

Astoria Software and Technical Information Standards



Enabling Technical Information Publishers with Support for Leading Standards

Astoria Software originated in the 1990's as the defacto content management solution used by military and military suppliers, as well as other early-adopter industries, all requiring a solution that supported the managing and publishing of structured technical information. Today, Astoria solutions have evolved to support the latest emerging and established information specifications adopted by the information standards organizations for many industries, including the ASD S1000D standard and the DITA XML standard.

Astoria Software and the DITA XML Standard

Astoria's XML content management solutions support the Darwin Information Typing Architecture (DITA) standard; DITA promotes content reuse and sharing and exchangability, as well as process automation. Astoria offers element level control and reuse, maximizing the benefits organizations can achieve by implementing the DITA standard

DITA is an architecture for creating topic-oriented, information-typed content that can be reused and single-sourced in a variety of ways. The DITA standard is a tested model with a broad community of support and adoption which mitigates the risk that companies will not be able to support their document structures and DTD's over time. Additional information on the DITA standard is available through the OASIS website. www.oasis-open.org/committees/dita/

DITA is also an architecture for creating new information types and describing new information domains based on existing types and domains. This allows groups to create very specific, targeted document type definitions using a process called specialization, while still sharing common output transforms and design rules developed for more general types and domains. Organizations who create product documentation, including web help files, user guides, and training materials use DITA to facilitate content reuse and repurposing, speeding time to market and reducing content development and delivery costs.

Using DITA's topic-based, modular approach to creating information, organizations benefit in the following ways:

- Easy content interoperability across applications
- Reduced risk in managing evolving data structures
- Significant improvement in productivity through content reuse, particularly when repurposing content across web, help file, and printed materials.

Astoria support for DITA includes:


- All the document types specified by DITA, including Topic, Task, Reference, Concept, and Ditable;
- DITA's table models (simpletable, choicetable) and also support for custom or semantic tables;
- DITA's reuse model where content can be referenced and reused from any other file along with full referential integrity.

Similar to the S1000D standard, DITA offers another proof point that XML standards are gaining mainstream momentum across the dynamic publishing market. These standards deliver organizations significant productivity gains and costs savings by enabling content reuse and repurposing. Without this reuse, authoring and publishing would remain static and silo-based, perpetuating inefficiencies as content is needlessly recreated and manually reworked across an organization.

Unlike competitive applications, Astoria offers element level control and reuse, maximizing the benefits organizations can achieve by implementing the DITA standard. Astoria supports this standard, and most other XML standards, without any additional customization.

For more information, please call (1) 650-357-7477 and ask to speak with a sales representative, or email sales@astoriasoftware.com.

Enterprises require a 'single source' for managing DITA-based content



Astoria's XML content management solutions optimize 'single-sourcing' and content reuse

Astoria and ASD S1000D Standard

Increasingly, product designers and engineers have “componentized” nearly every product into smaller and smaller modules in an effort to improve product quality, reduce production costs, and enable customer-specific configuration of finished goods. While manufacturing has moved to produce customized products, the world of technical documentation has generally remained attached to a top-down, siloed approach. The ASD S1000D standard is changing all that, enabling organizations to reduce documentation costs, improve information accuracy, and decrease time to market.

Astoria Software’s XML content management solutions are ideally architected to implement the S1000D standard, as Astoria offers element level control of content out of the box. Building on this elemental control, Astoria enables content reuse and repurposing that lie as the core of the S1000D standard, and the Astoria solutions enhance the entire authoring, management, and publishing cycles of S1000D documents.

S1000D - What is it?

The S1000D standard, which produces information (data modules), specifies a Common Source Data Base (CSDB) for capturing and storing information. The standard has been developed by the European Association of Aerospace Industries (AECMA), now ASD, to establish standards primarily for the documentation of military equipment. It is based on international standards such as SGML/XML and CGM for production and use of electronic documentation. Military and consumer commercial aerospace manufacturers in Europe have implemented this standard already, and many organizations in the United States and Asia are evaluating options to support implementation. For more information on the S1000D standard, visit www.s1000d.org.

According to the standard, content is stored in the CSDB in small elements, called data modules and are structured in ways that make it deliverable in a wide variety of electronic formats, as well as via the print medium. Storing discrete elements of information in the database promotes reuse of the information in as many different technical documents as possible, as once an element is authored it becomes available across an organization for reuse. Projects could contain thousands of elements, any of which can be reused for subsequent projects. Through this reuse, organizations benefit from the standard by reducing the cost of document creation and publication while increasing the accuracy of content, all in a shorter time frame than the traditional approach.

Astoria Solutions & S1000D

Astoria Software’s XML content management solutions promote reuse based on this same model of element level control of content. Using Astoria, authors are able to attach metadata to content elements which can identify version, approval status, edit/change access controls, or revision history at individual data element level. In fact, Astoria’s architecture is unparalleled among leading content management systems in the ability to create, revise and publish element-level content such as S1000D documents. Unlike S1000D specific software packages, Astoria customers can support all of their XML or structured content initiatives from one solution.

Because S1000D promotes reuse, Astoria solutions naturally result in reduced costs. Writers have traditionally applied the concept of reuse at a document level, if at all. Implementing element level control to meet the S1000D standard, Astoria offers a greater cost savings over the document chunking approach because the thrust is on individual components which can be reused at any level of granularity. During the content lifecycle, authors can edit the source component, and those updates are instantly propagated across the various product documents where the content element has been reused. Likewise, translation costs can be kept to a minimum because only the content which has been changed will be translated. Also, using a single source to produce various types of online and print deliverables also saves the considerable time and effort many organizations spend repurposing content.

Finally, Astoria Software’s XML content management solutions speed time to market for S1000D deliverables. With access to any existing data modules, authors are able to assemble product documentation in a fraction of the time. For the first time, the documentation lifecycle can meet or beat the product development lifecycle with an S1000D implementation of Astoria Software. Only Astoria offers element level control to deliver maximum content reuse, improved accuracy, increased productivity and ease of use that the S1000D standard makes available.

For more information on Astoria’s S1000D solution, please submit a request at sales@astoriasoftware.com or contact the Astoria sales department at (1) 650-357-7477.

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Astoria solutions enhance the entire authoring, management, and publishing cycles of S1000D documents.

About Astoria

Astoria Software, Inc., is the leading provider of XML content management solutions for the dynamic publishing of business critical information and documents. As the only software system that enables component-based management and reuse of structured content at the smallest element level, Astoria helps streamline a customer’s author-to-publish process for improved productivity and enhanced content quality while reducing the time and cost to publish. Content is authored, securely shared, reused, reviewed, updated and published quickly, reliably, with repurposing simplified for any delivery format – print or electronic. The company’s customers are progressive organizations who publish complex business critical information and documents that change constantly, they include: Cisco Systems, Texas Instruments, General Electrical Medical, Siemens Medical Solutions, Lockheed Martin, US Army, US Navy, Cessna Aircraft and others. Astoria is based in San Mateo, Calif. (www.astoriasoftware.com)



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