



# MadCap Flare

## Pain Points & Goodies

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# Agenda

## Flare Pain Points

- Flare's lack of single sourcing
- Applying two styles
- Inability to work over a network
- Update all colors (LOL—what a nightmare)
- Use of units and conversion in between them
- File path length and file/folder naming best practices

## Additional – if time

- The lack of using two monitors effectively
- TOC (how it's different from Word/FM, maintenance)
- PDF quality
- Managing/updating multiple projects
- Opening and closing topics/snippets. Lack of interconnectivity while writing

# Pain points



# Pain points – Flare's lack of single sourcing?



- Inability to link to an element outside of a project
- There's a lot of copying going round
- Easily multitudes of the same file – all around
- Global Project Linking not selective enough
- External Resources – problems with time zones
- External Resources – not automatic updates

# Pain points – Applying two style classes



- Flare's XML Editor only allows you to select one style class
- Popular CSS/JS frameworks use two or more classes  
Bootstrap: col-xs-9 col-md-7  
Foundation: small-2 large-4 columns
- Popular icon fonts such as Font Awesome use two or more classes

# Pain points – Inability to work over a network



- Sloooooooooow – but possible
- Typical Windows check for issue over a network
- Strange – thinking of the cloud
- Makes sharing content slightly more arduous

# Pain points – Update all colors



- Colors are set in stylesheets and skins
- Must be set (and changed) for each element separately



# Pain points – Use of units and conversion



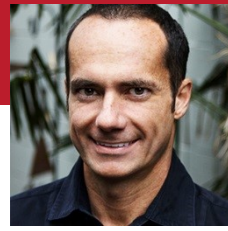
- Flare is designed for – the web
- Flare breathes and thinks pixels
- Changing in between units does not convert
- Inaccuracy of e.g. point sizes
- Only American picas (not EU Didots)
- 1,2 mm is not possible (thinks pixel)

# Pain points – File path length



- Windows maximum path length is 260 characters
- C:\Users\Scott\Documents\My Project\Example\Output uses 50 characters, without any project folders or a filename....
- Depending on source control – some do have the same issues + problems with Unicode characters

# Q & A



# Extras



- TOC (how it's different from Word/FM, maintenance)
- Managing/updating multiple projects



- PDF quality
- Opening and closing topics/snippets. Lack of interconnectivity while writing
- The lack of using two monitors effectively

# Goodies





# Agenda

## Flare Goodies

- Tables (convert to table, convert to text, drag-drop, table styles, pasting into Flare, Excel import etc)
- The TOC (to give a different perspective to the downsides)
- Note formatting (flexibility and links to samples they can copy-paste to reuse)
- The target file (all of it - more or less)
- Flare reports and Analyzer
- The XML editor

## Additional – if time

- Shared dictionaries
- MadCap Central and Flare integration
- Macros and keyboard shortcuts
- MadCap's support

# Goodies – Tables



- Table styles can be applied to a table, tables in selected topics/folders, or all tables
- Removing inline table formatting
- Specifying different formatting for online and print
- Add/delete/move rows and columns
- Adhere to the media sections in the CSS

# Goodies – The TOC



- Extreme flexibility in usage and content
- Conditions on TOC entries
- Control over use of Pagelayouts
- Control over outputs

# Goodies – Note formatting



- Auto-add and format text, like “Note.”
- Auto-add images, such as a “note” icon.
- Borders, background colors, rounded corners, etc.
- Free webinar:  
<https://www.madcapsoftware.com/webinars/advanced-css-best-practices-formatting-madcap-flare/>

# Goodies – The target file



- This is like – everything is good
- Flexibility on variables
- Control of base elements (PageLayout, media sections etc)
- Build targets simultaneously – command line
- Publish outputs to “locations”
- Can be controlled and create from the outside



# Goodies – Flare reports and Analyzer



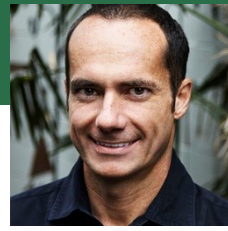
- Reports can be used for project management and troubleshooting
- Flare provides seven Analyzer reports
- Flare also provides over 100(!) “data only” reports
- Analyzer contains ~40 reports

# Goodies – The XML editor



- XML is normally mumbo jumbo
- Split view of code vs looks
- Structure blocks
- Preview

# Q & A



# Extras



- Shared dictionaries  
Managing/updating multiple projects
- Macros and keyboard shortcuts



- MadCap Central and Flare integration
- MadCap's support