



This showcase at the CIDM Best Practices Conference 2011 was presented by IBM Sterling Commerce's Bob Zebian, Advisory Software Engineer, Product Documentation.

Bob has been instrumental in managing the FrameMaker to DITA conversion project, operating the Migrate service and converting many thousands of pages of product content according to strict project deadlines.

The following provides detail of the conversion project to-date – covering the process, results achieved, lessons learned and conclusions – plus some of the Gotchas to look out for!

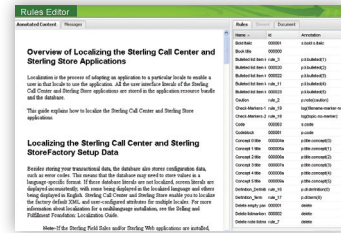
Introduction

New to IBM via an acquisition, the Sterling Commerce Information Development Team recently embarked on a project to convert their legacy unstructured FrameMaker files to the IBM DITA standard, undertaking the conversion of approximately 150,000 pages of content. In previous years, the team had grown exponentially through a series of acquisitions, and so faced the challenge of standardizing their documentation templates, deliverables for reuse and bundling of separate products.

They had grappled for a number of years with the conversion through a combination of manual processes and outsourcing, making slow progress. The acquisition by IBM required the Sterling Commerce Information Development Team to adopt a faster, more efficient conversion approach.

In 2011, IBM Sterling Commerce selected Stilo's Migrate – a cloud XML DITA conversion service.

Migrate enabled them to deliver high-quality content more rapidly, while reducing conversion costs and ensuring product release schedules were met. In just a few months, the team were able to convert many thousands of pages of content, at their own pace, and according to shifting business priorities.



The use of a sophisticated, but easy-to-use Rules Editor within the Migrate service enabled the team to become more ambitious with project deliverables. As their familiarity with the tool grew, so did

their understanding of its capabilities for generating complex conversion rules – and thereby reducing the need for any manual clean-up or post-processing tasks.

Using the Migrate DITA conversion service also threw up some unforeseen benefits – a key one being the accelerated rate of DITA adoption among team members – who, through the use of Migrate, were able to develop a deeper understanding of DITA concepts and methodologies.

Problem

To convert 150,000 pages of unstructured FrameMaker content to DITA

- ID team built from a series of acquisitions, globally dispersed
- Challenges with standardization of document templates
- Multiple product lines to consider
- Need to undertake conversion during a regularly scheduled release cycle and hit product release deadlines

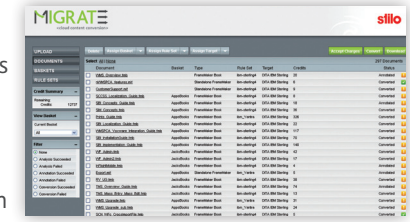
Proposition

The Stilo Migrate cloud content conversion service could be used by team members to:

- Reduce turnaround times
- Improve content quality
- Retain full control over the conversion process
- Reduce costs

Process

- Sample documents provided to Stilo, analyzed and jointly reviewed
- Migrate conversion pipelines tailored to meet detailed and complex IBM requirements
- 5 team members provided access to Migrate
- Users trained in a single one hour web session
- Users uploaded a range of documents, at their own pace
- Any issues were reported to Stilo and additional pipeline tailoring took place as required
- Users refined conversion results utilizing the Migrate Rules Editor



Results

20,000 pages successfully converted in a six week period, documents included...

- IBM Sterling Warehouse Management System Implementation Guide
- IBM Sterling Call Center Implementation Guide
- IBM Sterling Commerce Network Technical Overview
- IBM Sterling Connect: Direct for UNIX User Guide
- IBM Sterling Control Centre System Administration Guide
- Over 200 FrameMaker books converted

Quality of conversions were improved iteratively

- e.g. 638 page document was converted with zero errors
- Conversion rules addressed complex issues including:
 - automatically creating a hierarchical ditamap
 - automatically converting content in tables to definition lists or steps in a task
 - automatically tagging conditional text and producing appropriate ditaval file
 - automatically leveraging FrameMaker markers to generate correct topic types and file names