

What the Heck is Accelerated Authoring™ and Who Cares?

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Setting the Goalposts

Reasonable folk might disagree on how to improve the productivity of workers who spend hours each day working with a word processor, but there should be general agreement on the following list of goals:

- *Spend less time formatting documents, and more time creating value.*
- *Produce documents that are more readable and more aesthetic.*
- *Enable easy reuse of content by:*
 - *Copying and pasting between documents and from documents to e-mail.*
 - *Reusing blocks of information between and within documents.*
- *Easier to update documents.*
- *Easier to find content in documents.*
- *Provide “just enough” information in documents.*

Reaching the Goalposts

Accelerated Authoring™ is a collection of tools and methods to enable attaining these goals. Content controls are part of the Accelerated Authoring collection and are the subject of the first post in the Accelerated Authoring series.

Who Needs Accelerated Authoring?

Any worker who spends a good part of their work week creating and updating documents needs Accelerated Authoring. Job titles for such knowledge workers include:

- *Consultants.*
- *Lead developers and scientists.*
- *Marketing staff.*
- *Pre-sales staff.*
- *Product managers.*
- *Technical writers.*

Isn't Accelerated Authoring Bad for Knowledge Workers?

Neo-Luddites can raise a number of objections to Accelerated Authoring:

- *Another technology that dehumanizes and alienates people! Why can't you just let people write?*
- *If it works, don't fix it! After all, I have a job that keeps me busy all day every day.*

- *If I write more content in less time, I'll have less work! One of my colleagues may get fired and my pay will fall.*

Historical Note:

The Luddite movement of English textile artisans protested – and often destroyed – new textile machines introduced by the Industrial Revolution. The Luddites battled the British Army before being quashed by the inexorable march of technology and by the power of the state (including imposition of the death penalty and deportation to penal colonies).

Freeing the Creative Energies of Knowledge Workers

Rather than suppressing creativity, Accelerated Authoring facilitates creativity. By freeing knowledge workers from the hours spent battling headaches in formatting, Accelerated Authoring enables focusing of creative energies on disseminating knowledge and creating winning documents,

If It Works, Don't Fix It! Or, Ostrich Behavior as a Business Program

Accelerated Authoring is meant for staff that already creates documents, in companies that produce real value for customers. Why not just continue doing tomorrow what was done yesterday?

Staying in place is not an option. Leading companies from IBM to Adobe, Autodesk to Nokia, have adopted tools and methods for structured authoring and improving how content is prepared. To survive in the marketplace, you and your company need to keep pace with the productivity gains that your competitors will make.

You can stick your head in the sand and hope for the best. Or, you can compete.

If I write more content in less time, I'll have less work!

A common fear is that increased productivity will mean less work, and less pay. After all, labor-saving thanks to Accelerated Authoring will reduce demand for skilled knowledge workers.

Economists refer to this concern as the "Luddite fallacy". The fallacy is in the assumption that employers will keep output constant with a smaller, more productive staff rather than increasing production with the current staff. Knowledge workers are often bottlenecks hindering organizational growth. By becoming more productive, each knowledge worker increases his or her net contribution to the organization. Rather than see opportunities decline, adopting Accelerated Authoring opens new opportunities for knowledge workers and increases their value to the organization.

Next In This Series

Content Controls and Making Beautiful Documents!

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