

Publishing to Mobile Devices.

A WebWorks.com White Paper.

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Overview

This white paper discusses the current shift in publishing from hardcopy, and web based delivery to the rapidly growing demand for content to be delivered on mobile devices. The paper will conclude with information on how WebWorks ePublisher can help you position yourself and your content for this new paradigm.

The Mobile Revolution is Here

Do you own a smart phone, or a tablet device? What about an eBook reader? Even if you don't use such a device today, there is a strong possibility that you will at some point in the not too distant future. In fact the trend towards accessing online information through mobile devices is so strong, a study by the technology analyst group, Gartner, estimates that in just three years time, 2013, more people will be accessing the web and digital information through such devices.

The growing popularity, and demand for, mobile access has been underscored by the phenomenally successful launch of Apple's iPad device, with 3 Million sold in the first 80 days of it going on sale. (In fact this white paper was written on an iPad.) The most popular applications for these new devices have been a variety of eBook readers and digital versions of popular magazines and newspapers; showing that the demand for quality content is still as strong as it has ever been, even if the delivery platform is changing. In fact it is clear that ePublishing is now the fastest growing sector of content delivery.

And it's not just a consumer lead revolution either, the advent of mobile devices is having a major impact on the way that companies consume information and share content. A survey at the time of writing showed that the iPad is already deployed in 50% of Fortune 100 Companies, and the iPhone deployed in 80% of Fortune 100, and 60% of Fortune 500 companies.

Industry usage surveys published by Bloomberg show that mobile devices such as the iPad already provide 90% of the functionality of a laptop and that the amount of productive work done on a mobile device over a given time frame can be up to three times greater than achieved with a traditional laptop computer.

The Forrester group estimates that by 2015 a quarter of all computers bought for business will be mobile tablet style devices.

Are you already to deliver your content to this next generation of devices?

Don't Focus on the Device

In the previous section we used the current success of the iPad as an illustration of the rapid emergence of this new market, and that is what it should be taken as - an example. If we had written this paper 12 months ago (and we did consider it), we may have been talking about the popularity of the Amazon Kindle dReader instead.

And that would have been a perfect example of focusing on the device and not the content. Content processed to be published on the Kindle, can only be read on that one device. A model that might work for Amazon where they want to lock the eBook reader into only being able to access content from their online store; but not one that will work in a business environment where you do not have direct control over the devices, or platforms that your customers use. For delivering technical content, you need to prepare it in a way that your customers can access the content they need, at the time they need it, in the format, and on the device, they choose.

The ePUB Format

To ensure that you can deliver your content to multiple mobile devices, then you need to be using the new ePub format. Over the last few years ePub has emerged as the new defacto standard for publishing eBooks. ePub allows you to publish content to the most popular eReaders (with the notable exception of the Kindle), and mobile devices such as the iPad.

What would you do today to convert your existing content to the ePub format? Until now there has only been two real alternatives.

1. Learn about ePub mark-up (a combination of XHTML, CSS and ePub specific metadata) and manually re-tag your content ?
2. Send your content to a third party conversion bureau, and do your own QA, testing, and post-production revisions?

You should also be aware that the ePub standard as it currently stands (July 2010) does not handle complex tables well. In the world of technical documentation that could be a vitally important component of your information design, how will you handle that? Do you know which tables to treat as graphics, and which to extract information from?

Like the market it serves, the ePUBlisher format is undergoing continual change, at the time of writing an updated version that will incorporate some multi-media elements is due to be released towards the end of 2010.

WebWorks ePublisher and ePub

Here at WebWorks, publishing to mobile devices is nothing new, we've been doing it for a long time. We were the first to market with support for the Palm Reader and the Microsoft Reader format for the first generation of smart phones and PDAs. We have kept ahead of the curve, and continually monitor the emergence of new standards like ePUB

With the release of WebWorks ePublisher 2010.2, the "Mobile Plus" edition in July 2010 , we provide in-product support for the ePUB format, giving you the capability to publish your existing content to the new mobile delivery platforms.

With the release of WebWorks ePublisher 2010.2 you can now automate, and keep control of, converting your content to the ePUB format. Apply WebWorks proven workflow techniques to the new format and be assured of consistent quality, and zero post production editing each and every time you publish.

Using WebWorks ePublisher applying a new output format, like ePUB, to your production projects takes less than 30 seconds, and your authors can keep on creating content in the tools they are used to. No need to change the way you create your content just because you have a new deliverable.

With WebWorks ePublisher we help you stay ahead of the curve, and put you in position to meet the needs of your customers and a changing marketplace.

About ePublisher

ePublisher enables cost-effective processes for efficiently writing, presenting, and deploying online and print publications. Through the use of its three components, organizations can leverage existing authoring tools and content management systems and meet organization-wide publishing needs without incurring expensive training or software deployment initiatives. Its open system architecture, based on industry-standard XSL, enables a large degree of flexibility, customizability, and migration investment protection.

ePublisher will save your group time and seamlessly fit into your writing workflow, giving your writers more time to do what they do best - write.

About WebWorks.com

WebWorks.com, a brand of Quadralay Corporation, is the leading provider of comprehensive online publishing and help system delivery solutions. Its products and services constitute the definitive single source for all your ePublishing needs. We specialize in content conversion software that outputs Web, online help, wiki, and electronic publication formats. Our ePublisher Platform can automate the conversion of source documents in popular authoring formats such as DITA-XML, FrameMaker or Word and convert them to multiple end-user formats such as wikis, mobile devices, WebWorks Help, HTML, CHM, and PDF. Our conversion system is based on XSL so that output formats can be customized or even developed from scratch..

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