Q: We're using another XML editor, do we have to use FrameMaker for authoring?

No, that's one of the great things about DITA. You are free to mix and match editors and publishing tools as needed. You can publish using FMx-Auto and use any DITA-compliant editor for authoring.

Q: But, our CMS doesn't support FrameMaker.

Not a problem. To use FMx-Auto for publishing you don't need a "bridge" or any special connector. First, your CMS just needs to be able to define a publishing task that can write the DITA files to the file system (either on the client or server). Then it needs to be able to run an executable (the batch file that runs the AutoFM script). It's very likely that your current CMS can do those things.

If you're not satisfied with the overall PDF quality from your current DITA workflow, or if you'd like it to be easier to make changes to your layout, FMx-Auto is an excellent option.

If you're just starting to look into DITA to PDF publishing options, carefully look at all of the costs involved, not just the initial expenses. While tempting to go with the "free," Open Source option, it will likely cost more in the long run, and may not provide the level of quality you want and need.

FMx-Auto is easier to use, creates superior output, and is more affordable, why use anything else?

FMx-Auto is built on these solid and reliable tools:

- Leximation DITA-FMx performs all of the document and book setup tasks
- Leximation AutoFM provides scriptable, command line control over the entire build process
- Adobe Acrobat Distiller generates the PDF document
- Adobe FrameMaker functions as the layout and formatting engine

Available in three license types:

Desktop-250 - For installation on a client desktop (or laptop) computer running FrameMaker 7.2, 8, 9, or 10. Output is limited to 250 pages.

Desktop-Unlimited - For installation on a client desktop (or laptop) computer running FrameMaker 7.2, 8, 9, or 10.

Server - For installation on a system running FrameMaker 10 Server.

FrameMaker, Acrobat Distiller, and DITA-FMx are sold separately. AutoFM is included with a purchase of FMx-Auto.

For more information and to download a 30-day trial, visit our website:

http://www.leximation.com/fmx-auto

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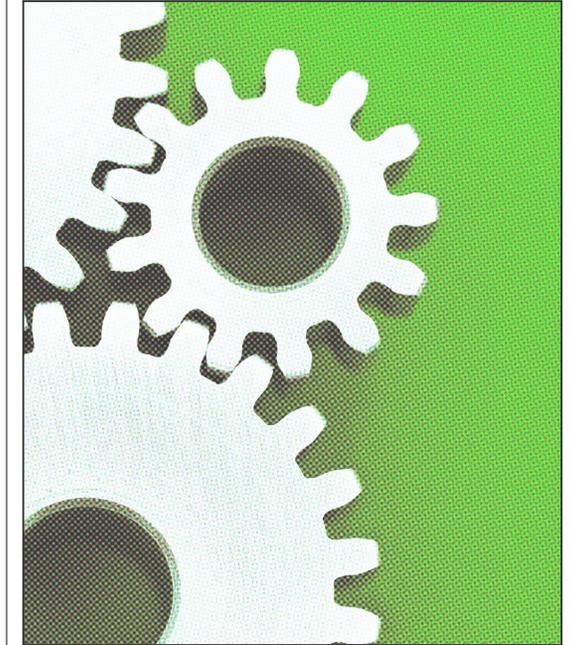
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FMx-Auto

Create professional quality PDF documents from DITA

Frustrated by poor PDF quality from your current DITA workflow?

Tired of paying outside support for development and maintenance of your XSL-FO stylesheets?

Looking for an easier option for managing customizations of your PDF output?

LEXIMATION™

Tools and Solutions for Print and Online Publishing

FMx-Auto

Ease of customization. It's very likely that people in your technical publishing department have experience with setting up FrameMaker templates; much more likely than finding an XSL-FO developer within your company. Anyone familiar with FrameMaker template development will be able to learn how to maintain and customize a DITA structured application. All of the layout and formatting of a PDF generated from DITA through FrameMaker is controlled by the structured application. This can be easily modified and updated as needed, often by just making minor adjustments to the templates.

Superior quality PDF output. Have you been told that you have to sacrifice the look of your PDFs in order to gain the benefits of XML and structured authoring? That's just not true. FMx-Auto builds upon the exceptional layout and rendering engine in FrameMaker producing superior results. This allows you to achieve professional quality PDFs while maintaining all of the benefits of XML authoring.

Less expensive. In the long run, FMx-Auto is a cost-effective option. Yes, an XSL-FO based workflow is "free," but incurs significant expenses to implement. First, XSL-FO will likely require the purchase of a proprietary rendering engine, which may match the cost of FrameMaker or FrameMaker Server. Next is the cost of development and maintenance. Unless you have experienced FO developers on staff, you'll need to hire outside help, which will cost a significant amount of time and money. If you produce output in multiple languages, that will require further effort. Finally the inevitable layout modifications will incur additional expenses. FMx-Auto is more cost-effective by bringing more of the development in-house.

Selected features of FMx-Auto:

- Easy integration with most CMS and automation workflows
- Creates a FrameMaker book and components from your DITA map and topic files
- Adds TOC, Index, and other generated lists to the book based on DITA "booklists" elements
- Allows application of different templates for each "chapter" or book component
- Provides extensive control over pagination and numbering
- Includes related links from relationship tables
- Allows the combination of content from DITA, FrameMaker, and Word
- Applies map metadata to the generated FrameMaker book and components
- Optionally moves figure titles below figures
- Breaks tables that span multiple pages

How does it work?

FMx-Auto is a suite of flexible and customizable tools that work together. At the core is DITA-FMx, a FrameMaker plugin which provides extended DITA authoring and publishing features beyond those offered by the default DITA support in FrameMaker. FMx-Auto is an addon for DITA-FMx that unlocks an API. Through this API, the publishing features are available to automation by an FDK client plugin, ExtendScript, or FrameScript. Provided with FMx-Auto is AutoFM, a FrameMaker plugin which performs the automation tasks.

Script-based build control

AutoFM provides a simple XML-based scripting model which controls the processing of files within FrameMaker. When used with FMx-Auto, it opens the specified DITA map, runs the DITA-FMx "Map to Book" command on that map, prints or saves the resulting book and components to PDF, then exits FrameMaker. Any application or scripting language which can run an executable file can drive this process. You can run this build process interactively on a client system, or it can be initiated by your CMS publishing task.

Professional publishing features

The publishing features in DITA-FMx build on those already available to FrameMaker documents and books. When creating a book from a DITA map, any front matter or back matter "booklists" elements in a bookmap are created as FrameMaker generated lists (like a TOC or Index). Pagination and numbering properties defined before the build are applied to all of the book component files. Each component can have a different template applied as needed.

File format flexibility

You can set up the build process to include binary FrameMaker files for use as a title page or other content not available as DITA files. The AutoFM build process can also import Word documents and convert them to FrameMaker files, if it's necessary to create output that is a combination of DITA, FrameMaker, and Word.

Metadata support and customization

Metadata in the DITA map can import into the book and component files. These variables can be used in the binary FrameMaker files, or as part of the header/footer content in the DITA-sourced documents. Custom pagination and processing can perform any necessary cleanup or publishing tasks. Many additional options are available to the DITA-FMx book-build process for enhancing the output.