Demystifying Information Modeling

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The Information Model

- A framework for organizing all the information people need
  - To understand and use products and services effectively and efficiently
  - To get their jobs done
  - To reach their goals
  - To communicate among other members of their community
The Information Model

The three components of the Information Model

- Content Units
- Information Types
- Metadata Dimensions
Metadata Dimensions

• The categories that you use to organize and label the content that you will manage in a content management system
Metadata Dimensions

Authoring dimensions
- Author/Owner Role
- Department
- Editor/Reviewer
- Schedule dates
- Source
- Workflow

User dimensions
- Goals
- Tasks
- Concepts
- Stages of use
- Learning style
- Roles
- Workflow
- Language
- Culture

Publishing dimensions
- Product
- Release
- Subject area
- Process area
- Customer(s)
- Information type
Metadata Dimensions

• Add values to the metadata dimensions

  • Product name
    • Model A
    • Through
    • Model Z
  
  • Language
    • English
    • German
    • Japanese
    • Urdu

  • Release
    x.01
    Through
    x.10

  • Author
    Tom
    Dick
    Harry
Information Types

- Information Types are the standard categories of content that you use to provide the structure and content guidelines needed to author individual topics
- An Information Type is generally supported by an authoring template
Information Types

• Typical Information Types
  • Policies
  • Concepts
  • Processes
  • Procedures
  • Reference types
Content Units

- The content units are the building blocks of your Information Types
- Content units, required and optional, guide the authors in writing topics that can be easily reused in a variety of contexts
How to get started

• First step
  • Analyze your users and identify their information needs
  • Analyze your information and identify the information types
  • Match users to information types
  • Add new and eliminate information types that no one needs
How to get started

• First step

The user needs command reference information. You provide command reference information.
Finding the Information Types

• Second step
  • Determine a minimal number of information types
  • Create a hierarchy of information types
  • Define how and when each information type will be written
Finding the Information Types

• Second step

Is this a new type of procedure?

- Procedures
  - Hardware
  - Software
Mapping the Information Types

• Third step – Down to the content units
  • Dive into the information types
  • Identify the content units in each information type
  • Map the content units across information types to identify opportunities for reuse
Mapping the Information Types

• Third step – Down to the content units

What information do our users need?

CAD Design Tutorial
Mapping the Information Types

• Third step – Down to the content units
  • CAD Design Tutorial
    • Lesson Title
    • Lesson purpose statement
    • Introductory phrase with hypertext links to modules
    • Optional tip
    • Module title
    • Module instructional steps
    • Module tip

Repeat as often as needed
Organizing the content units

- Fourth step
  - Chart each Information Type with all its content units
  - Determine where the content units appear to overlap
  - Make certain they have the same names everywhere they appear
Organizing the content units

**Tutorial Lesson**
- Tutorial title
- Purpose statement
- Warnings and Cautions
- Tutorial steps
- Feedback statements
- Options

**Procedure**
- Procedure title
- Purpose statement
- Pre-requisites
- Warnings and Cautions
- Action steps
- Feedback statements
- Options

Some of the content units may be the same
Developing the context

• Even though you create modular content, you need to provide context
• Develop a Content Plan to map your content to a variety of contexts, such as
  • a print publication
  • a help system
  • a Web site
Developing the context

• Use your Content Plan to develop the production templates for your output
• Use your Content Plan to provide a sequences of topics for virtual compound documents
• Use your Content Plan to develop the linking structures for help systems and Web sites
Developing the context

Source Files

- Help
- HTML
- PDF
- Print books
Project plan

• Develop a plan for the implementation of your content management solution
  • Assess the feasibility
  • Make a decision to proceed
  • Schedule activities
  • Develop your Information Model
  • Write a requirements document for technology
  • Select technology
  • Choose a pilot project
  • Deploy your project
  • Evaluate the results
# Project plan

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