokia
- Xylem
- IXIASOFT

Early DITA adopters included:



Spread of DITA: Nokia

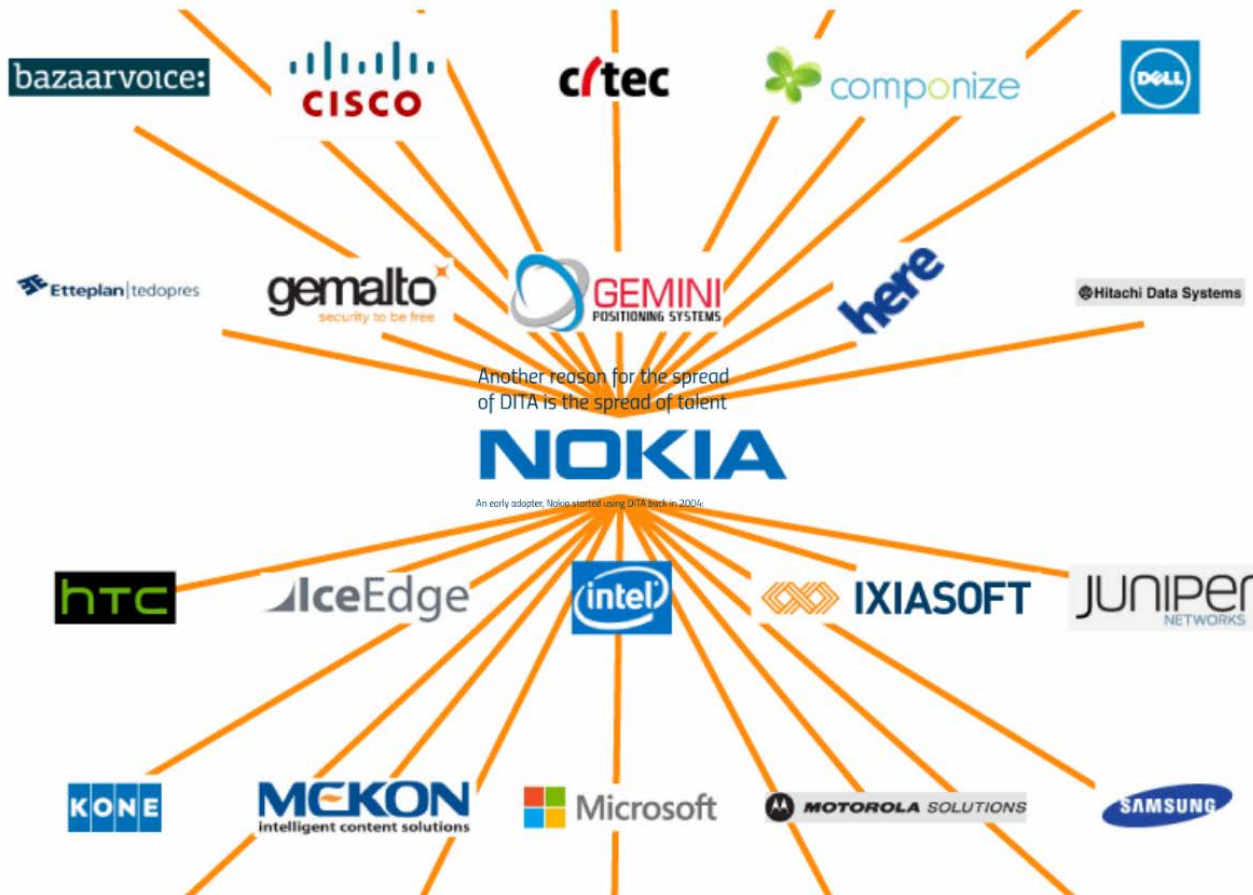
Another reason for the spread of DITA is the spread of talent

NOKIA

An early adopter, Nokia started using DITA back in 2004:

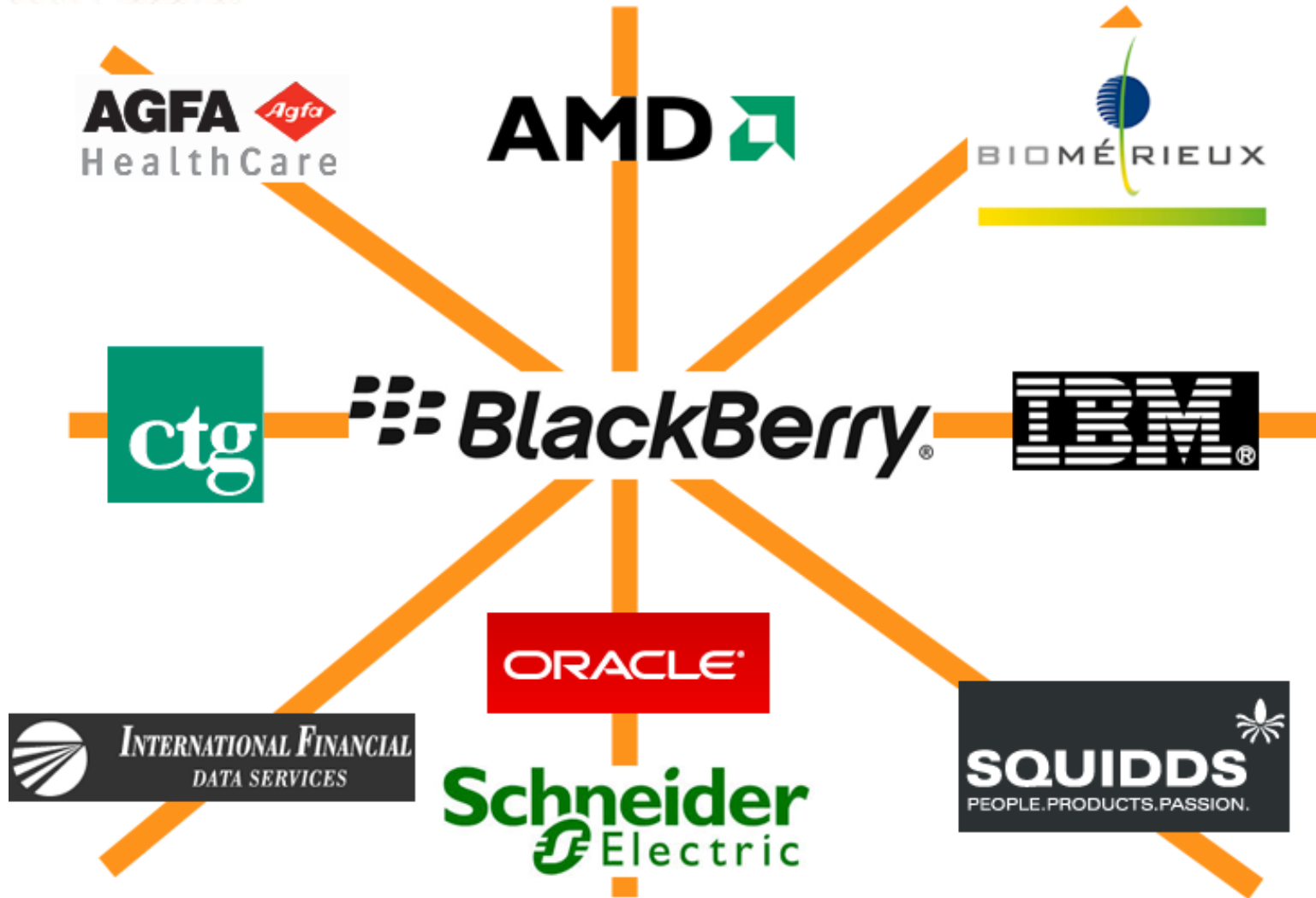
Spread of DITA: Nokia

DITA-using Technical Writers from Nokia have gone on to use DITA at all of these firms:



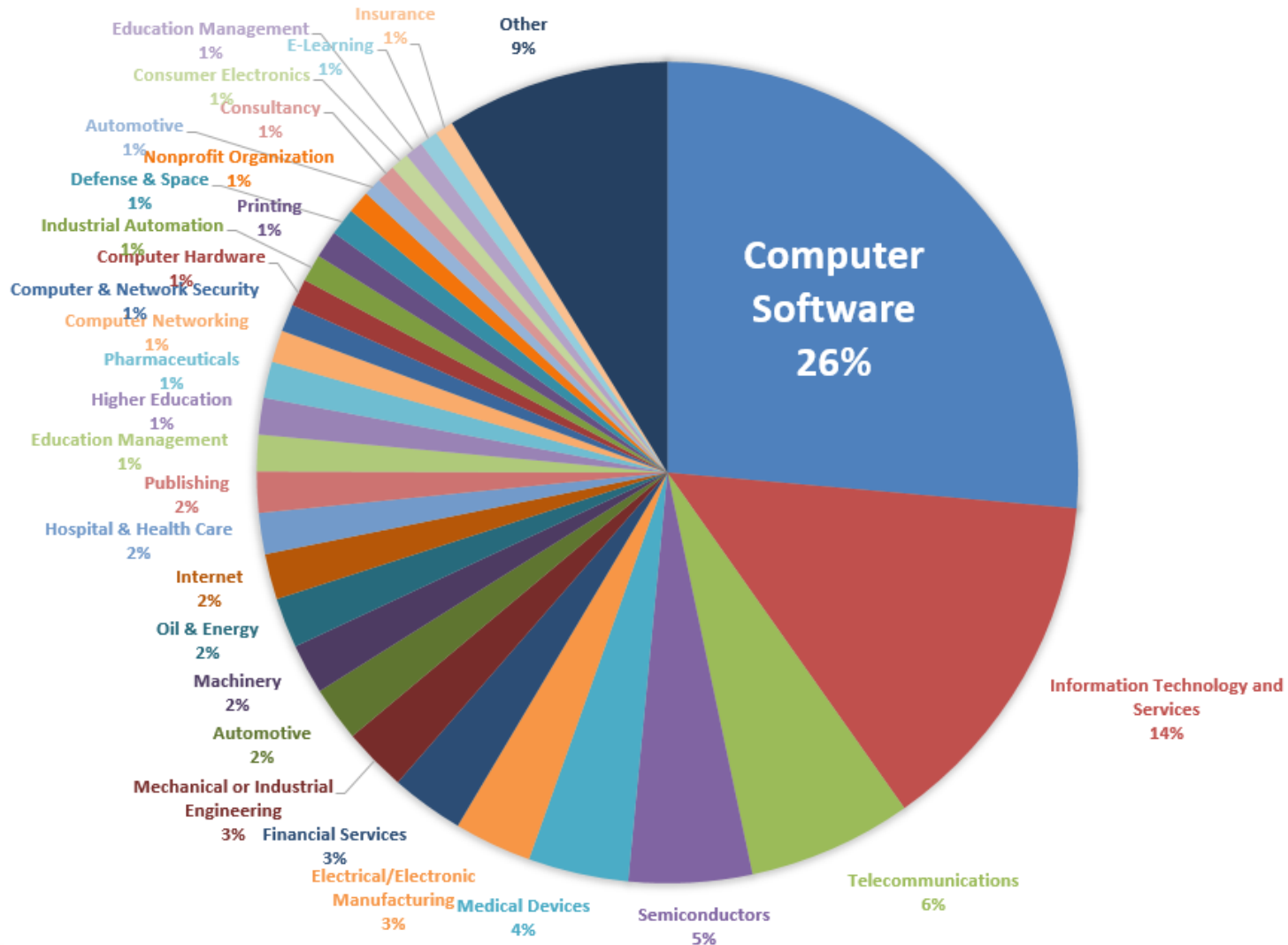
This is one of the ways in which DITA usage spreads from firm to firm

Spread of DITA: BlackBerry



Spread of DITA: Industry Sectors

DITA USAGE BY INDUSTRY SECTOR, Q3 2015



The Difficult Birth of DITA 1.2

- Development of DITA 1.2 within OASIS was ... not well controlled:
 - Some incomplete proposals were approved
 - Dependencies of some sections were not recognized until the end
 - Much of the weight of spec development fell on a few TC members
- Number of tags ballooned, adding to perceived complexity
- As one commentator said, it was “messy”

The Gradual Success of DITA 1.2

- Some immediate success: Learning & Training
- Software vendors were late in providing the necessary tools
 - By late 2013 roughly a third of all the DITA XML editors listed on DITAWriter.com were still not fully DITA 1.2 compliant

DITA 1.2: December 2010

- Information types:
 - Learning & Training specialization
 - General task; machinery task
 - Subject scheme; classification map
- Architecture:
 - Key-based addressing for links and variable text
 - Additions to conref; constraints
 - Topic and domain integration
- Domains:
 - Classification; delayed conref
 - Task requirements; hazard statement
- New elements: Many!

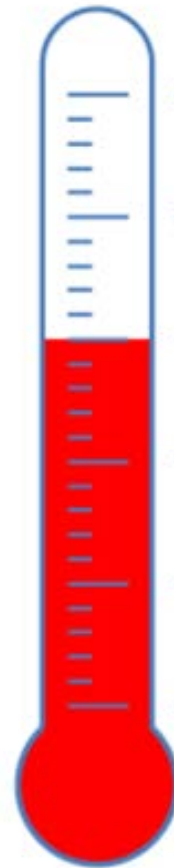
DITA 1.3: When Will It Be Released?

December 15 or 16, 2015



The Release of DITA 1.3

- DITA 1.3 “content complete” as of this summer
 - Only minor changes/fixes have been added since then
- Things are on-track for official release as of mid-December 2015
- OASIS has publicly stated that DITA 1.3 can be considered “done” *now*



DITA 1.3 approved as an OASIS standard

Fingers crossed ... 16 December 2015

Vote by OASIS member groups

Slated for 1 – 15 Dec 2015

60-day public review of candidate OASIS standard

Slated for 15 Sep – 14 Nov 2015

Committee specification approved

21 Aug 2015

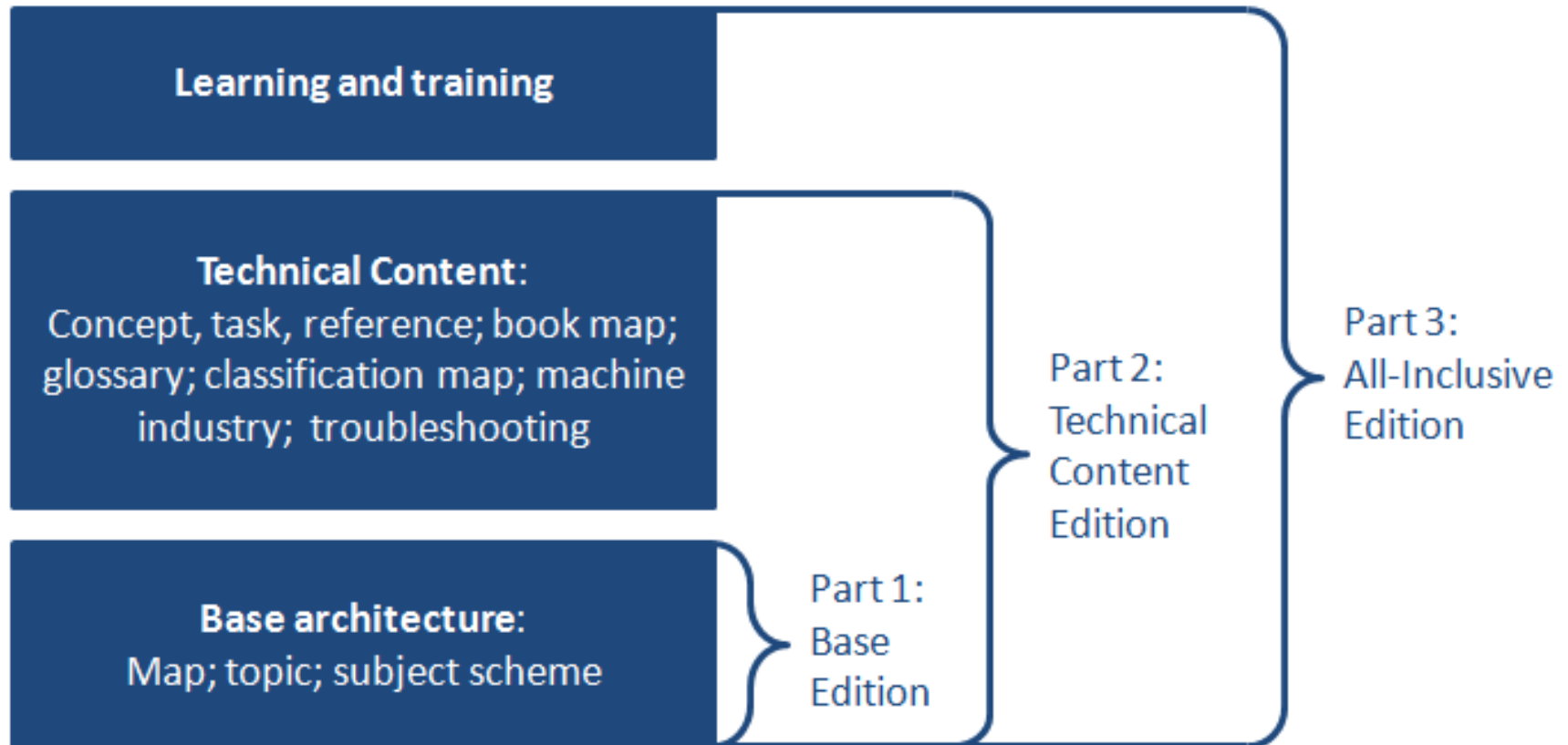
30-day review

8 July – 7 Aug 2015

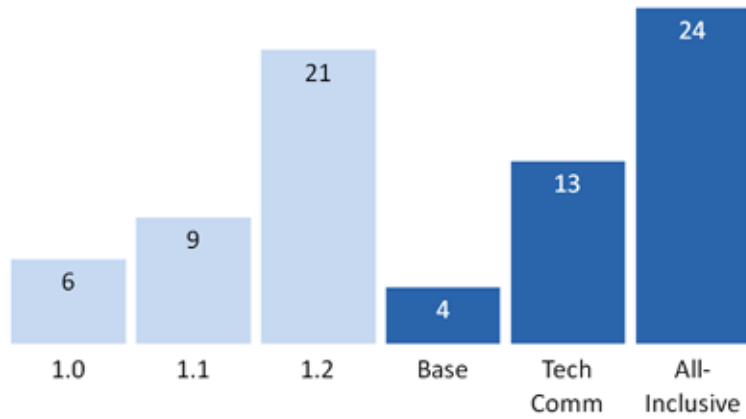
Development

2010 – 2015: Lots of hard work!

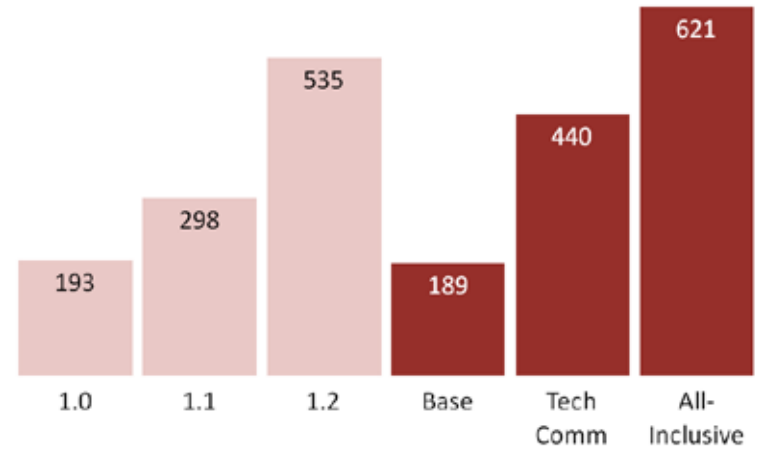
DITA 1.3: What Does It Look Like?



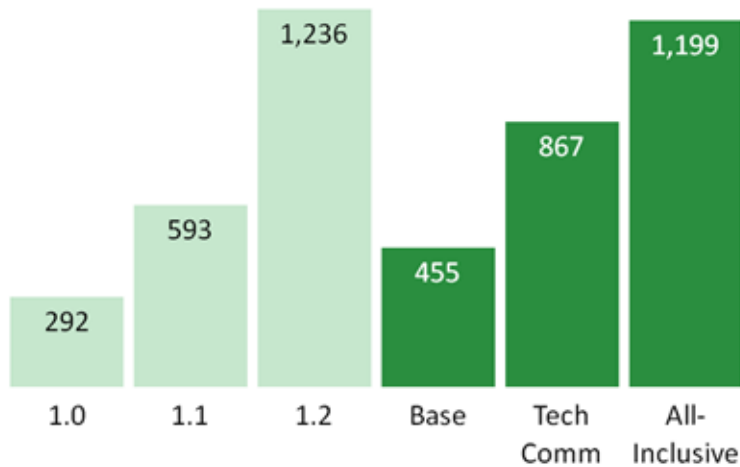
DITA 1.3: What Does It Look Like?



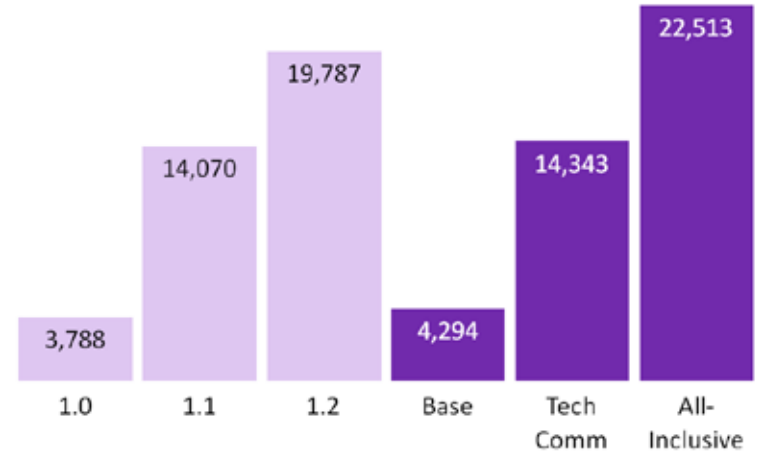
Number of document types



Number of elements



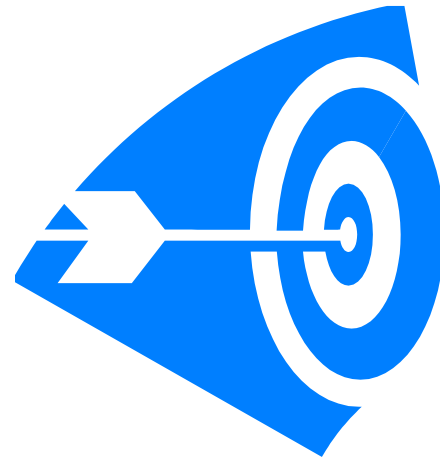
Size of specification PDF (pages)



Size of specification PDF (KB)

DITA 1.3: Why Three Editions?

- Focus on topic and map as the CORE document types
- Growth of DITA and emergence of new audiences
- Desire to provide users with targeted packages that better contain what they need – no more, no less

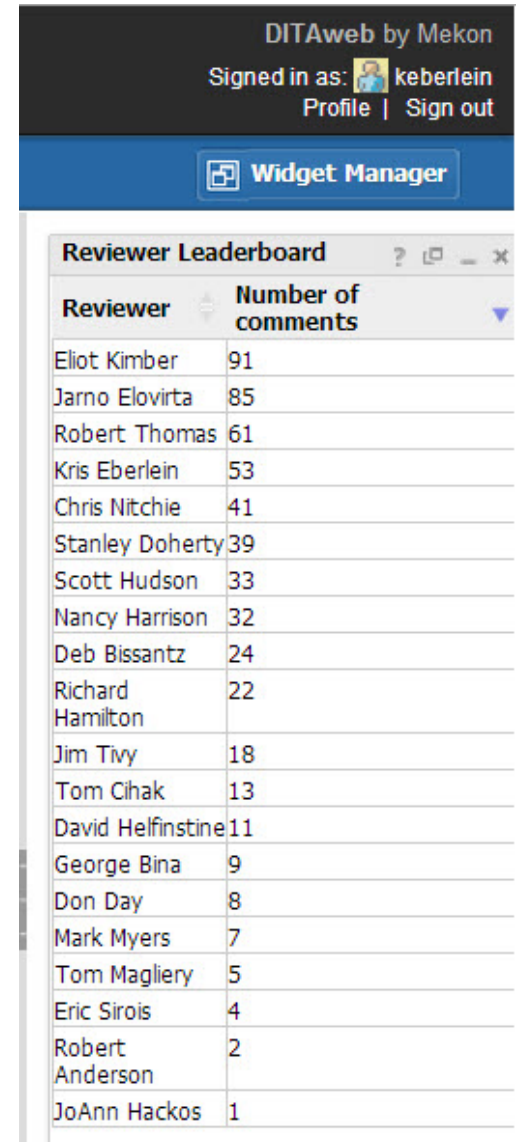



DITA 1.3: How Did We Do It?


- Spent six months after release of DITA 1.2 reflecting:
 - What worked and what didn't
 - Perceptions of DITA complexity
- Developed new processes
 - Three-stage process for approving what went into 1.3
 - Required spec content to be written BEFORE approval
 - Reduced the number of spec editors
 - New review process

DITA 1.3: Review Process Using DITAweb

- Made it easy for people to participate and for everyone to see ALL comments
- Very successful, for example, consider our 1st whole-spec review:
 - 543 comments (does not include comments on comments)
 - Participation by 19 people and 15/16 voting members (94%).
 - Review closed on time (2 week period)
 - We actually had to tell people to stop adding comments!



DITAweb by Mekon
Signed in as:  keberlein
[Profile](#) | [Sign out](#)

 **Widget Manager**

Reviewer Leaderboard ? [] - x

Reviewer	Number of comments
Eliot Kimber	91
Jarno Elovirta	85
Robert Thomas	61
Kris Eberlein	53
Chris Nitchie	41
Stanley Doherty	39
Scott Hudson	33
Nancy Harrison	32
Deb Bissantz	24
Richard Hamilton	22
Jim Tivy	18
Tom Cihak	13
David Helfinstine	11
George Bina	9
Don Day	8
Mark Myers	7
Tom Magliery	5
Eric Siros	4
Robert Anderson	2
JoAnn Hackos	1

Lightweight DITA



Lightweight DITA: Why?

- Full DITA is much more than many need, especially new markets such as:
 - Marketing
 - Medical information
- Need to be able to map to content in other forms:
 - HTML5
 - Markdown



Lightweight DITA: What?

- An architecture designed to ease implementation by vendors and adoption by users:
 - Easy out-of-the box authoring for common topic types
 - Out-of-the box mappings and specifications for authoring these topic types in other formats, such as HTML5 or markdown
 - Easier specialization

Lightweight DITA: Who is Driving This?



OASIS 
Advancing open standards for the information society

Other Languages
I want to

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Lightweight DITA SC

[Join This SC](#) [SC Members Page](#) [Send A Comment](#)

Developing a lightweight DITA architecture to ease implementation and adoption

Michael Priestley, mpriestl@ca.ibm.com, Chair

Statement of Purpose



Lightweight DITA vs full DITA

	Full DITA	Lightweight DITA
Topics	94 elements	~30 elements
Maps	10 elements (+30 shared with topic)	~3 elements (+1 shared with topic)

<p>What elements are allowed in a paragraph?</p>

```
dl parml fig syntaxdiagram imagemap image
lines lq note hazardstatement object ol pre
codeblock msgblock screen simpletable sl table
ul boolean cite keyword apiname option
parmname cmdname msgnum varname wintitle ph b
i sup sub tt u codeph synph filepath msgph
systemoutput userinput menucascade uicontrol q
term abbreviated-form tm xref state data data-
about foreign unknown draft-comment fn
indextermref indexterm required-cleanup
```

```
image
ph (phrase)
b (bold)
i (italic)
u (underline)
sup (superscript)
sub (subscript)
xref (link)
data
```

Slide courtesy of Michael Priestley

Lightweight DITA: When?



- Post-DITA 1.3
- The subcommittee is designing carefully and thoughtfully
- Has decided to have first iteration only have topic and map
- As Chair, I've encouraged them to make a first pre-release, test-the-waters version open **SOON**.

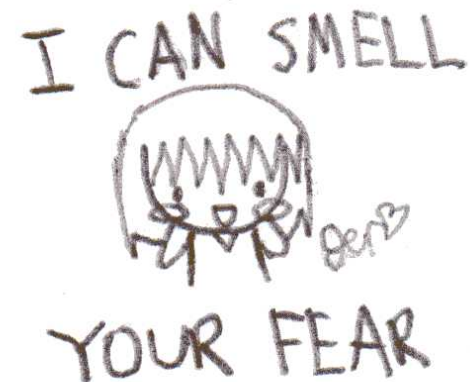
What's next: DITA 2.0



- Opportunity for architectural changes
- For the 1.x releases, The DITA TC's hands have been tied ...
- For DITA 2.0, we will have more freedom ...
- It won't be backwards compatible ...

What's next: DITA 2.0

- **What do you mean it won't be backwards compatible?!!**
- I'm scared that you'll break all my stuff ...
- As best as we can, the DITA TC will avoid being disruptive and provide migration strategies



What's next: DITA 2.0

- Examples of changes that are not backwards compatible:
 - Removing deprecated elements
 - Redesigning chunking
 - Specifying a processing order
 - Deprecate the less-frequently-used values for attributes

Resources: DITA 1.3

- [DITA 1.3 specification](#)

The URL links to the most recent official version of the specification. In October 2015, it links to the Candidate OASIS Standard, published 3 September 2015.

- [DITA 1.3: Why Three Editions?](#)

Working draft 02, 20 October 2015.

- [Overview of DITA 1.3](#)

PDFs of presentations given by Kristen James Eberlein (Eberlein Consulting LLC) at conferences in 2014

- [DITA 1.3 Webinar](#)

PDF and link to recording of a Webinar jointly sponsored by the DITA TC and DITA Adoption TC in August 2014.

Resources: White papers

- [Understanding Scoped Keys in DITA 1.3](#)
Authored by Leigh W. White (IXIASOFT); published September 2015.
- [About the DITA 1.3 release management domain](#)
Authored by Tom Cihak (Freescale) and Keith Schengli-Roberts (IXIASOFT); published June 2015.
- [Using DITA 1.3 Troubleshooting](#)
Authored by Bob Thomas (TagSmiths); published July 2014
- [Making the Most of the New Math Domains in DITA 1.3](#)
Authored by Autumn Cuellar (Design Science), published April 2015.

Resources: Lightweight DITA

- [OASIS DITA TC subcommittee](#)
Public page for the subcommittee. Includes publicly-accessible links to documents, e-mail, subcommittee minutes, etc.
- [LinkedIn group](#)
Forum for discussion of lightweight DITA.
- [“Does DITA Need XML?”](#) PDF of slide deck for a presentation by Michael Priestley (IBM) at tcworld conference, November 2014.
- [Overview of Lightweight DITA \(XDITA and HDITA\)](#)
Blog post by Michael Priestley, April 2015; updated May 2015.

Q/A

Eberlein
Consulting



IXIASOFT



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