

LEADING PHARMACEUTICAL COMPANY CHOOSES QUARK FOR KNOWLEDGE AND PROCEDURE MANAGEMENT

QUARK XML AUTHOR IMPROVES THE CREATION, DISTRIBUTION
AND REUSE OF MEDICAL INFORMATION ACROSS 12 EUROPEAN
COUNTRIES AND 14 LANGUAGES

A leading pharmaceutical company, with headquarters in North America and operations across Europe, has produced and marketed many first-in-class prescription medications and serves the broad needs of the healthcare market – from patients and practitioners to clinics and hospitals.

Knowledge management is key to delivering timely and accurate medical information, which led the pharmaceutical leader to choose Quark XML Author for Microsoft Word integrated with EMC Documentum to improve information accuracy, speed the publishing process across various languages and reduce overall publishing costs by a third.

The company provides medical information about their products to healthcare professionals through a proprietary application maintained by its global IT services team. The application acts as an EMEA-wide document management system for medical information, customer responses and other medical content such as relevant literature and publications. The company's call center staff uses the system to access the medical information required to respond to questions about the company's products, research and services. In Europe alone, this means over 20,000 standard answers are re-purposed on a daily basis to create customized letters and responses in several languages.



For example, if a doctor contacts the call center with a question about the suitability of a drug to a certain type of patient, the customer support operators search for relevant information in the system and obtain a highly scientific medical answer. The response the call center delivers to the doctor consists of multiple components, one of which is the actual answer to the scientific question. The system automatically puts these components together based on the type of response and according to country, language and a number of other factors.

Through the system the responses are authored as XML documents to facilitate the dynamic assembly of letters and reuse of components.

The director of the IT team responsible for the system says, "The main challenge we have is leveraging our highly-qualified content to ensure answers that already exist in one language can be re-used. With medical and scientific information, it doesn't matter which region you represent – our responses to doctors and patients won't change by country. The key is leveraging the knowledge we already have stored in the system."



The Importance of Structured Content

At the heart of managing content for re-use lies the structure of the information. The IT director describes why structured – smart – content is so important for the company,

"WE COULDN'T AFFORD TO LOSE A SINGLE PIECE OF INFORMATION. WE REALIZED WE NEEDED A STRUCTURED AUTHORIZING SYSTEM TO BE ABLE TO IMPROVE PRODUCTIVITY, SO WE SWITCHED TO AN XML-BASED SYSTEM TO SUPPORT STRUCTURED CONTENT, COMPLIANCE WITH IN-HOUSE STANDARDS AND CONSISTENCY. NOW 100 PERCENT OF THE INFORMATION WE PRODUCE IS RE-USED."

The company chose to put Quark XML Author for Microsoft Word at the center of the document management system to create all the components of their responses, including: opening sentence, signature, address and the medical response. Quark Professional Services configured Quark XML Author so that it understands what components the company needs and makes sure that they are in the right format with the right XML structure.

Before introducing an XML-based system, the company was using Microsoft Word to create medical information. The IT director explains, "Word was great for our authors. They knew how to use it and there were no technicalities involved. However, it meant that our staff had to write every response from scratch every time. They would take an old standard response and correct it to fit the specific addressee. This involved a lot of time-consuming manual work that was slowing us down considerably. The beauty of smart content is that you only change one single XML component where needed and the rest gets updated automatically with a massive efficiency gain."

Quark XML Author: Pain-free Smart Content

In the first implementation of their XML-based system, the company initially deployed a complicated XML editor that was a significant hurdle for subject matter experts and difficult to maintain and upgrade. The IT director says, "If you are a technical person there's nothing better than an elaborate XML editor, but if you are a scientific person, if you've worked in a hospital for 15 years and then you join a company to author medical content, you don't want to deal with tagging content and raw XML. Our authors are scientists, not IT engineers. It's a different breed of people.

"The XML editor we used in the past was a tool our authors had to learn from scratch, on top of their normal workload. They had to get used to that context, and if they hadn't used it in a while, they would forget how to use it. Our scientific writers only used 2-3 percent of the functionality of the complex XML editor and we still had a lot of complaints, which ultimately would cost us time and money. We wanted to bring XML authoring back to a manageable level, drastically improving usability."

After a thorough evaluation process and multiple tests, the company decided Quark XML Author for Microsoft Word was the solution to their XML authoring pains. “We did a marketplace scan to check what solutions were out there and Quark XML Author got shortlisted and ended up top of the list. We picked Quark software because it has more business benefits. The main benefit for us is that with Quark XML Author information can be created in Microsoft Word, which means much less training, smaller learning curve and less hassle with the authoring system. Word is a tool that our subject matter experts are using in other contexts as well, that they are used to, that they know.”

During the evaluation process the company engaged with a core set of users to establish if Quark XML Author was the right choice. “We asked some key users, who used the old system on a daily basis for highly complicated content – not scientifically complicated, but that required formatting, tables, figures, etc. – and they loved it. That was proof that the concept works and we opted to deploy Quark XML Author to the whole user community,” says the IT director.

“QUARK XML AUTHOR FOR MICROSOFT WORD ALLOWS OUR KNOWLEDGE WORKERS TO CREATE CONTENT IN A HASSLE-FREE ENVIRONMENT. IF THEY HAVE LESS STRESS WITH THE SYSTEM THEY WILL WORK FASTER, THEY WILL LOG LESS SUPPORT CALLS AND THEY WILL BE HAPPIER.”

Quark XML Author for Word works in the background and modifies the normal operation of Word to let users create XML documents. “The fact that Quark XML Author can integrate with Microsoft Word means that our subject matter experts perceive their authoring job as easy. Before they were looking at the plain XML source code, which was a nightmare for them. Now all the XML complexities happen in the background and they can concentrate on the scientific content.”

Saving Time and Money

Quark XML Author lets writers focus on creating content rather than formatting, which has reduced an author's effort by one-third.

The IT director recalls, “With the old system we had high costs of ‘support.’ Our authors were asking questions

CHALLENGES

- Increase adoption of XML authoring among subject matter experts, including medical scientists
- Improve the accuracy and accessibility of thousands of responses used in customer communication
- Leverage highly-qualified content already stored in database for global reuse
- Maintain compliance with in-house consistency standards

SOLUTION

- Quark XML Author for Microsoft Word

RESULTS

- Subject matter experts are immediately comfortable authoring XML content in hassle-free Microsoft Word environment
- 100 percent of over 20,000 customer responses are accessible for reuse
- Significant decrease in time required to respond accurately to customers in 12 European countries and across 14 languages
- Overall publishing costs will decrease by a third by removing manual rework and reducing system complexity

about how to make a sentence bold or how to insert a table. These are the kind of ‘how to’ questions that we wanted to get rid of, because they slow down the publishing process and distract the knowledge worker, whose value is the ability to provide accurate scientific information and not to layout documents or tag XML.”

In the evaluation process, the company carefully measured their return on investment and concluded that Quark's solution was the most cost-effective way to tackle XML authoring. “We put Quark XML Author for Microsoft Word in the context of our cost model for our document management system. We are looking to save a lot of money by

introducing Quark XML Author, simply because the cost of support will vanish. Our goal is to reduce authoring costs by 30 percent.”

Regarding the company's experience with Quark, the IT director says, “Working with Quark Software Inc. has been a pleasure. Quark's Professional Services have a deep knowledge of configuring Quark XML Author as well as integrating it with content management systems. The team helped us understand the benefits of creating smart content for the management of information and procedures that are crucial to our business.”

ABOUT QUARK SOFTWARE INC.

Quark's software enables organisations of all sizes to meet customer demand for engaging, relevant communications when, where and how they want them. Our solutions combine the power of XML with flexible layout and design to automate the delivery of customer communications to print, Web, and interactive experiences on the latest digital devices. Financial services firms, manufacturers, and governments around the world rely on Quark solutions to elevate customer communications to new levels, reduce time to market, and lower costs.

To find out more about Quark Enterprise Solutions visit www.quark.com/enterprise or contact us at www.quark.com/contact

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