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Content Rules,
Global Content Strategy

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Hello Content Rules,

Thank you for giving our team the opportunity to work on the proof-of-concept project for Tech Company's Zen 4 sever manual for hardware and software installation. We used MadCap Flare to demonstrate how a single-source solution will allow Tech Company to do the following:

- update content once across all related products and publications
- make content searchable online
- produce print for those customers who want it
- create consistency across the different content creators/approvers who own various parts of the related products
- personalize hardware and software print content for different customers and product versions when possible

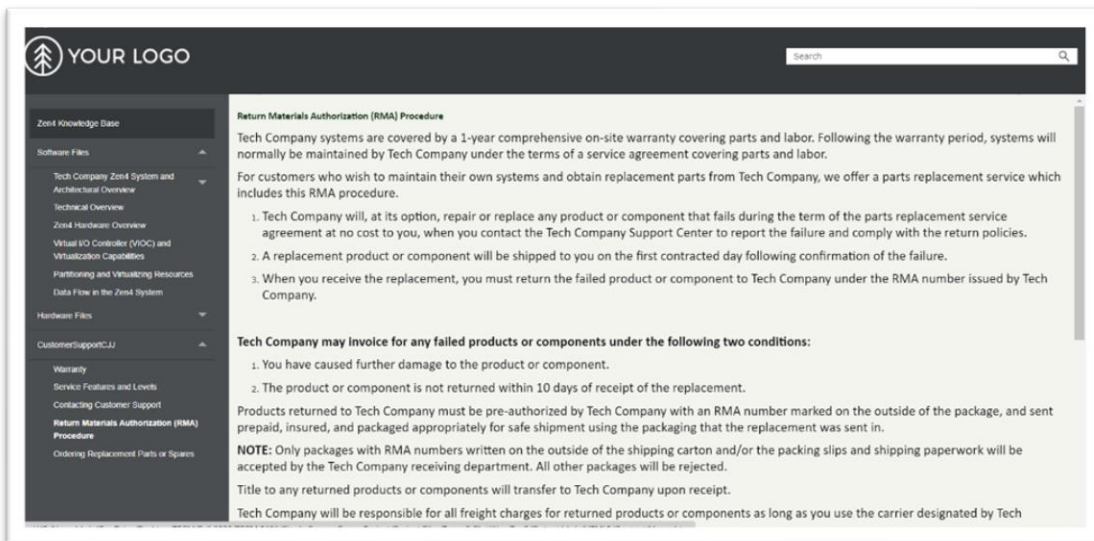Please refer to the screenshot below to see an example of HTML output build:

Figure 1: Example of Output Build for HTML Knowledgebase

To achieve the above, please read below how the content was single sourced by our team.

Our Team's Approach to Single-Sourcing

Our team decided to focus on the following content to create the proof-of-concept:

- Chapter 1 of both the hardware and software guides.
- Appendix A from the software guide
- Appendix A, B, and C from the hardware guide.

The files were identified based on their topic types using Heretto's Information Model and created using DITA-inspired topic templates for:

1. Concept
2. Task
3. Reference

Once all the Chapter 1 files and appendices from both the guides were categorized, we inserted metadata and keywords in the topic files to create a searchable knowledgebase website.

We also designed the three target publications—HTML website and two print PDFs—using HTML and CSS. The three target publications that were designed were:

- A print Zen4 installation guide as a PDF
- A print Zen4 configuration guide as a PDF
- A Zen4 knowledgebase website as HTML 5

Proof of Concept

Metadata and Keywords Create a Searchable Knowledgebase and Improve Efficiency

We introduced keywords and metadata into each topic file to benefit both internal and external audiences.

Keywords: Keywords help external audiences like end users locate content more effectively. When users can easily locate help content, the number of support tickets that users submit decreases, saving time and money for Tech Company.

The topics we worked with are each labeled with multiple keywords. By employing keywords, users will be able to find the exact content they are looking for much sooner. We chose some of the keywords based on how frequently they appeared in the topic or throughout the manual.

For example, the Zen 4 System and Architectural Overview topic file has the following keywords:

- Zen4
- AMD Opteron
- Q-Series system modules
- Fibre Channel Modules
- Resource modules
- Low-latency access
- Ethernet Network Modules
- Application Service Modules

Metadata: Metadata, such as short descriptions and author tags, will improve Tech Company's internal efficiency when creating new topics or editing old ones.

Labeling topic ownership saves time during the content creation process, and short descriptions help authors contextualize information. For example, new authors who edit a topic can identify the original author to clarify details.

Figure 2 illustrates an example of author tags and short descriptions for a topic.
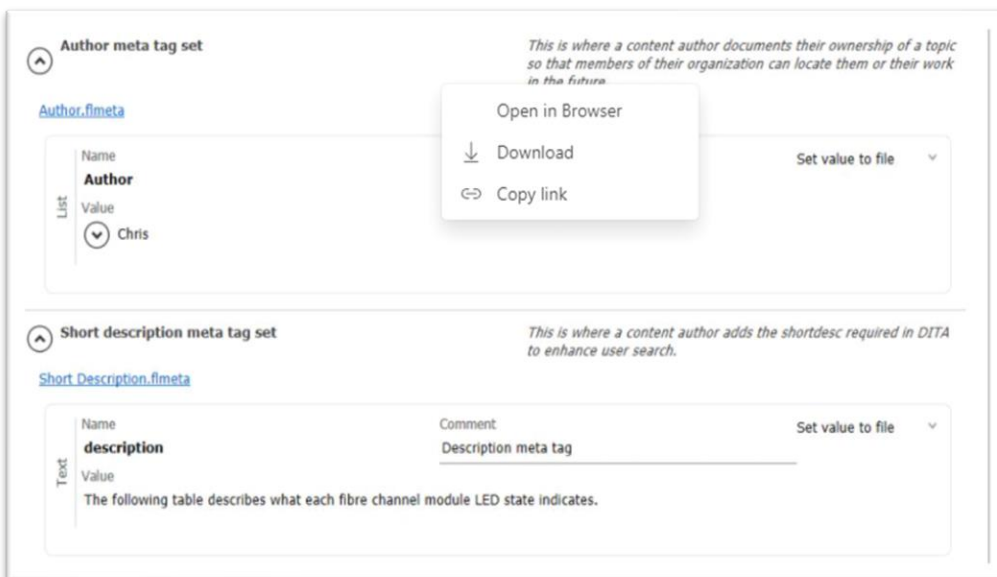

Figure 2: Example of author tags and short description

Created New Topics from Larger Topic Files for Content Management and Single Sourcing

To conform to the brief of a single-source project, we broke larger topic files into smaller topics. This makes it easier to customize output builds for different targets by adding or deleting standalone topics. To do this, we processed the content and arranged information in a way that makes sense to users.
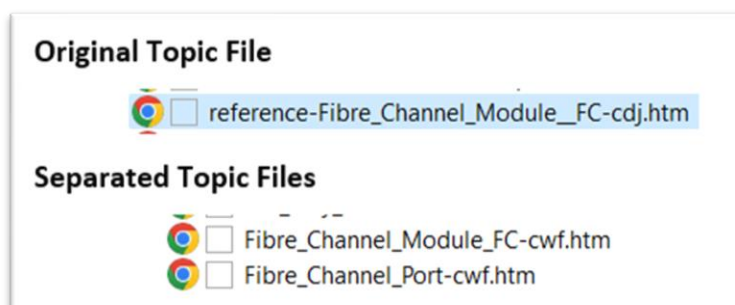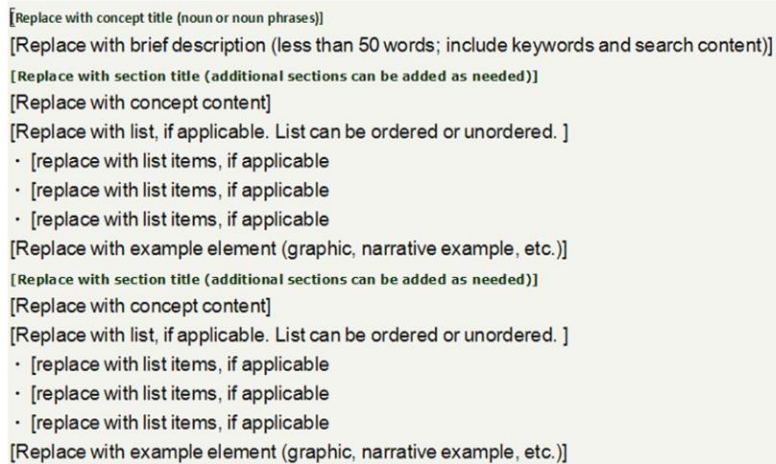

Figure 3 shows how Fibre-Channel-Module-FC file was separated into two topic files: Fibre-Channel-Module-FC and Fibre-Channel-Port.

We also modified duplicate files to avoid repeating or overlapping information. For example, we modified the Technical-Overview file from the Software guide, which included the same content as the hardware guide. We used this revised content for the new output builds.

After this change, the single-source project has only one Technical-Overview topic file that can be used for both the guides and the HTML website.

Topic Templates Standardized to Save Time when Authoring New Topics

To promote continuity and uniformity across all topics, we created three templates for Task, Concept, and Reference topics. These templates were developed in accordance with elements used in DITA standards and Heretto's Information Model.


```
[Replace with concept title (noun or noun phrases)]
[Replace with brief description (less than 50 words; include keywords and search content)]
[Replace with section title (additional sections can be added as needed)]
[Replace with concept content]
[Replace with list, if applicable. List can be ordered or unordered. ]
· [replace with list items, if applicable
· [replace with list items, if applicable
· [replace with list items, if applicable
[Replace with example element (graphic, narrative example, etc.)]
[Replace with section title (additional sections can be added as needed)]
[Replace with concept content]
[Replace with list, if applicable. List can be ordered or unordered. ]
· [replace with list items, if applicable
· [replace with list items, if applicable
· [replace with list items, if applicable
[Replace with example element (graphic, narrative example, etc.)]
```

Figure 4: Concept template as it appears in Madcap Flare

The use of these templates will have multiple benefits. When all topics are written using a similar structure and voice, users are more likely to find the content approachable and useful.

Additionally, using these templates will save authoring teams valuable time and money. Instead of manually formatting new topics, authors can write directly into a template.
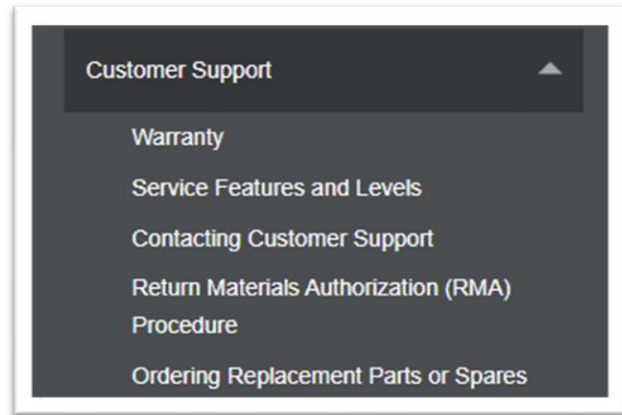
Figure 4 demonstrates Concept template with replaceable and pre-formatted text to aid authors when creating new topics. The other two templates are formatted similarly.

Created a Customer Support Section Topic Instead of Clumping it in Appendix

Finally, we created a Customer Support Section category from Appendix A topics in the software guide to better aid Tech Company's customers. This will streamline the guides and help customers find the help they need quickly, without having to navigate the appendices in the two guides.

All the topics in Appendix A are extremely useful. In both the guides they were buried under Appendix A or Appendix B. We separated the customer help topics like Warranty, Customer Support Number, Service Labels so that users can more easily locate this information.

Figure 5 demonstrates the structure of the newly developed Customer Support section on the knowledgebase.

Figure 5: Appendix A topics developed into Customer Support drop-down

We hope the above changes and modifications we have made give you an idea of the work our team can do on a single-source project of this magnitude. Thank you so much for the opportunity to collaborate on this project for Tech Company. We hope this proof of concept meets your expectations and will be a step towards future collaboration.

Sincerely,
[Team Member 1, Team Member 2 and Team Member 3]