

Referenced content

A practical example from an electronics manufacturer



The scenario

ACME Inc, a set top box manufacturer, has been selling direct to consumers

Now, they have the opportunity to sell via MegaCorp, and in new territories

New opportunities ~ new challenges!

The challenges

Branding

Translation

Localisation

Regulatory compliance

Health and safety

Practical examples

A genuine, proven solution

Company details withheld ~ 'ACME' is fictional!

Not necessarily the only solution

Modelling DITA content

Two parts:

1. Careful analysis of requirements
2. Match to one or more reuse mechanisms

‘Top Down’ and ‘Bottom Up’

Then meet in the middle!

PDFs with annotations very useful ~ brainstorming!

DITA reuse mechanisms

The basic topic/map content inclusion

conref: direct element to element inclusion

conkeyref: indirect element to element inclusion

DITAVal: attribute based profiling

....

Two approaches

1. Reference common content

Cautions and warnings

2. Reference 'difference' content

Specific product related content

Referencing content applies a focus to that content,
to highlight, control and manage

Collection topics

Multiple items of referenced content in one topic,
rather than one referenced item per topic

Bring together referenced content related to a specific
subject

Easier content planning and management

A minimalist approach?

Collection topic examples

A brand collection topic for all aspects related to the brand ~ brand name, address and contact details, URL

A safety and regulatory collection topic for all warnings, cautions and notices

A product collection topic for all aspects related to the product ~ product name, specifications, identifiers

A typical collection topic

A four column table:

Description

Element

Text

Conkeyref

The conkeyref example demonstrates how it can be used, and provides a copy & paste approach to reuse!

Naming convention

The use of keys avoids any possible awkward filename system

Key naming can provide a very short description of the content, enough to know it is the right content

A good idea is to incorporate the name of the element to avoid confusion ~ full list or individual list items

Dual dependencies

Each brand may choose to redefine each product name

Regulatory statements are locale and product dependent

Dual dependencies solution

The brand collection topic:

```
<ph id="PhUSBStick">RoadRunner</ph>
```

The product collection topic:

```
<ph id="PhProductName" conkeyref="AMBrand/  
PhUSBStick"/>
```

Content topic:

```
<ph conkeyref="AMProduct/PhProductName"/>
```

Map re-use for languages

Define the contents and structure at the topic level once, and reuse for all languages

Avoid making the same structural edits to multiple maps

Guarantee that the contents are the same, for all languages

3 Map solution

Language Topic Pool map: `<keydef href="filename" keys="identifier"/>`

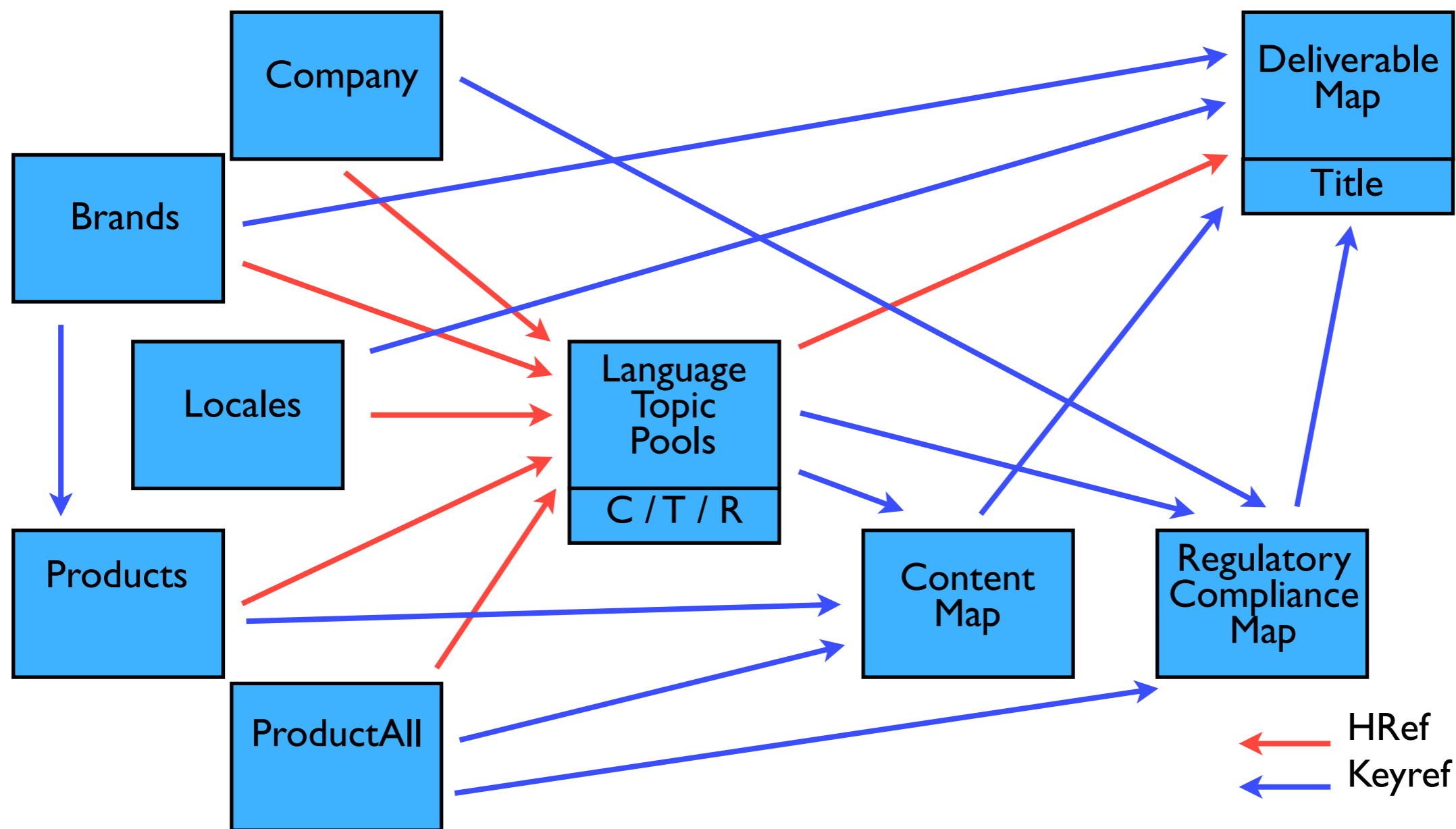
Content map to reuse: `<topicref keyref="identifier"/>`

Minimal Deliverable map:

A. `<keydef keyref="identifier" keys="reference"/>` for reference content

B. Maprefs to Topic Pool & Content maps

Pulling it together



Key features

Keys are:

- Extremely powerful
- Extremely flexible
- Easily manageable

Why not use DITAVal?

Referenced content can be abstracted to collection topics ~ easier to edit, manage and control

DITAVal is an attribute, and can be hard to find within topics ~ harder to update for new scenarios

However, can abstract DITAVal phrases with, e.g., conref

Why mix different mechanisms? ~ Easier to use just one

Best Practice?

- Mixing conref & conkeyref could lead to author confusion as mechanisms similar
- Consider architecture very carefully: locate and define content to manage
- DO NOT redefine @keys, e.g. build reltables with `<topicref @keyref/>`
- Give careful thought to a naming convention
- Find a solution that works, and maintain consistency

Thank you for your interest

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