

XMetaL Author Enterprise Edition: Intro to XML, XMetaL and DITA

Who This course is for users coming from unstructured authoring tools who want to learn to author DITA content using XMetaL Author. This can include technical authors, engineers, administrative personnel and knowledge workers who need to prepare documents and manuals to a high standard, ready for reuse and publishing through a DITA system. You will benefit from comprehensive instruction that will enable you to become productive immediately with, or without, a content management system.

Why The course will equip users new to structured information with a general understanding of structure, a contextual grounding of how structure relates to, and is different from, their current way of working, and why new disciplines need to be applied to their content creation. They will learn how the DITA standard should be applied and the skills necessary to create and work with structured templates to produce valid documents. It introduces the concepts of specialisations and conditional publishing with guidelines on how and when to use them. It explains how to use relationship tables and maps to create more robust information and reuse it across multiple different output types, as well as output formats, complete with different types of cross-references (one-way, sequences, groups), DITA Conrefs, and the DITAVAl file. Actual case studies will be used as contextual references where possible.

Length 2-3 days depending on current skill level

Introduction to Structure

- XML vs. HTML
- XML vs. Proprietary Formats
- Semantic vs. Unsemantic
- Benefits of Controlling Business Rules

Introduction to DITA

- Beyond Traditional XML
- Topic Types
- Conref
- Bookmaps
- Relationship Tables and Related Items
- Information Architecture and Taxonomies
- DITA and Content Management Concepts

Specialisation

- When to Specialise
- Structural Specialisation
- Domain Specialisation

XMetaL DITA Edition

- XMetaL templates
- UI Components and their usage
- Options set-up

- Basic macros
- Short-cuts, Tips and Tricks

Topics and Maps

- Creating Topics
- Creating Maps
- Creating Conrefs
- Creating Relationship Tables
- Editing Elements and Attributes
- Finding and repairing structure errors
- Inserting Graphics
- Inserting Multimedia

Editing Text

- Adding and deleting text
- Selecting and changing text
- Using the Clear and Undo commands
- Cutting, Copying and Pasting text
- Adding special characters
- Context-sensitive menus
- Spell Checker
- Find/Change
- Thesaurus

Tables

- Table structures
- Table types
- Moving around in a table
- Selecting parts of a table
- Modifying the shape of a table
- Adding data to a table

Cross-references

- Creating and managing Cross-references
- Manual and automatic updating of Cross-references

DITA OpenToolkit

- What it is
- Publishing multi-format content
- Managing Conditions and builds
- DITAVAl files