What Is DITA?

Getting Started Guide
What is DITA?

The Darwin Information Typing Architecture (DITA) is an open standard for creating and assembling structured, topic-based content that you can quickly and easily distribute across multiple platforms.

Information Typing

DITA uses information typing to categorize content into three main types: concept, task, and reference. These three information types contain more specific pieces of information, such as product descriptions, step-by-step instructions, and safety warnings. In DITA, all content is componentized using information types. Categorizing information this way helps organize and manage your content.

Content Architecture

Once you have content in the topic types, you can assemble and reuse those topics in DITA maps for use in multiple documents. DITA maps link topics without any need to copy and paste content across documents. Think of DITA maps like a table of contents, and how you arrange topics in those maps creates the structure of the document you’re building.
Benefits of DITA

Unstructured content often exists in disconnected silos. We've all experienced information buried in Word docs, slides, PDFs, or emails across a range of locations and on the computers of team members within an organization. Moving your information to a structured content source, like a DITA Component Content Management System (CCMS), offers substantial benefits from both a business and a technical perspective.

Business management benefits

**Publishing:** DITA content can be published in many different formats, reducing costs for publication and distribution.

**Content creation:** DITA's topic-based authoring makes it easy to reuse existing content and improve consistency, cutting down document production time and cost.

**Updating and version control:** DITA enables authors to make a change once and have it automatically update in all relevant documents, and a DITA CCMS provides mechanisms for managing different versions of your content.

**Translation:** DITA helps reduce localization cost by enabling you to send only updated content for translation.

Technical benefits

**Reuse:** DITA eliminates the time consuming and error-prone task of copying and pasting content by providing a methodological approach for effectively repurposing content.

**Formatting:** DITA enables authors to focus on content creation because all formatting is applied during the publishing process.

**Collaboration:** DITA, in conjunction with a CCMS, enables you to make edits, comments, and reviews in a single source, making it easier to manage the collaboration process.

**Scalability:** DITA is flexible enough for use in organizations from large corporations to small start-ups and anything in between.

easyDITA

easyDITA is an end-to-end DITA CCMS that transforms content into flexible, actionable, and manageable data that you can leverage across your organization, including your documentation, customer support, marketing, HR, regulatory compliance teams, and much more.
Learn More About DITA

If you want to advance your content management capabilities and learn more about DITA, here are some resources to further your knowledge.

Resources

**LearningDITA.com** offers free courses, webinars, and certifications for learning DITA. [learningdita.com/](http://learningdita.com/)

**DITA Primer** provides an in-depth definition, history and use cases, covering topic types, maps, and content reuse. [easydita.com/resources/dita-primer/](http://easydita.com/resources/dita-primer/)

**How to select DITA CMS technology** is a great guide to help you determine what you need to look for in a CCMS. [easydita.com/how-to-select-dita-cms-technology/](http://easydita.com/how-to-select-dita-cms-technology/)

**How** to Reuse Structured Content With DITA explains the most common reuse types in DITA like content references, topic reuse, variable phrases, conditional processing, and more. [easydita.com/how-can-i-reuse-content/](http://easydita.com/how-can-i-reuse-content/)

Is DITA right for you? Check all that apply

Here’s a short quiz to help you decide if moving to DITA is right for you and your team. Check off each item that applies and tally your score.

- Do you translate your content?
- Do you publish for different types of audiences?
- Do you have a lot of similar product documentation?
- Do you need to publish to multiple formats?
- Do you use multiple software systems to produce documents?
- Do you have more than 5,000 pages of documentation?
- Do you require an audit trail for documentation?
- Do you frequently copy and paste content?
- Do you have trouble maintaining consistency across documents?
- Do you have difficulty keeping documents up to date?
- Do you have problems keeping documents in a shared location?

If you have one or more items checked, you should consider using DITA. If you have most or all items checked, you have a strong DITA use case.