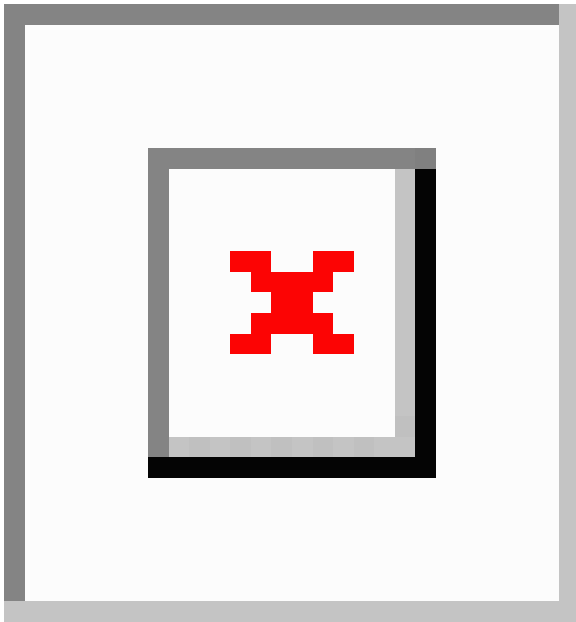


## 1. SDL



SDL is the global innovator in language translation technology, services and content management. With more than 20 years of experience, SDL creates transformative business results through nuanced digital experiences with customers around the world. Dakota works closely with SDL to ensure that customer's knowledge management systems are successful and fully supported.

### *SDL Knowledge Center*

SDL Knowledge Center is a powerful solution that simplifies the creation and distribution of technical publications across the entire user journey. Dakota can assist with any phase of your Knowledge Center deployment, including requirements analysis, system integration, output customization, and ongoing support.

Benefits of Knowledge Center:

- Reduce content development and localization costs by 30-50%
- Drive down call center support costs by increasing customer self-service
- Improve the overall customer experience by delivering consistent, compelling and useful product content
- Empower employee collaboration by providing a platform for content development
- Bring content to market quicker with a simple way of managing and delivering complex content to customers
- Improve engagement with customers through social interactions between content creators and consumers

### *SDL XPP*

Automate the composition and pagination of XML data and many other data sources, in formats such as PostScript, Adobe Acrobat PDF and ePub with the SDL XPP software solution. Used alone, or as part of the Contenta Publishing Suite, the XPP XML publishing engine can fully automate end-to-end publishing workflows from receiving multi-sourced data through to combining it into a complete deliverable.

## 1.1. SDL INTERVIEW WITH ERIC FOX

SDL is the global innovator in language translation technology, services and content management. With more than 20 years of experience, SDL creates transformative business results through nuanced digital experiences with customers around the world.

The next installment in the SDL Partner Spotlight series, we interviewed [Eric Fox](#) from [SDL Knowledge Center](#) partner, [Dakota Systems](#) ([www.daksys.com](http://www.daksys.com)) who emphasized the increasing importance of the DITA standard to the organizations they work with.

### **Tell us a little about Dakota Systems**

**Eric:** Dakota has implemented large-scale content management systems for technical documentation teams for over fifteen years. Back then, our founder Brian Buehling recognized that while there were a lot of tools to help with different aspects of publishing, none provided end-to-end solutions that covered editing, content management and publishing. Dakota was formed to solve that problem by offering full system integration solutions for technical documentation teams.

At our inception in 1999, we were supporting mainly SGML-based systems using custom databases and scripting tools. Later on, as groups began to transition to XML we worked with a lot of proprietary document models. But, over the course of the last five years, we've seen DITA grow by leaps and bounds in terms of adoption. Now, at least 70% of our work is DITA-related.

Our development team is based in Chicago, USA and our consultants typically work on-site providing customers with specialized services that facilitate integrations and that also address training (visit [www.ditatraining.com](http://www.ditatraining.com) for more information), content conversion and custom output transformation development.

In addition to technical and implementation expertise, we recognize the challenges that customers have moving from traditional page-based content production into topic-based content production, like the DITA standard. So our ability to listen and help our customers through this transition is really important.

### **What are the main drivers you see in terms of DITA adoption?**

**Eric:** Translation is a big one. It is really difficult to be cost-effective when technical content is managed in a book format. Breaking content down into smaller topics means that our customers only need to translate changed content from version to version. DITA makes both managing multilingual content as well as controlling associated costs a lot easier.

Using the DITA standard, companies can really take advantage of their content in a lot of different ways. As companies want to distribute docs to multiple channels like PDFs, web, help systems and mobile apps, they really see the advantage of applying structure to their content. We're also seeing a lot of newer applications and content needs around marketing, training and eLearning. So the desire to reuse and share content is really across departments.

I think companies have just started to recognize the value added that technical documentation brings. With the internet and Google, customers look for this kind of content on their own, and use the information they find as the basis for purchase decisions, so I think we'll see growth in this area.

### **What value do you think SDL Knowledge Center brings?**

**Eric:** First and foremost, Knowledge Center is a mature, rock-solid product that has already been through the paces of customer demands. It leads all the other DITA solutions. The user interface is really well designed. One of its biggest strengths is that it is very effective managing the various relationships across a library of DITA content.

It really brings an added value for globally distributed teams who can access and assemble content created in different locations. That's where the centralized CMS comes in.

Another great feature is that it integrates well with oXygen and other desktop XML editors as well as providing an interface that makes it easy for subject matter experts, non-tech writers and non-DITA aware people to both review as well as create and edit the DITA or XML content directly through their web browser.

### **How does SDL Knowledge Center differentiate from other products?**

**Eric:** The review and collaboration features really stand out for globally distributed content contributors. They don't even have to be in the same office and all the content is created and available to whoever needs to see it or reuse it.

In terms of companies with translation requirements, nothing out there does it as well as SDL Knowledge Center. When you think of companies that have to translate numerous topics into 30 plus languages, there's no other CMS.

As a partner and integrator, I can tell you that SDL Knowledge Center is a really open system. Its APIs are out there and available and not locked down or proprietary. This means we can create integrations with XMetaL, oXygen and other editors really easily.

**Where do you think Dakota Systems really adds value?**

**Eric:** When we start projects we're good at listening to the customer and really understanding what they need early on in the project. We've established real credibility and pride ourselves on more than just implementing a system, but being a trusted advisor. We really focus on making things work the way our customers need them to work.

More recently we've really had the opportunity to take DITA to the next level by transforming content to non-traditional outputs. For example, one of our customers is a training group who wanted to transform their content into PowerPoint. We removed the dependency for an application-specific format by creating an HTML5 enhanced presentation output. This means they could provide presentation viewers right in a browser.

Another great project we're really proud of, is we created an app for the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium. These remote villages sometimes don't have medical care or doctors and have a building that has different medical supplies as well as a huge reference book for more immediate care. Dave Badger, our technical lead, was instrumental in migrating the book's content to DITA and now it's published to a website called the Electronic Community Health Aide Manual (eCHAM) and an iOS app called the iCHAM. This content is constantly reviewed by doctors and ensures that medics can provide immediate informed care until a doctor can arrive.

Overall, we've been involved in some really great projects with SDL including implementations for Lloyd's Register, Dunnhumby and for the Government Printing Office (GPO) in Washington. We're looking forward to our continued relationship with SDL.