

EPUB Help – Coming soon to a desktop near you?



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Introduction

— [Scott Prentice, President of Leximation, Inc.

— [Specializing in FrameMaker plugin development as well as structured FrameMaker conversions, consulting, and development. FrameMaker user/developer since 1991.

— [Developed DITA-FMx, a FrameMaker plugin for efficient DITA authoring and publishing.

— [Consulting for custom Help systems, creative/functional web applications, and EPUB solutions.

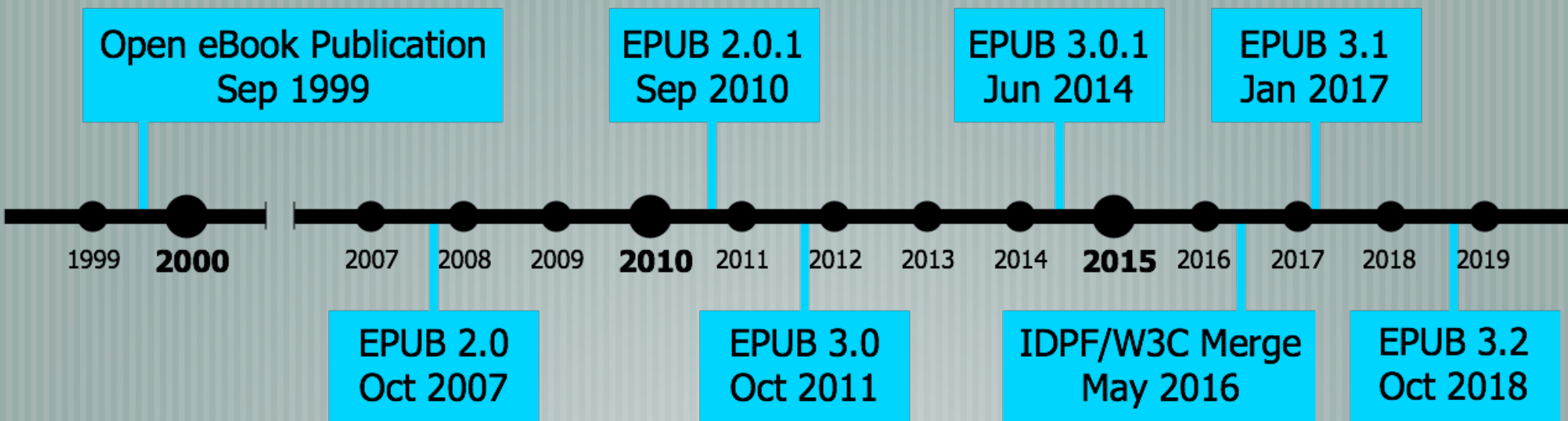
What is EPUB Help?

- [Cross-platform replacement for HTML Help (CHM)!
- [Locally installed, vertically-scrolling, topic-oriented
- [TOC, index, search, bookmarks, next, previous, back, etc.
- [Audio, video, MathML, SVG, and more!
- [Context-sensitive (a stretch, but crucial, yes?)

What is EPUB?

- [EPUB: ebook file format for every device and platform
- [Requires a “reader” application or dedicated device
- [A collection of XHTML, XML, CSS, and media files wrapped in a “zip” archive
- [Defines the content, navigation, and formatting of ebook
- [“EPUB” is a registered trademark of the W3C (was IDPF)

[almost] 20 years of EPUB!



EPUB 3 makes it possible!

- [Adds new pagination/scrolling features.
- [Based on (X)HTML 5 and CSS 3.
- [Supports responsive design via media queries.
- [Provides robust JavaScript support, off-the-shelf libraries and custom coding.
- [Full Unicode support, including vertical and RTL languages.
- [It's a "website in a box"!

What's the catch?

- [EPUB 3 is current spec, but full support still weak.
- [Most readers don't support the necessary features.
- [Publishing tools don't support the necessary features.
- [They all claim "EPUB 3 support," but it's not really true.
- [Must hand code to implement EPUB Help and take full advantage of EPUB 3.

Ugh. Hand coding?

- [Yes. But it's not hard.

- [Use your favorite publishing tool to create the EPUB.

- [Use Oxygen XML Editor to edit the EPUB and add this line ..

`<meta property="rendition:flow">scrolled-doc</meta>`

- [This can be automated.

- [Results in a basic vertically-scrolling, topic-oriented, EPUB ..
other features will require more work.

Is this for real?

— [Creating “EPUB Help” can be done now.

— [No desktop readers currently support the “scrolled-doc” property. (Chrome+Radium does, but ..)

— [You can use JavaScript to “fake out” some readers.

— [BUT .. Radium Desktop is under development by EDRLab!
(Next beta is due out late November.)

Authoring/publishing tools

— [Adobe FrameMaker

— [Adobe RoboHelp

— [MadCap Flare

— [MadCap DocToHelp

— [oXygen XML Editor

— [DITA-OT + DITA for
Publishers

— [Adobe InDesign

— [Calibre

— [Chapters

— [and .. epubcheck!

Useful EPUB 3 readers

— [Desktop

- Chrome+Radium (macOS, Linux, Windows) .. WAIT!
- ADE (macOS, Windows, iOS, Android)
- AZARDI (macOS, Linux, Windows) .. maybe not?
- Radium Desktop (macOS, Linux, Windows) .. SOON!

— [Mobile

- Apple iBooks (iOS)
- Gitden Reader (Android, iOS)

EPUB Help (JS)

Using the Reference Manager

Lets you select a conref, xref, or link target by specifying the file, element type, and element.

The Reference Manager is displayed when inserting a conref, xref, or link. To insert a conref, choose Insert Conref from the DITA menu, to insert an xref or link, use the Element Catalog. Note that the Reference Manager is only displayed for xref or link elements if they are defined as a "Container" rather than a "Cross-Reference" element in your EDD.

Parent: [Using DITA-FMx](#)
Related information
[INI-Only Settings](#)
[Update References](#)
[Insert Conref](#)
[Setting Up to Use Cross-References](#)

Figure 1. DITA-FMx Reference Manager

DITA-FMx - Reference Manager

1. File location: Files currently open in FrameMaker

2. Source file: C:\Tools\lmi-docs\DITA-FMx2.0_Help_Source\ditafmx_ref_inionly.x

3. Element tag: b, dentry, topic

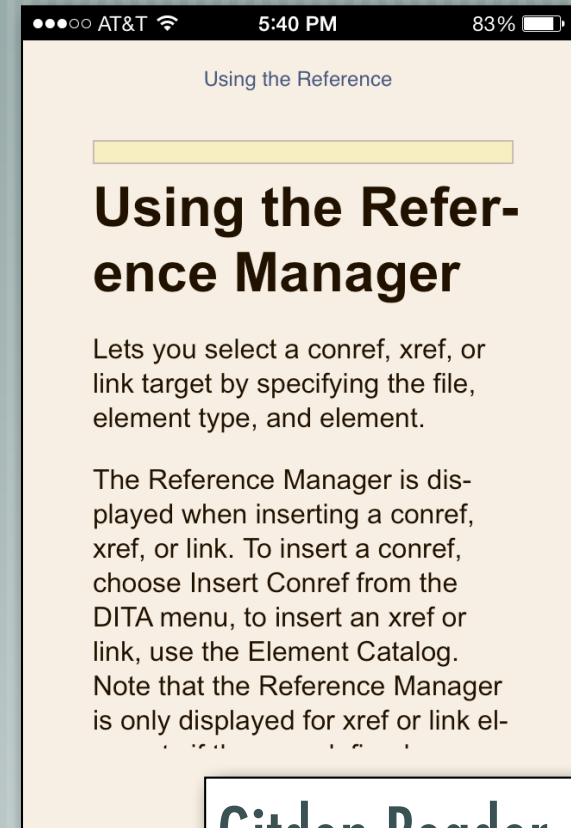
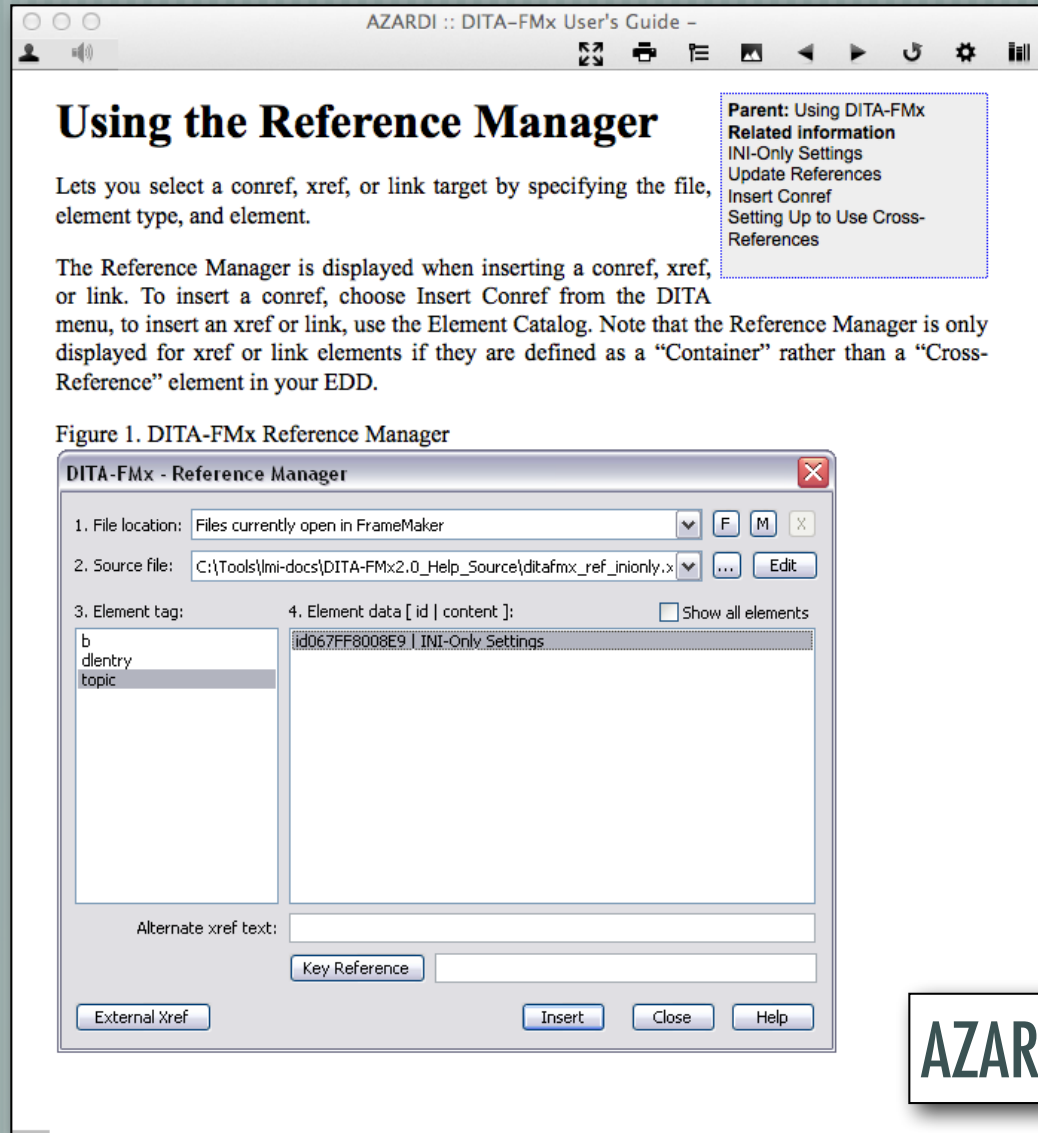
4. Element data [id | content]: id067FF8008E9 | INI-Only Settings

Back to p.2 5 of 13

iBooks - iOS

Radium+Chrome - Mac

EPUB Help (JS)



Gitden Reader - iOS

AZARDI Desktop - Mac

Demo — “Fake” EPUB Help

- [Uses JavaScript and CSS to make pages vertically scrolling
- [AZARDI reader offers “context sensitive” option
- [Click Help button in application to open Help
- [Interesting as a prototype, but probably not viable(?)

Getting very close!

- [Chrome+Readium does support “scrolled-doc”

- [Prototype includes ..

- Responsive layout

- TOC and index (and “Find”)


- Plus .. full text search with highlighting!

- [What else is needed?

EPUB Help (real)

FM2DITA USER GUIDE

[[TOC](#) | [Index](#) | [Search](#)]



Conversion Table Development

Tips and guidance on creating conversion tables.

The fundamental concepts of setting up a conversion table are fairly basic, but actually doing so can be quite time consuming and complex. The best place to find all of the details on this process is the *Structure Application Developer's Guide* from Adobe. Not much has changed over the years on this subject, so you should be able to use most any version of this document with any version of FrameMaker. With FM7.2, this PDF was installed in the `OnlineManuals` folder, for later versions you'll have to locate it online. Just search for the document title.

The FM2DITA preconversion commands are used before applying the conversion table, but two commands, Retag Paras and Retag Tables in Paras, will affect the way the conversion table is developed. The FM2DITA sample files include a sample conversion table, we recommend that you take a look at this conversion table, so you'll be familiar with a simple, but functional conversion table.

[Initial Conversion Table Setup](#)
FrameMaker can create the basic conversion table for you to use as a starting point.

[Setting Up Mapping Rules](#)
Mapping rules define the initial mapping from styles and objects to elements.

[Working with Qualifiers](#)
For all but the simplest of conversions, you'll need to use qualifiers to properly identify and wrap like named elements used in different structures.

[Setting Up Wrapping Rules](#)
Wrapping rules are used to wrap one or more elements in new elements to create hierarchies in the structured file.

[Conversion Table Tips](#)

Radium Desktop (R2)

- [Open Source project developed by EDRLab

- [Built on top of the Radium SDK

- [Uses web-based technologies (Electron, React, Typescript, HTML5, CSS3, etc.)

- [Fully accessible (screen readers, etc.)

- [Possible to create custom “branded” version of reader (it’s open source!)

Radium Desktop

- [EDRLab is interested in supporting EPUB Help features ..
 - Context sensitivity (via API or command line)
 - CSS absolute positioning (3.2 feature)
 - window.history object (back)
 - Persistent window size and position
- [Everything else is available now!

Wrap-up

— [Do you need to deliver locally installed Help?

— [Are you still creating CHM files and wondering when that will completely break?

— [EPUB Help is almost ready, and will provide everything you need, and more!

— [Talk to tool vendors about what you want.

Resources

— [EPUB 3.2 specification — w3c.github.io/publ-epub-revision/epub32/spec/epub-spec.html

— [EPUB 3.1 specification — www.w3.org/Submission/epub31/

— [HTML 5 specification — www.w3.org/TR/html5/

— [CSS 3 specification — www.w3.org/TR/CSS/

— [CSS 3 module status — www.css3.info/modules/

— [Readuim Desktop — www.edrlab.org/readium/readium-2/

More resources

— [On the Slow Adoption of EPUB 3 — epubsecrets.com/on-the-slow-adoption-of-epub-3.php

— [Responsive Ebook Design — medium.com/@sandersk/responsive-ebook-design-a-primer-8bba01328219

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even after the conference!