MADCAP FLARE DESKTOP 2025

Key Features

Key Concepts and Features

Flare Desktop has many features in it. Over time, you will find that some of these are more important to you than others. Following are some important characteristics of Flare Desktop, including key concepts and features that are especially important for most authors and ones that you are likely to use. See the Help system for more information about each feature.
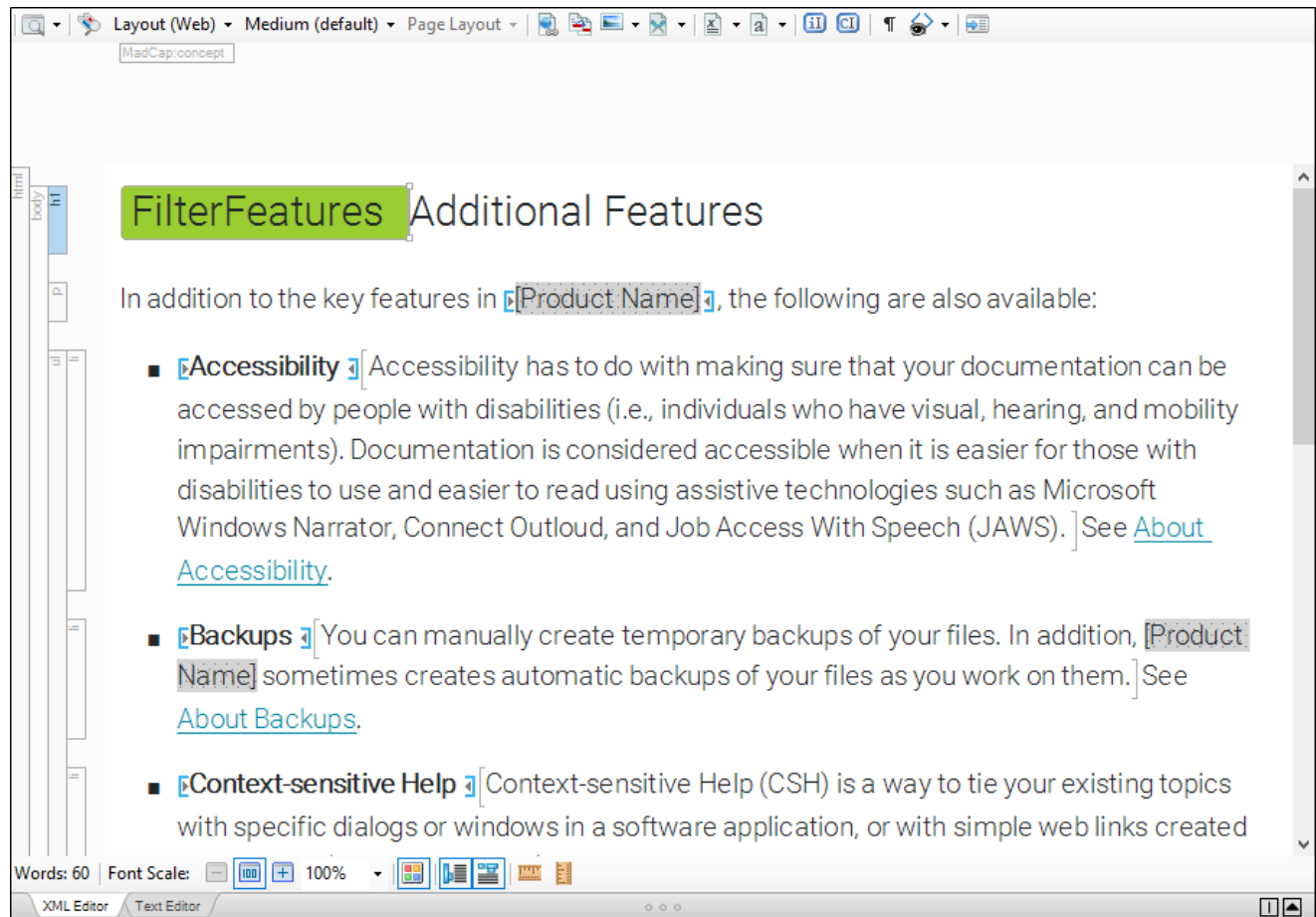
▎General Key Features

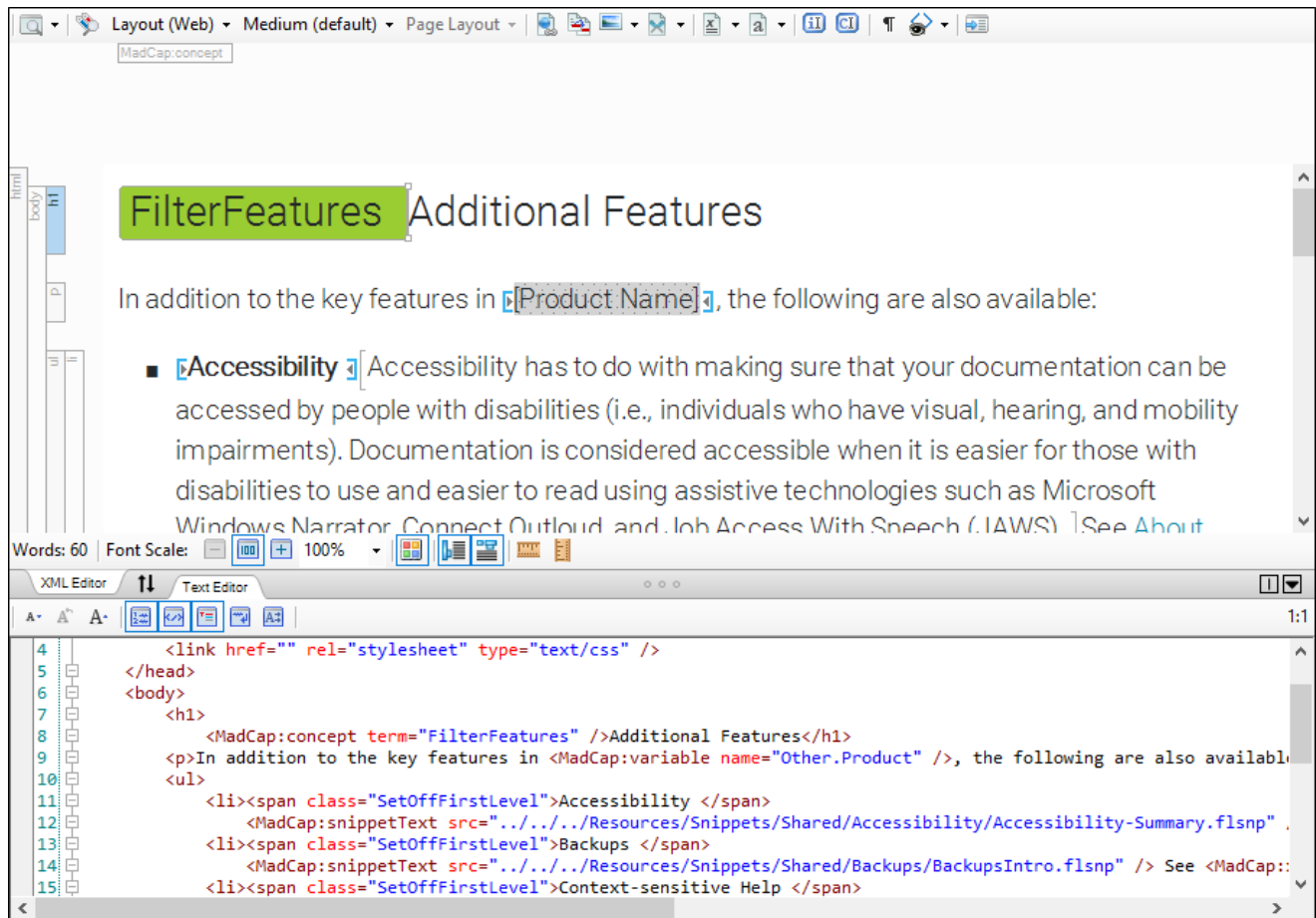Following are some general key concepts and features in Flare Desktop.

XHTML Authoring

In Flare Desktop, content is authored in Extensible Hypertext Markup Language (XHTML) , which is a cross between XML and HTML. XML was developed by the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C), intended as a replacement standard for HTML to render documents on the World Wide Web. XML is not a fixed set of elements like HTML, but rather a metalanguage (a language for describing languages). It enables authors to define their own tags.

For anyone unfamiliar with XHTML, this might sound intimidating at first. But even if you do not know anything about XHTML, XML, or HTML, you can create your content in Flare Desktop's main content editor (the XML Editor) in much the same way you would use a tool such as Microsoft Word. The XHTML markup is automatically created for you behind the scenes.

If you happen to be experienced with XHTML, you will be glad to know that you can work in the markup, taking advantage of all of the benefits of this structured language.

Layout (Web) ▾ Medium (default) ▾ Page Layout ▾

MadCap:concept

FilterFeatures Additional Features

In addition to the key features in [Product Name], the following are also available:

- **Accessibility** Accessibility has to do with making sure that your documentation can be accessed by people with disabilities (i.e., individuals who have visual, hearing, and mobility impairments). Documentation is considered accessible when it is easier for those with disabilities to use and easier to read using assistive technologies such as Microsoft Windows Narrator, Connect Outloud, and Job Access With Speech (JAWS). See About Accessibility.

- **Backups** You can manually create temporary backups of your files. In addition, [Product Name] sometimes creates automatic backups of your files as you work on them. See About Backups.

- **Context-sensitive Help** Context-sensitive Help (CSH) is a way to tie your existing topics with specific dialogs or windows in a software application, or with simple web links created

Words: 60 | Font Scale: − 100% ▾

XML Editor | Text Editor

```
4          <link href="" rel="stylesheet" type="text/css" />
5      </head>
6      <body>
7          <h1>
8              <MadCap:concept term="FilterFeatures" />Additional Features</h1>
9          <p>In addition to the key features in <MadCap:variable name="Other.Product" />, the following are also available
10         <ul>
11             <li><span class="SetOffFirstLevel">Accessibility </span>
12                 <MadCap:snippetText src="../../../Resources/Snippets/Shared/Accessibility/Accessibility-Summary.flsnp"
13             <li><span class="SetOffFirstLevel">Backups </span>
14                 <MadCap:snippetText src="../../../Resources/Snippets/Shared/Backups/BackupsIntro.flsnp" /> See <MadCap::
15             <li><span class="SetOffFirstLevel">Context-sensitive Help </span>
```

Single-Sourcing

One of Flare Desktop's biggest strengths lies in single-sourcing, which means to reuse content, and producing multiple outputs from the same set of source files. Flare Desktop lets you single-source your projects in many ways, using various features.

This includes (but is not limited to):

- "Building Blocks and Topic-Based Authoring" on the next page
- "Snippets" on page 12
- "Variables" on page 13
- "Conditions" on page 17

Building Blocks and Topic-Based Authoring

In other authoring tools, you're probably used to everything being a part of a single file—the content, the table of contents, the glossary, the styles, and so on. It's not like that in Flare Desktop. Instead, most of the pieces are separate, sort of like building blocks. This is one of the things that helps to make Flare Desktop so powerful and give you so much flexibility in how to create your output.

Your content is stored in topic files and in smaller snippet files. And images exist as separate files and are included in topics and snippets by reference. Your table of contents is a different file, as is the glossary. The styles are stored in a separate cascading stylesheet file. In fact, you might even have a project with multiple TOCs, multiple glossaries, and multiple stylesheets. It all depends on how you want to work.
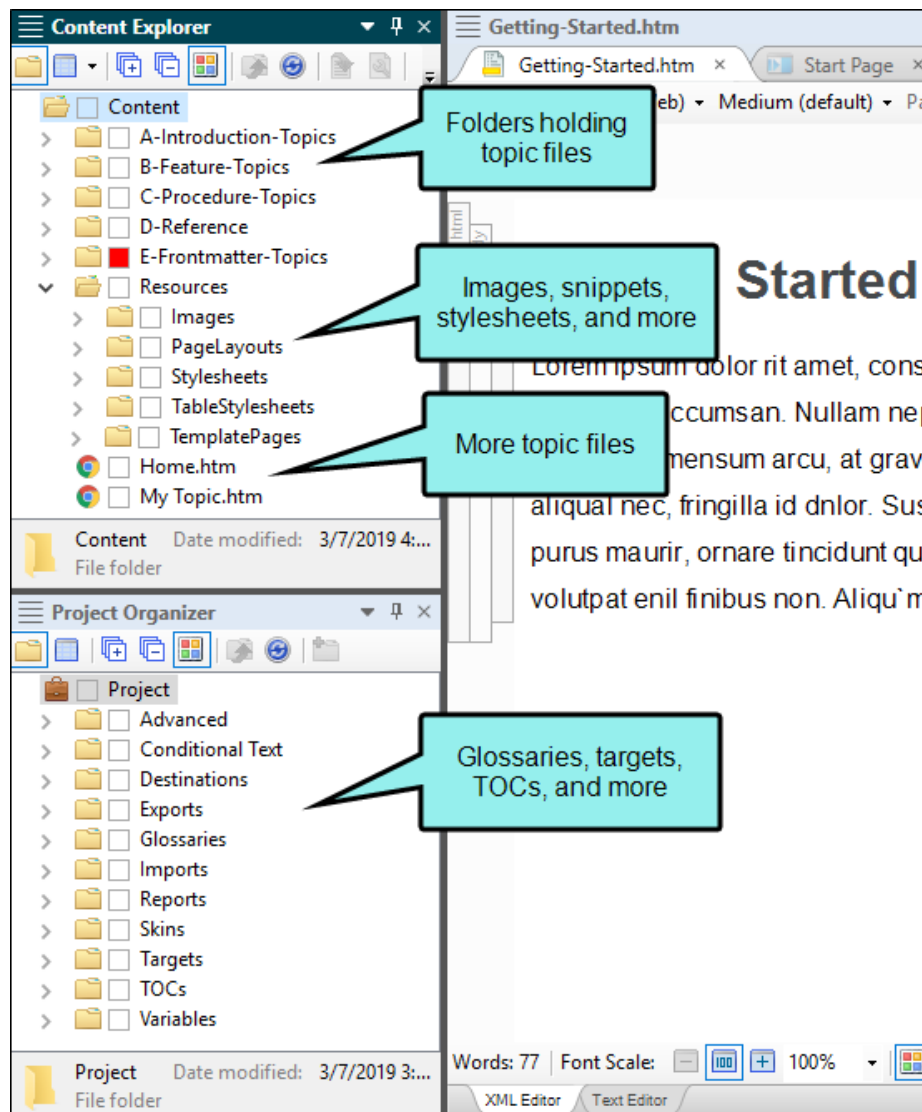
Indexes are different because they are created in part by inserting index keywords into topics and snippets. There is no separate index file in the Flare project. However, for the most part, you're dealing with separate files as building blocks in Flare Desktop.

Then you use another file called a "target" to take all of these pieces, merge them together, and generate the output you want. It's kind of like putting a bunch of ingredients into a food processor and ending up with a smoothie.

Topics are where you type your text and other content. If you come from the world of print publishing, you'll probably be tempted at first to create really long topics—such as one topic for each chapter or even one topic for an entire PDF manual. And while Flare Desktop lets you create very long topics and there may be cases where you need to do that, for the most part, you want your topics to be smaller, digestible chunks of content that you can reuse for different outputs. One chapter in a PDF that you create from Flare Desktop will usually consist of several separate topics.

But don't make your topics too short either. We're not necessarily talking about single sentences or short paragraphs. You want your topics to have enough substance to stand on their own, but short enough to be able to easily reuse them in different places in various outputs.
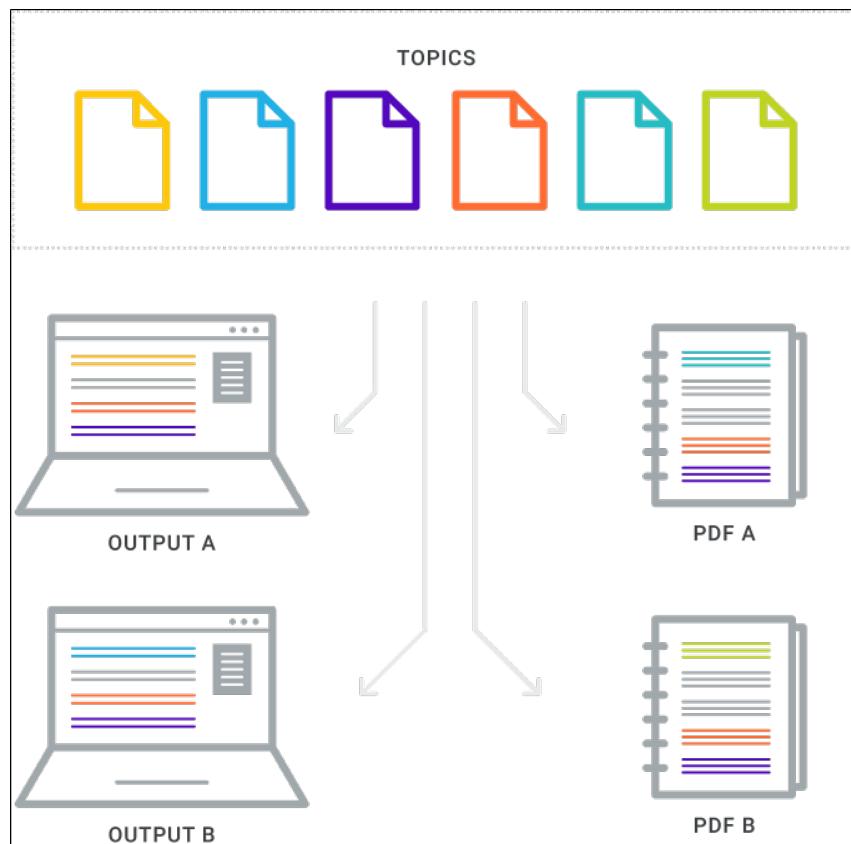
Open File Architecture

All files in a Flare project are separate XML documents. This means that Flare projects are completely open, transparent, and accessible. One great benefit of this is easier customization of your project and files via scripting.

Schema

A schema is a collection of metadata that describes the elements in an XML document. Flare's document schema is a hybrid between XSD (XML Schema Definition) and a custom schema created by MadCap Software to account for the unique tags and styles required to support all of Flare Desktop's features. Therefore, the Flare schema conforms to industry standard requirements, recommended by the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C). This means Flare content can be edited in the Flare Desktop XML Editor, in external editors, or transferred back and forth between the two at will. Also, because Flare's code adheres to the W3C specification, it is easier to integrate with other XHTML applications.

▎Authoring Key Features

Following are some key authoring features in Flare Desktop.

Cross-References

A cross-reference is a link that lets you connect text in one topic to another topic (or a bookmark within a topic). This is somewhat similar to a text hyperlink. However, cross-references are more powerful in that the links can automatically be updated based on commands (e.g., appears as a text link in online output, but page numbers in print-based output).
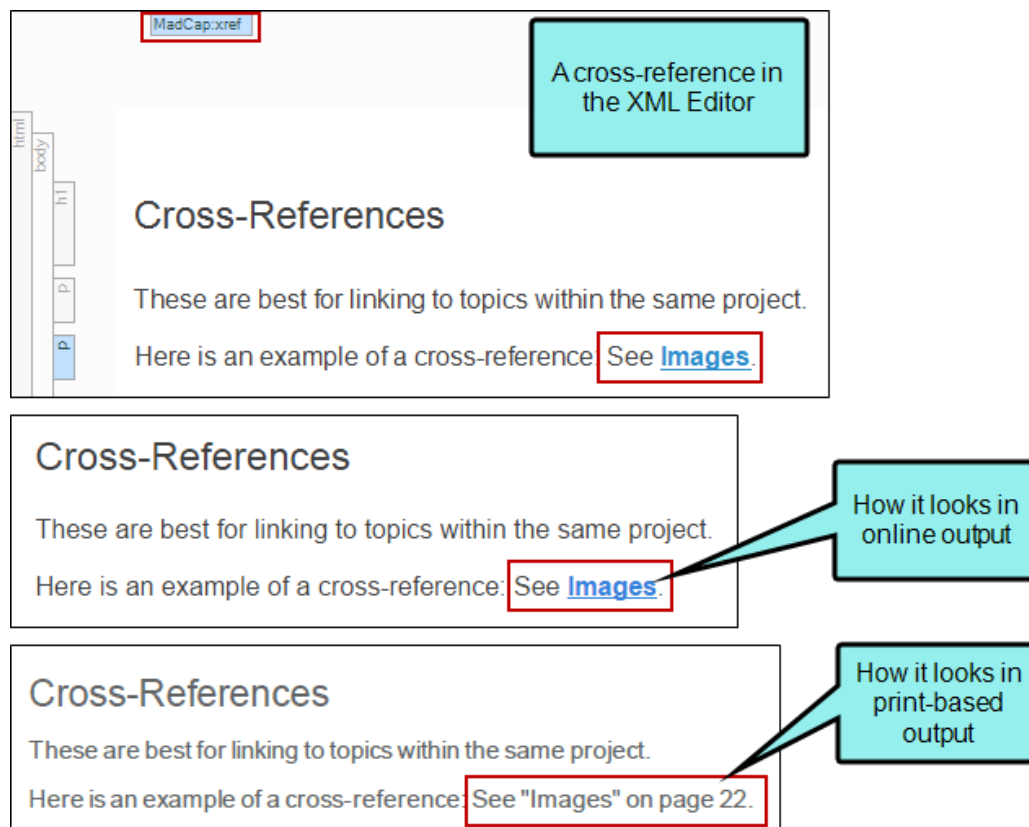
The best practice is to use cross-references to create links between files and locations *inside* a Flare project, and hyperlinks are preferred for links that point *outside* of the project (e.g., websites, external PDFs). There are exceptions to this, but most of the time this is the recommended approach.

Link Viewer

In Flare Desktop there are many ways to link one file to another, such as inserting a cross-reference or text hyperlink, inserting an image, applying a stylesheet to a topic, and more. The Link Viewer window pane (**View > Link Viewer**) lets you see how your different files are connected and may be one of the most useful tools you use in Flare Desktop.
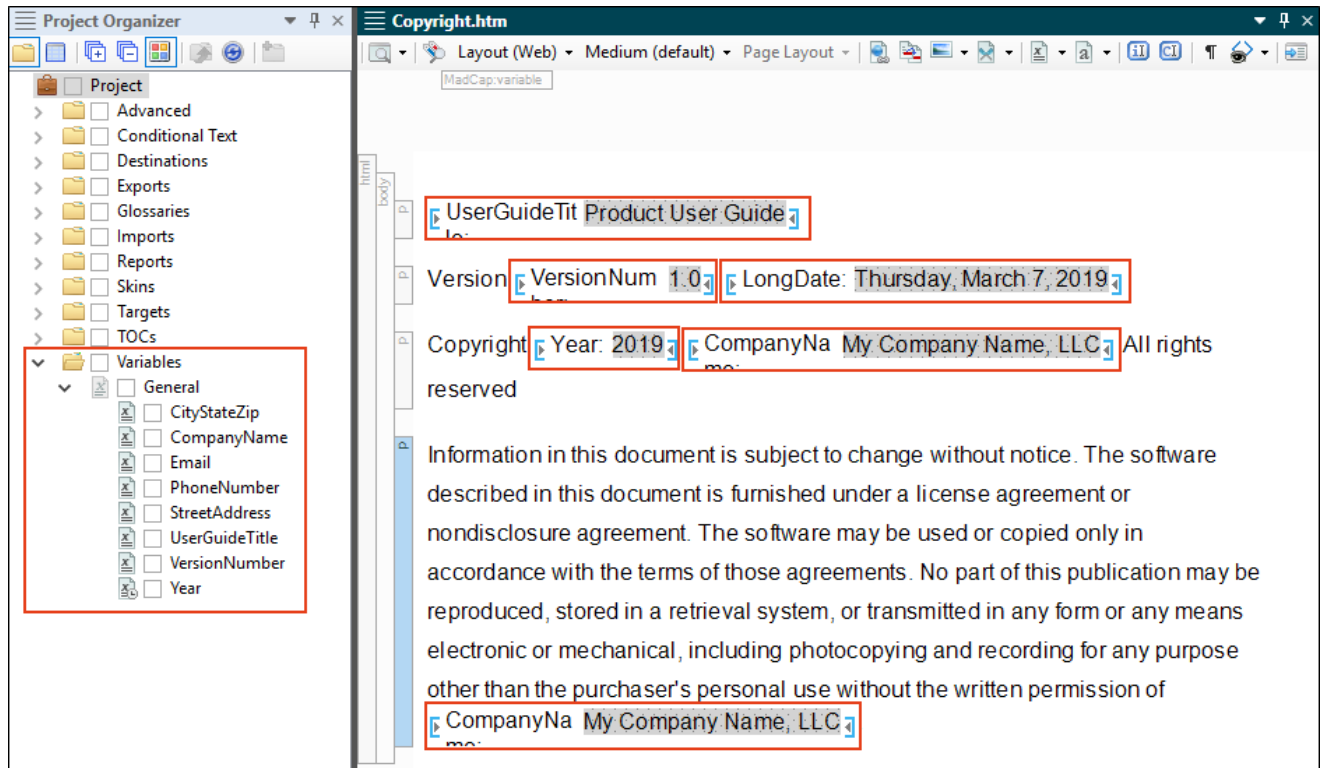
Snippets

A snippet is a chunk of formatted content that is heavily used in single-sourcing. Snippets can include text, tables, images, and whatever else can be included in a normal topic. You can insert snippets into one or more topics throughout your project, thus allowing you to reuse content that is maintained in one place. You can even insert them into other snippets, creating nested snippets. Snippets are not usually intended for single words or very short phrases that change frequently. In those cases, you probably want to use variables instead.

The major benefit of using snippets is that you only have to create your content once, rather than having to type the same information in each topic (or in another snippet) where you want to use it. If you need to modify the content of a snippet, you only need to change it in one place and the change is made automatically in every file where the snippet has been inserted.
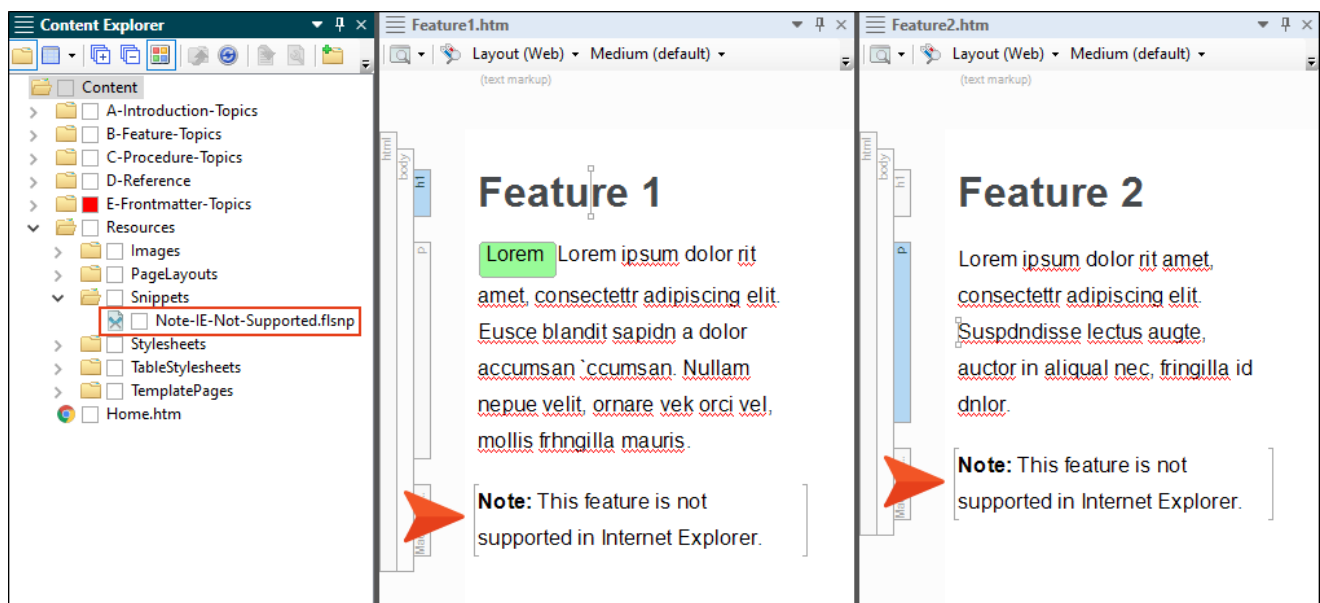
Variables

A variable is a small piece of plain text or auto-generated content that can be edited in one place but used in many places throughout your project. Variables are especially useful for text that might change frequently, such as version numbers and dates. Variables are stored in variable sets, which can hold multiple variables. Depending on the template you select when creating a project, Flare Desktop may provide you with an initial variable set, but you can add as many additional variable sets and variables as you like.

Images

You can insert images into content files (e.g., topics, snippets). Flare Desktop supports the following types of raster and vector image files: BMP, EMF, EPS, EXPS, GIF, HDP, JPG, JPEG, PDF, PNG, PS, SVG, SWF, TIF, TIFF, WDP, WMF, XAML, XPS. One of the quickest ways to insert an image is to drag it from the Content Explorer into the open content file. You can also apply styles to images to affect their look (e.g., resizing, thumbnail popup).
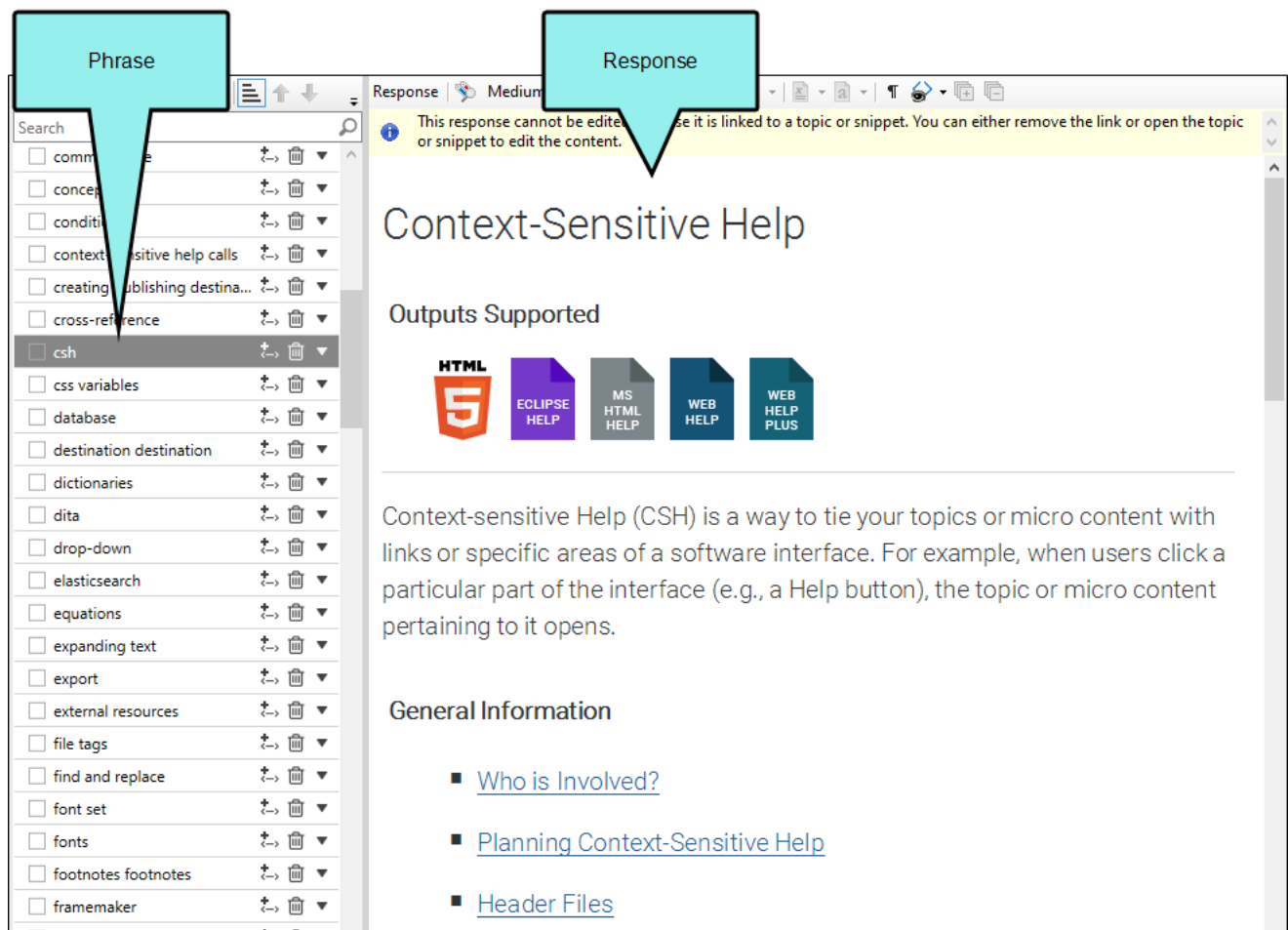
Multimedia

You can incorporate different types of video files (i.e., YouTube, Vimeo, Windows Media, QuickTime, HTML5) into your Flare project. In addition, you can insert links to movies created in MadCap Mimic. If you want to enhance your output using 3D, Flare Desktop supports Universal 3D (U3D) files. These files allow you to show users an interactive 3D model in print or web output.

Also, numerous multimedia files are supported in PDF output. This means that those files play when viewing the PDF in electronic format. If you print the PDF, those files are simply displayed as static images.

Micro Content

Micro content is short, concise information that stands alone and is easily consumable. In Flare Desktop, it begins with the creation of a collection of brief *phrases* and corresponding *responses*, such as questions and answers. After generating HTML5 output, these phrase/response combinations can be used in different ways as users interact with your output. For example, it can greatly improve the user experience when people search in your HTML5 output. It can also be used to create field-level context-sensitive Help.

MICRO CONTENT EDITOR

OUTPUT

With some extra effort and scripting outside of Flare Desktop, you can use micro content for other advanced purposes, such as chatbots.

Conditions

A condition is a single-sourcing feature that you can apply to files or different areas of your content. Conditions can determine whether certain information displays in some outputs but not in others. You can also control whether content displays on a certain device or screen size. For example, maybe you need to produce both online and print-based output. Much of the content you create is going to be the same for both outputs, but some of it is going to be written only for online output, and some only for print-based output. So you can create condition tags for each and use those tags to separate the content when you build your output.
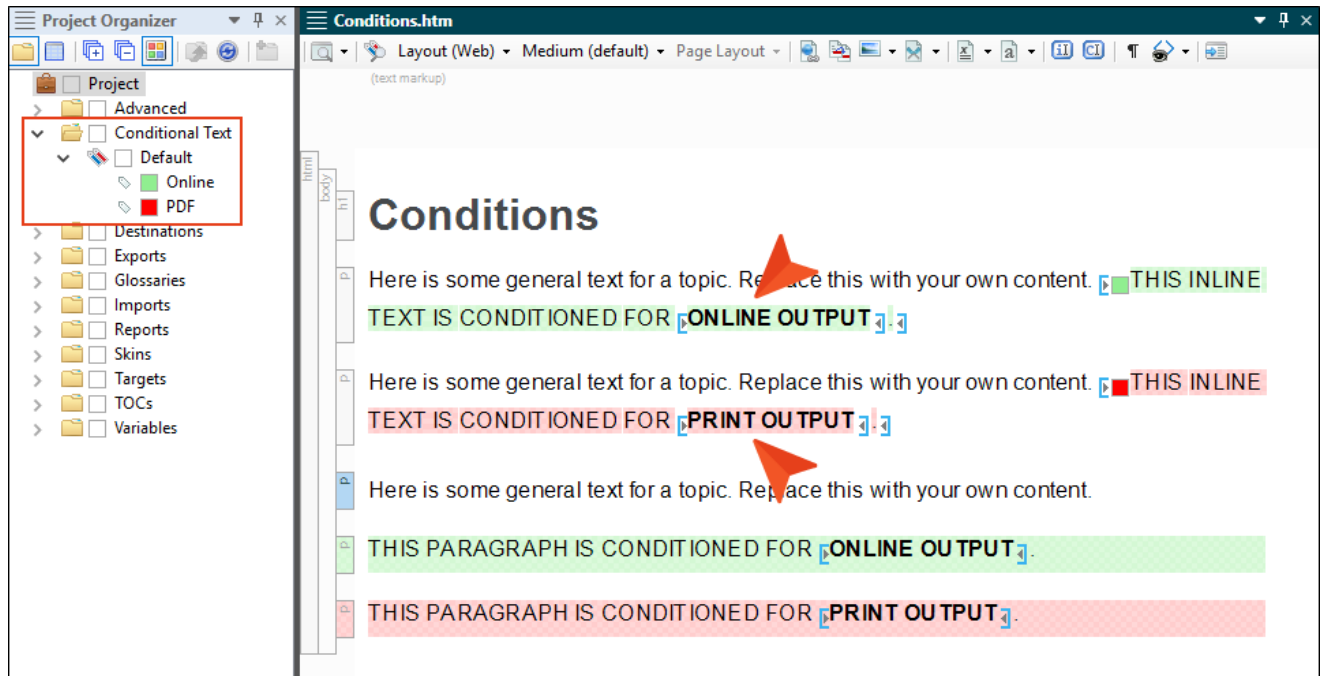
Conditions can also be used to make content responsive (e.g., content changes automatically according to the size of the screen, rather than simply based on "include" or "exclude"). Associating conditions with factory media queries (Web, Tablet, Mobile) can help make some content more appropriate or easier to read on different devices.

Tables of Contents

Creating and editing a table of contents file in Flare Desktop can be very easy to do for both online and print output. You can drag topics from the Content Explorer to the TOC Editor. You can also manually add TOC books and items, and then link them to other files. The links usually point to topics, but for online outputs they can also point to external files, other Help systems, and movies. You put all of these books and items in a structure that you think would be useful for the individual. In online output, end users browse through a TOC to find information. And in HTML5 Side and Top Navigation output, the TOC items become links in menus.

The TOC files you see in the Project Organizer work differently for online output than they do for print-based output. For online outputs, TOC files are exactly as their name suggests; they are files that create TOCs or menus in the output. But for print-based outputs, that same TOC file functions more like an outline. The element that actually generates a TOC in print-based output is called a "proxy," which is inserted into a topic. You can manually create that proxy yourself, or you can select an option in the Advanced tab of the Target Editor and let Flare Desktop do it all for you. There are pros and cons for both methods.

Context-Sensitive Help

Context-sensitive Help (CSH) is a way to tie your topics or micro content with links or specific areas of a software interface. For example, when users click a particular part of the interface (e.g., a Help button), the topic or micro content pertaining to it opens.
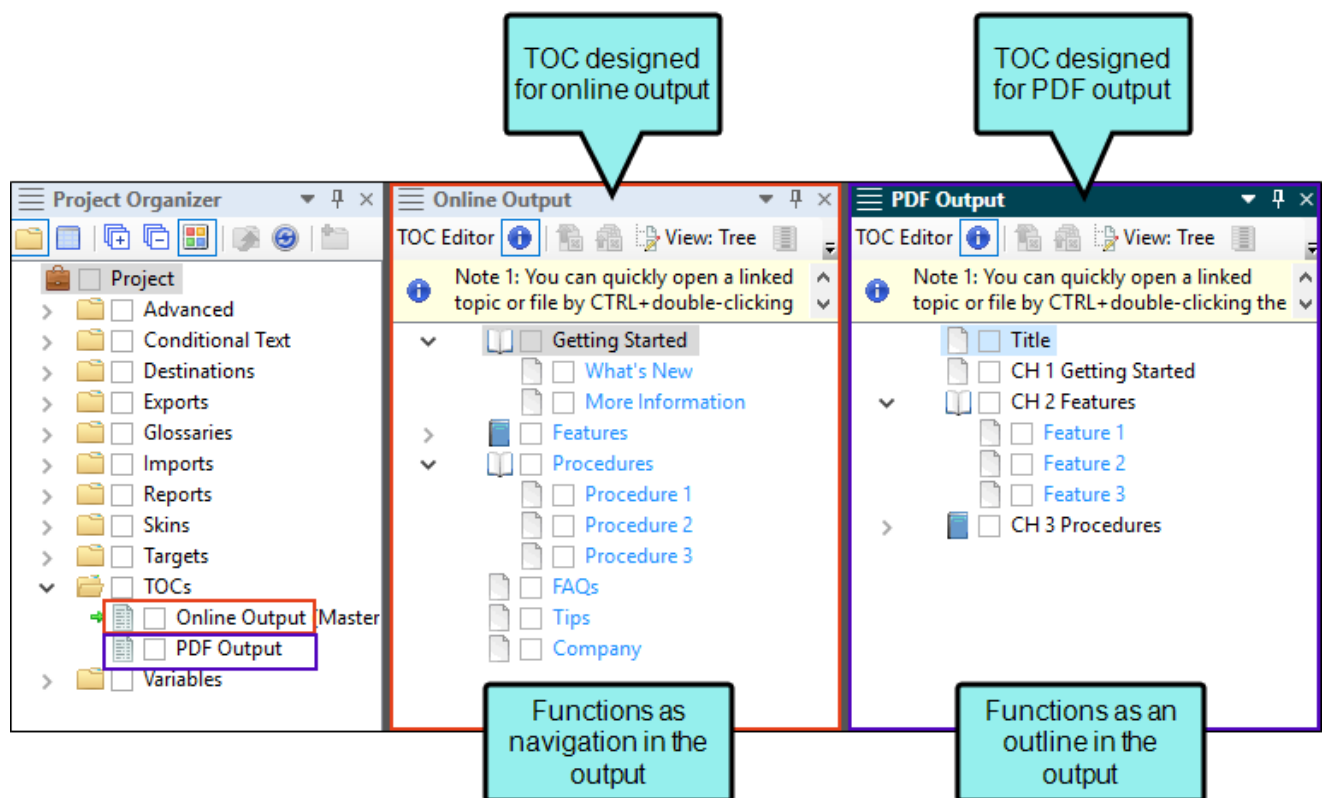
Responsive Web Design

Responsive web design (RWD) is a way to construct your HTML5 output so that the display and content are adjusted automatically depending on the device. Therefore, on tablets and mobile devices such as smart phones, users will see a condensed look and perhaps different text that is more appropriate for those devices, compared with larger monitors. You can get the same effect if you shrink your browser to a smaller size.

There are two areas where RWD can be applied: (1) skin and (2) content.

HTML5 Side and Top Navigation skins are always enabled for responsive output, but you can adjust some settings on the Skin tab in the Target Editor. For Tripane output, you can enable responsive output in the Skin Editor, and you can adjust the same settings as Side and Top Navigation output in the Target Editor. When a skin is responsive, the navigation elements (e.g., menu/table of contents items) are automatically adjusted depending on the size of the screen.

Depending on the output type, you can make your content responsive to different devices and screen sizes by using responsive conditions and responsive layouts, in conjunction with media queries.

Large web layout. Notice the menus in the skin and the hyperlinked images in the topic below.

When you break down the authoring process in Flare, you will discover that it can be quite simple. Following are the basic steps that you need to follow for creating and developing a project in Flare.

> BASIC STEPS

∨ RECOMMENDED FOR NEW USERS

If you're brand new to Flare, we recommend you use the following to help you get started. These will help you become acquainted with the interface, common features, basic steps, special tips, and more.

Depending on your preference, you can watch a video, read a PDF guide, or work through a tutorial. You might even want to use all three, because although there is certainly common information in all three, each one is also unique.

- **Getting Started Video** The Getting Started Video provides a visual demonstration of how to create a new project, introduces basic information about Flare, and points you to additional videos and resources to further develop the project.

- **Getting Started Guide** The Getting Started Guide is a PDF that explains how Flare works and introduces you to some of its key features and concepts. It then outlines the five basic steps for developing a project and producing output.

- **Getting Started Tutorial** The Getting Started Tutorial is a PDF file that you can use alongside Flare to create, develop, and generate output from an actual project.

Getting Started Video »

Getting Started Guide »

Getting Started Tutorial »

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Mobile layout. Now that the screen is smaller, notice the menus in the skin are now in a flyout, and the hyperlinked images are stacked.

Dynamic Preview

You can use the Preview window pane to see a quick preview for a topic, snippet, or template page. The Preview window pane is dynamic, allowing you to keep the preview open while you work and see changes as you make them in the XML Editor.

Initially, the window pane opens as a floating window. This can be quite useful if you are working with dual monitors, because you can drag the Preview window pane to one monitor while editing the topic in the other monitor. However, you always have the option of docking the Preview window pane to the interface.
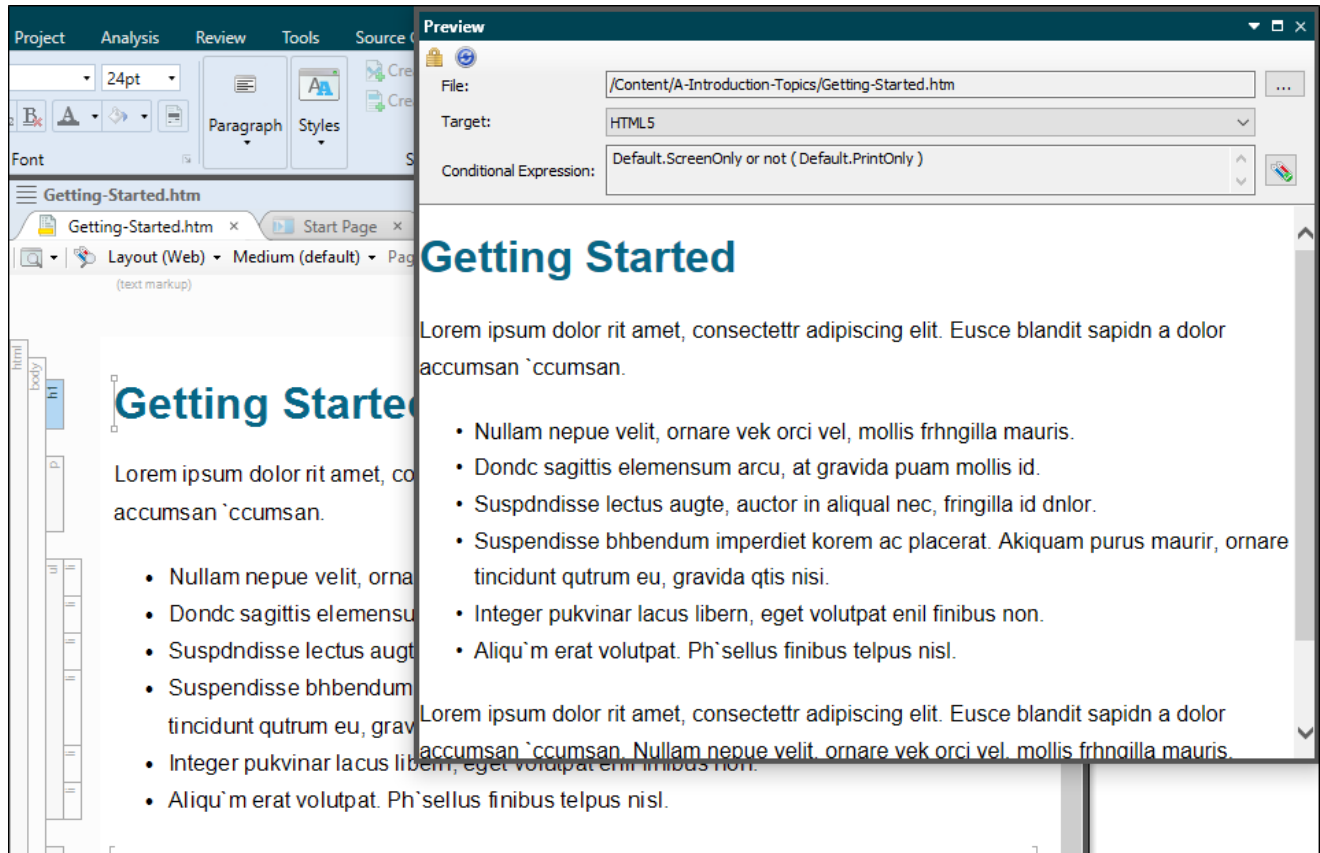
Search

For HTML5 targets, you can choose the type of search engine you want people to use—MadCap Search, Google Search, or Elasticsearch (for Side Navigation, Top Navigation, or skinless output). There are additional steps that you can follow and features you can select, depending on the search engine you choose. For MadCap Search and Elasticsearch, you can include micro content in the output, which can especially enhance your search results.

❙ Design Key Features

Following are some key design features in Flare Desktop.

Branding

The branding feature provides a convenient way to set common branding elements (e.g., logo, hero image, font, color palette) to match the output with your company's brand.

You can set up branding when creating a new project using the Start New Project Wizard. The advantage of doing this is that your basic branding design is established from the get-go. Alternatively, you can download a free project template (from MadCap Software's website), and then add your content and branding (via the Branding Editor).
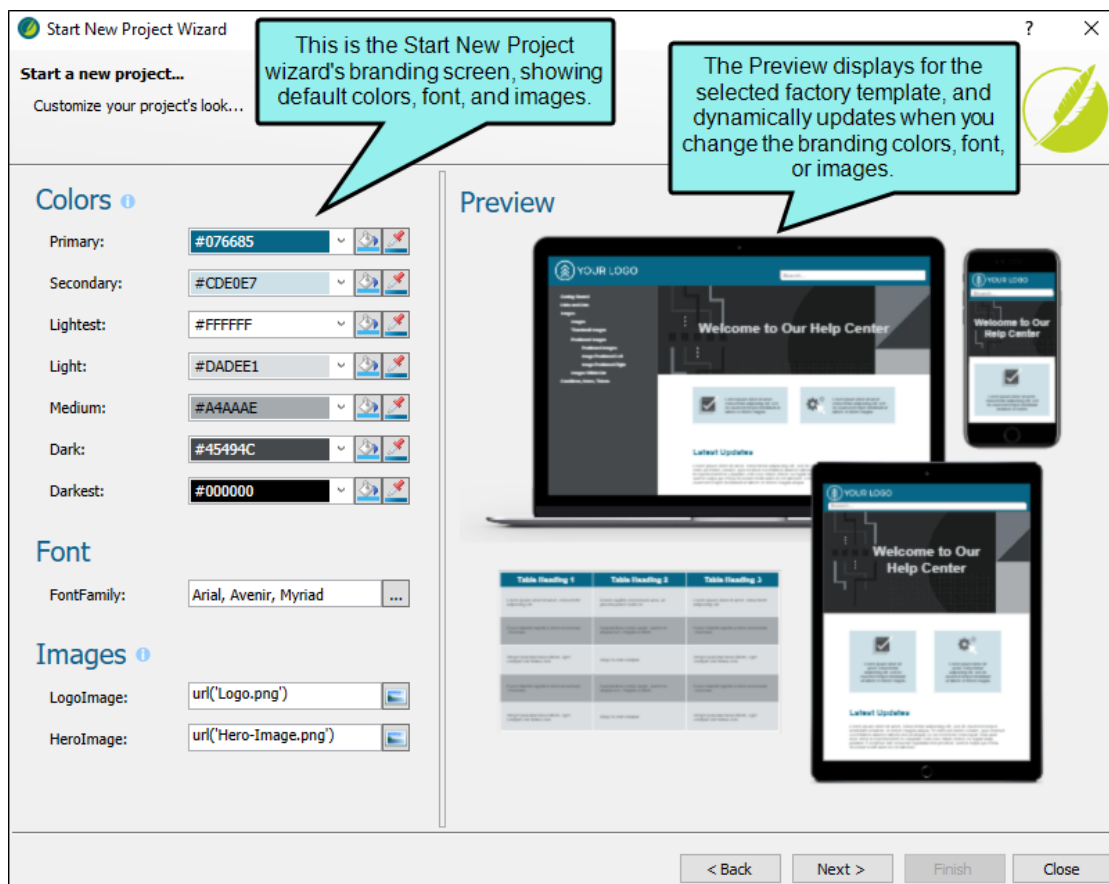
Cascading Stylesheets

Styles are used to control the look and feel of your documentation, and keep the content separate from its presentation. The styling is based on cascading stylesheets (CSS), which is an international standard for formatting web content, developed by the World Wide Web Consortium (or W3C).

Flare Desktop lets you work with stylesheets in a number of ways. You can use a primary stylesheet, automatically associating it with all files at the target level or project level (recommended). However, if you have some topics that you want to use a different stylesheet, you also have the option of associating those individual files with that other stylesheet. Once you've set up your stylesheet, you can apply its styles to the different pieces of content in your topics and snippets.
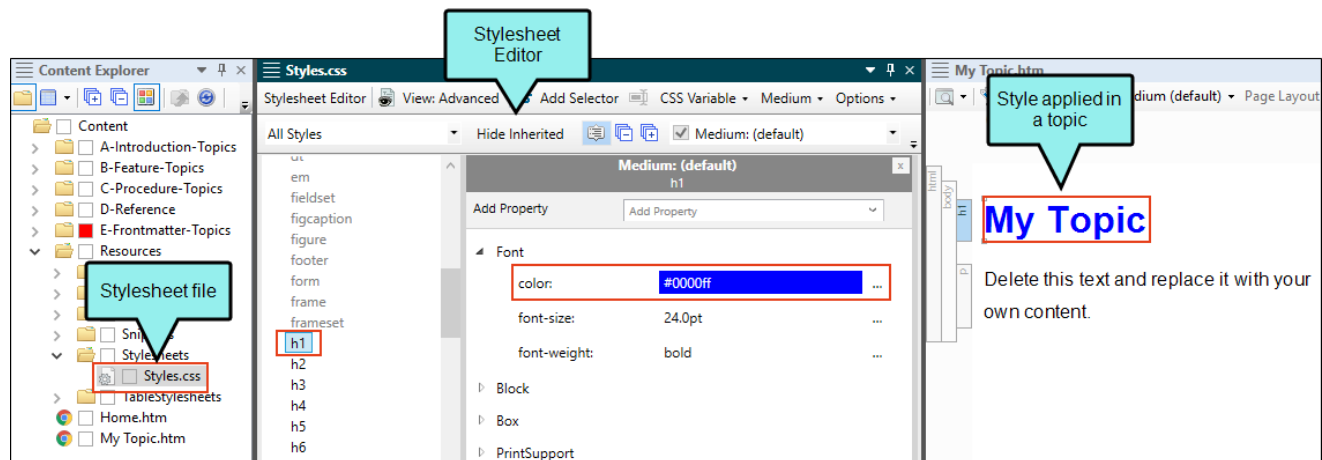
As much as possible, you should avoid the opposite of styles, which is local formatting. For example, you can highlight some text and make it green and italic right where that content exists. But if you make that same change in many places, it takes a lot longer and it's a lot more work to control the look of that content if you later change your mind.

In addition to using stylesheets for topics, you can use separate stylesheets in Flare Desktop specifically for tables inserted into topics.

For the differences between regular stylesheets, table stylesheets, and local properties—and when you should use one over the other—see the Help system.

Template Pages

A template page lets you automatically apply certain content—such as breadcrumbs, menus, toolbars, search bars, footer text, or mini-TOCs—to multiple topics in the output. A template page is primarily used in online outputs. However, it can be used in Word output as well. For Word output, a template page lets you determine page specifications (such as size or orientation) and to apply certain content (e.g., header text or page numbers) to many topics in a manual. For print-based outputs other than Word, page layouts are used instead of template pages.

☆ **EXAMPLE** You want every topic in your Help system to include a footer with contact information about your company. Rather than having to type this content or insert a snippet in every topic, you can create a template page and enter the footer in just that one location. Then you associate the template page with any of the targets in your project. The footer is automatically included at the bottom of every topic when you build and view any of those associated targets.

Page Layouts

A page layout is used for page specifications (e.g., size, margins) and to apply certain content (e.g., headers, footers, page numbers) to many (or all) topics in print-based output. It allows for easy configuration through the use of content frames, bleeds, crop marks, registration marks, margins, padding, alignment features, and more. You might create multiple page layouts for different purposes (e.g., title page, TOC, chapters, appendix).

Page layouts are similar to template pages, but are more flexible and easier to use. The general rule is that page layouts are recommended for *print-based output*, and template pages continue to be the best method for automatically adding headers, footers, breadcrumbs, and more in multiple topics for *online output*. Another difference between page layouts and template pages is that page layouts can be used for Adobe PDF, Microsoft Word or Microsoft PowerPoint, whereas template pages can be used only for Microsoft Word when creating print-based output.
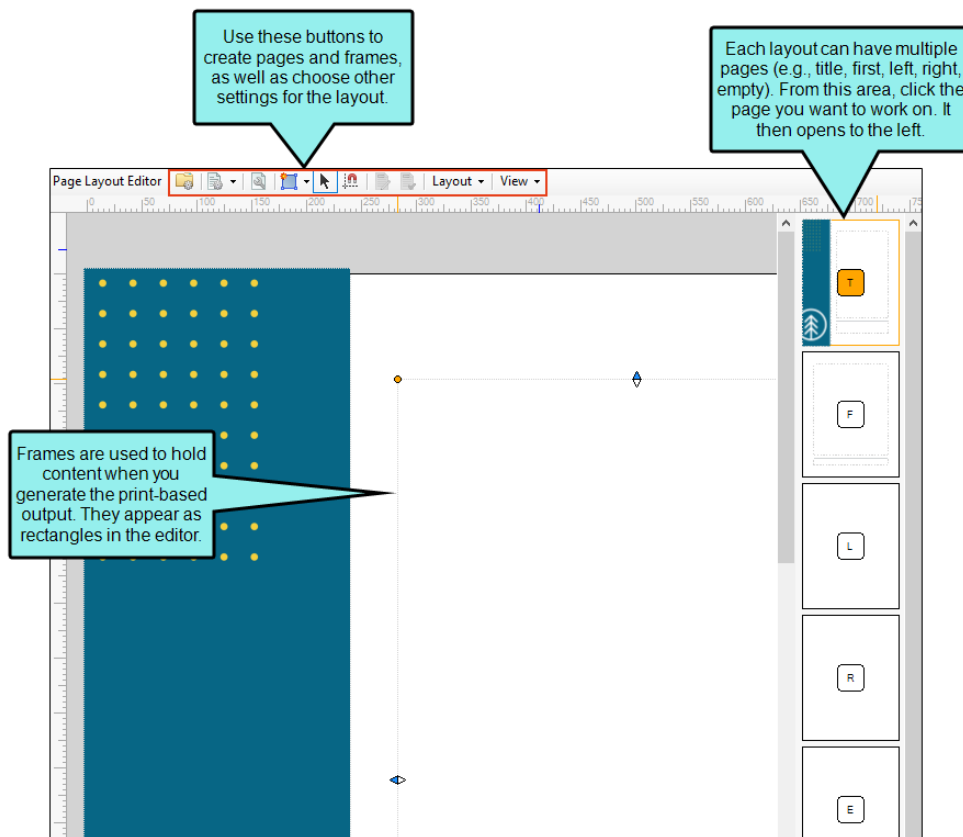
Skins

A skin is a file that contains information about the appearance of an online output window, including navigation elements.
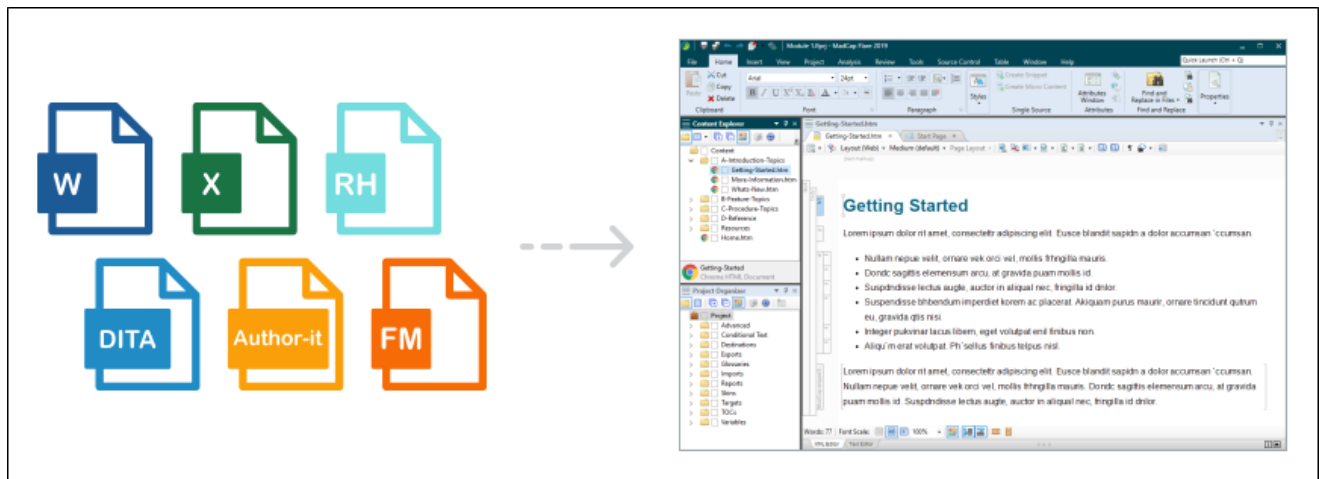
Depending on the type of output, a skin can help to determine the following:

- Main menu position
- Slide-out position
- Slide-out menu style
- Top menu depth levels
- User interface text
- Size and position of output
- Which navigation elements to include
- Other settings…

I Importing Key Features

There are several ways that you can import files into Flare projects.

Following are a few of the most common types of imported files:

- **Word** You can import Microsoft Word documents, including DOC, DOCX, and RTF files. Flare Desktop tightly integrates with Word, using modern XML data flow techniques and leveraging the Microsoft XML Schema for Office documents. This allows for superior content fidelity during import.

- **Excel** You can import Microsoft Excel files into Flare projects. They can be imported into existing projects or when creating a new project. The spreadsheet content will be added to tables in Flare Desktop when the import is finished.

- **HTML** You can import HTML files, automatically converting them to XHTML.

- **Confluence** If you have an Atlassian Confluence account, you can import pages (HTM and resource files) into Flare projects. You can import these files into a new Flare project or an existing one. Flare Desktop supports both the cloud and local versions of Confluence.

- **Markdown** Markdown is a markup language using plain formatting syntax. You can import Markdown (.md) files into Flare projects. This might be necessary, for example, if software developers or subject matter experts write content in Markdown and you want to include that information in your Flare project.

- **FrameMaker** You can import Adobe FrameMaker documents, including BOOK, FM, or MIF files. Because you can import the source FrameMaker BOOK and FM files (rather than just MIF files), Flare Desktop has full access to FrameMaker variables, conditionals, autonumbering, and so on. This means that those features are converted to Flare seamlessly.

Exporting Key Features

You can export an entire Flare project, or parts of one, to another location. One reason you might want to use this feature is to quickly and easily make a copy of projects and archive them, especially if you have an extremely large Flare project and need to archive only parts of it. Another use for this feature is translation. If you only need a portion of a parent project to be translated, you don't want to send the translator all of the files, but rather a smaller version of the project containing only the files requiring translation.

▍ Multi-Channel Publishing Key Features

Flare Desktop supports multi-channel publishing, which means you can draw from a common set of source files to generate and publish output in multiple formats. This helps to ensure your content is accessible to end users, wherever they are, and however they prefer to consume the information.
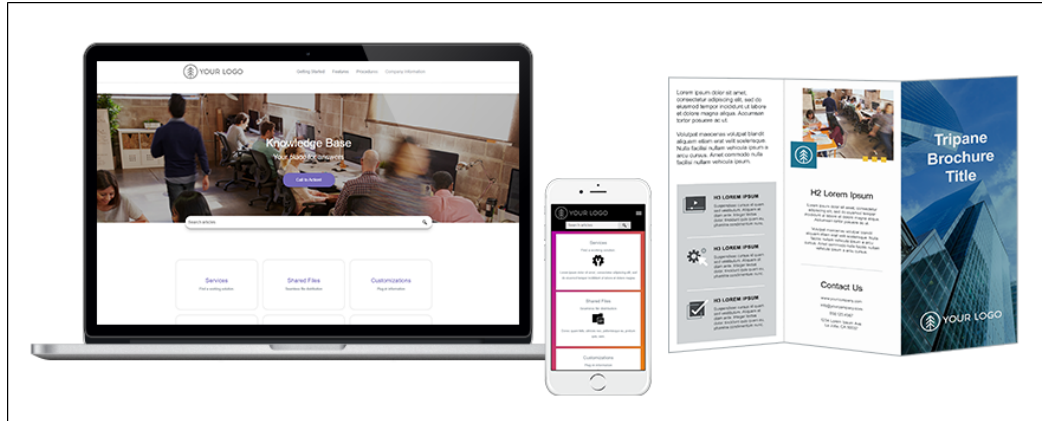
Recommended Output Types

Although you have many choices about the kinds of output you can generate, following are the most popular and recommended formats.

- **HTML5** This output format supports the HTML5 specification developed by the Web Hypertext Application Technology Working Group (WHATWG) and the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C). Therefore, the HTML5 format results in better markup and offers unique characteristics and features not found in other outputs (e.g., frameless, responsive, micro content, private output). HTML5 also lets you create traditional Tripane output or the newer Side or Top Navigation outputs, which give your output the appearance of a modern website with integrated responsive skins and content.

  For more information, see the *HTML5 Guide*. For links to this PDF manual and others, see the Help system.

- **Adobe PDF** Short for "Portable Document Format," PDF is an open standard format for electronic documentation exchange invented by Adobe. PDF files are used to represent a two-dimensional document in a device- and resolution-independent fixed-layout format.

- **Microsoft Word** The output can be exported to Microsoft Word in DOCX, DOC, PDF, or XPS format.

  For more information, see the *Print-Based Output Guide*. For links to this PDF manual and others, see the Help system.

Publishing Destinations

When you build output from your project, Flare Desktop produces the output files and places them in a folder with your project files. Publishing simply has to do with copying those output files and placing them in a location where others can access them. Of course, you can manually copy the output files from your project folder and paste them wherever you'd like, or you can use FTP software to transfer them to a remote server. Flare Desktop's publishing destination feature is simply a way to do this more quickly and easily.
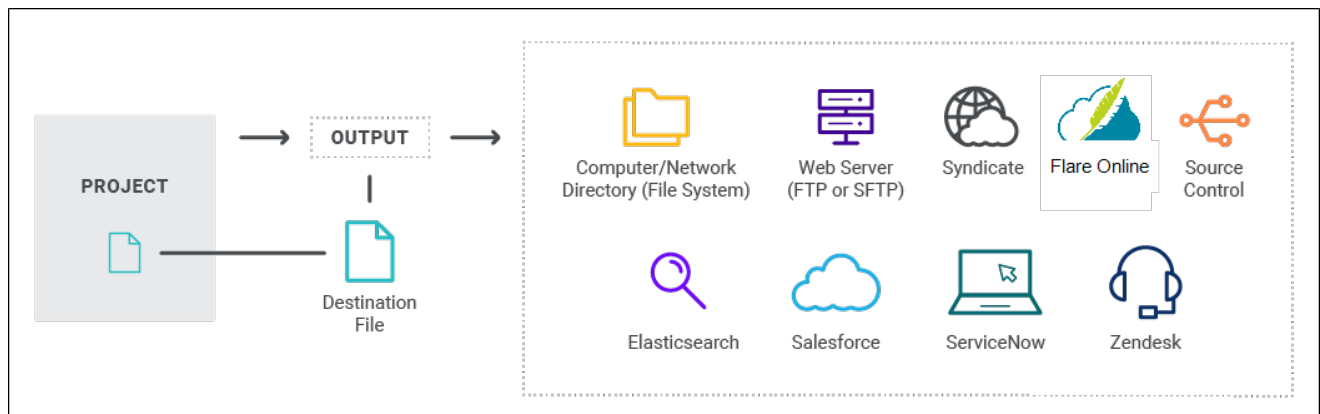
❙ Learning and Development Key Features

Following are some key learning and development (L&D) features in Flare Desktop.

Multiple Types of Courses

You can create three types of courses.

- **Quiz** Consists of test questions with specific answers that are graded. A quiz is a basic way to determine a level of knowledge. It can reveal gaps in knowledge.

- **Knowledge Check** Consists of information that is presented to a learner. This learning exercise is not formally graded. The course can include interactive content, and question sections that can help the learner grasp the content. You have the option to track if the learner completed the course or not. A knowledge check does not determine mastery.

- **Combination of a Knowledge Check and Quiz (Combo)** Includes both a knowledge check and a quiz, but only the quiz portion gets graded at the end of the course.

Single-Sourcing Content

You can reuse eLearning content (e.g., text, images, videos, audio) from one source location. Instructional designers, technical writers, subject matter experts, and others can productively collaborate, review, and share content across the enterprise.

Generating eLearning Packages

You can generate SCORM-compliant (1.2 and 2004) and xAPI-compliant (Tin Can) zip file packages to upload to any external learning management system (LMS), or learning record store (LRS).

Organizing Content

You can develop "chunks of training," or scalable topic-based eLearning content. Material can easily be arranged according to course, topic, product, table of contents, output, etc.

Using Templates

You can create simple tests from project eLearning templates. There is no need for programming knowledge or multimedia tool expertise.

Publishing Output

You can create your course to fit different purposes and devices with responsive HTML5 web design and multi-channel publishing. When a learner takes an online course, the output offers a modern web experience. You can also produce PDF output for your courses.

Streamlining Process

You can create more efficient workflows; including anything from importing and managing content, creating interactive courses, to publishing in different languages—especially when using Flare Desktop with other MadCap Software products (e.g., Flare Online, Capture, Lingo).

❙ Project Management Key Features

Flare Desktop provides several features that can be used to manage your project and enhance team authoring.

Analysis and Reports

Tools are available that let you perform analysis and reporting on both source files and output.

Analysis on Source Files

No setup is needed for analysis of source files. You simply run scans on your project.

- **Analysis Ribbon** From the Analysis ribbon in Flare Desktop, you can scan files and run reports to discover a wide variety of information. This includes broken links or bookmarks, files with changes, topics not in a table of contents (TOC), used meta tags, and more.
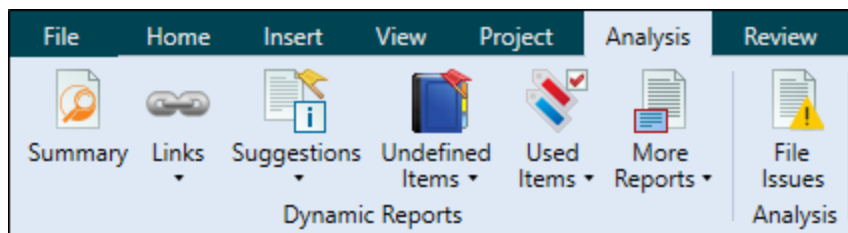
- **Reports** From the Reports folder in the Project Organizer, you can generate custom reports based on information contained in your project. In addition, you can design the look and feel of reports, save them for future access, and open them in a browser window (where you can print them).

Report information is organized, making it easy for you to locate and choose data to include in a report.

You can click this check box to select all options in a category.

Tables:	Concepts	☑ Select all
Styles	☑ Concept Links	☑ Files with Concepts
Archive	☑ Topics With Concept Links	☑ Topics With Concept Links Missing a Concept
	☑ Topics Without Concepts	☑ Used Concepts
	☑ Used Search Filters	
	Condition Tags	☐ Select all
	☐ Applied Conditions	☐ Files With Condition Tags
	☐ Files With Snippet Conditions	☐ Undefined Condition Tags
	☐ Unused Condition Tags	☐ Used Condition Tags
	Content Files	☐ Select all
	☐ Empty Content Folders	☐ File Word Count
	☐ Files With Annotations	☐ Files With Changes

☐ Select all
☐ Skip empty reports
☐ Print report after generation
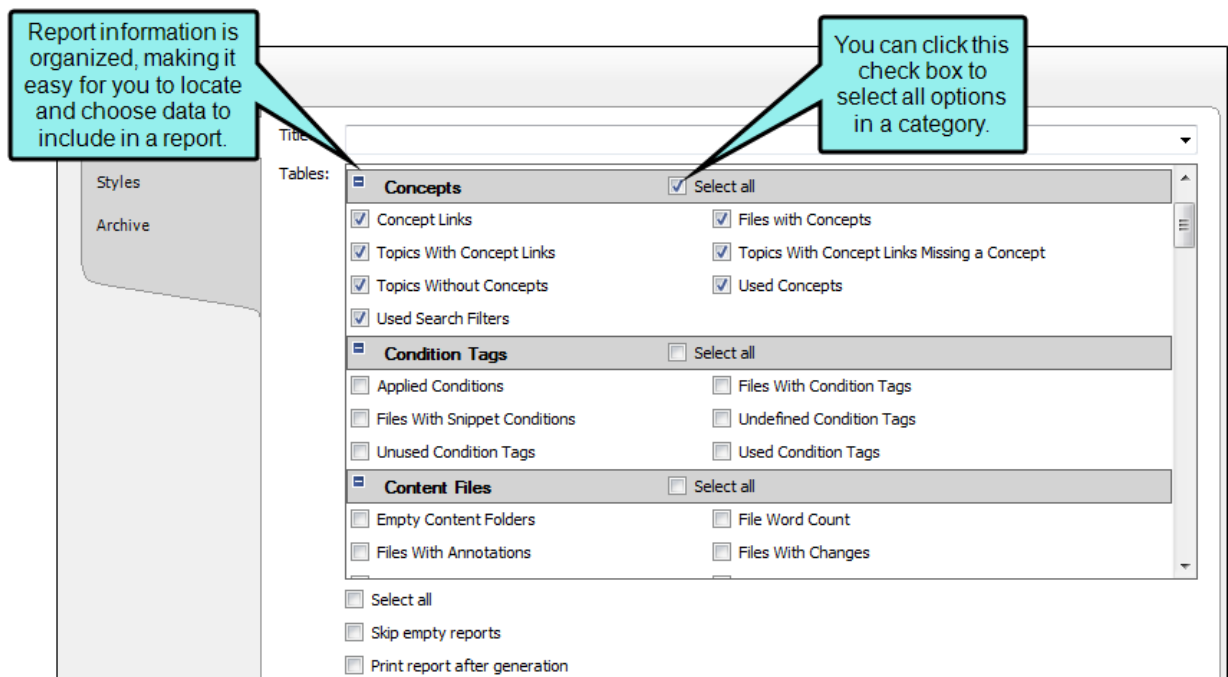
- **Text Analysis** From the Tools ribbon in Flare Desktop, you can run text analysis on content files for readability, average sentence length, and more.

Results

Analysis:

Reading ease score: 90*

Grade level score: 2.5*

Comparison:

Reading ease score: 81.4*

Grade level score: 3.8*

* Denotes statistical significance
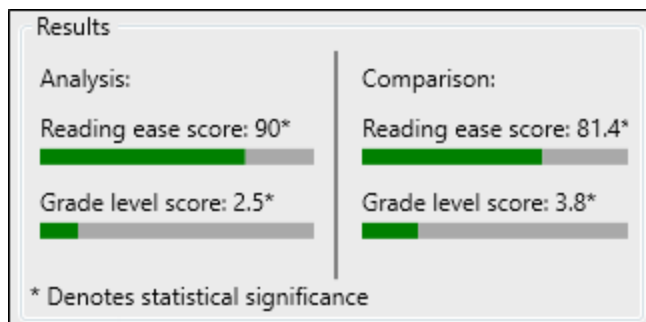
Analysis on Output Files

If you have a MadCap Flare Online license, you can view analytics on published HTML5 output. This includes search phrases used, search ph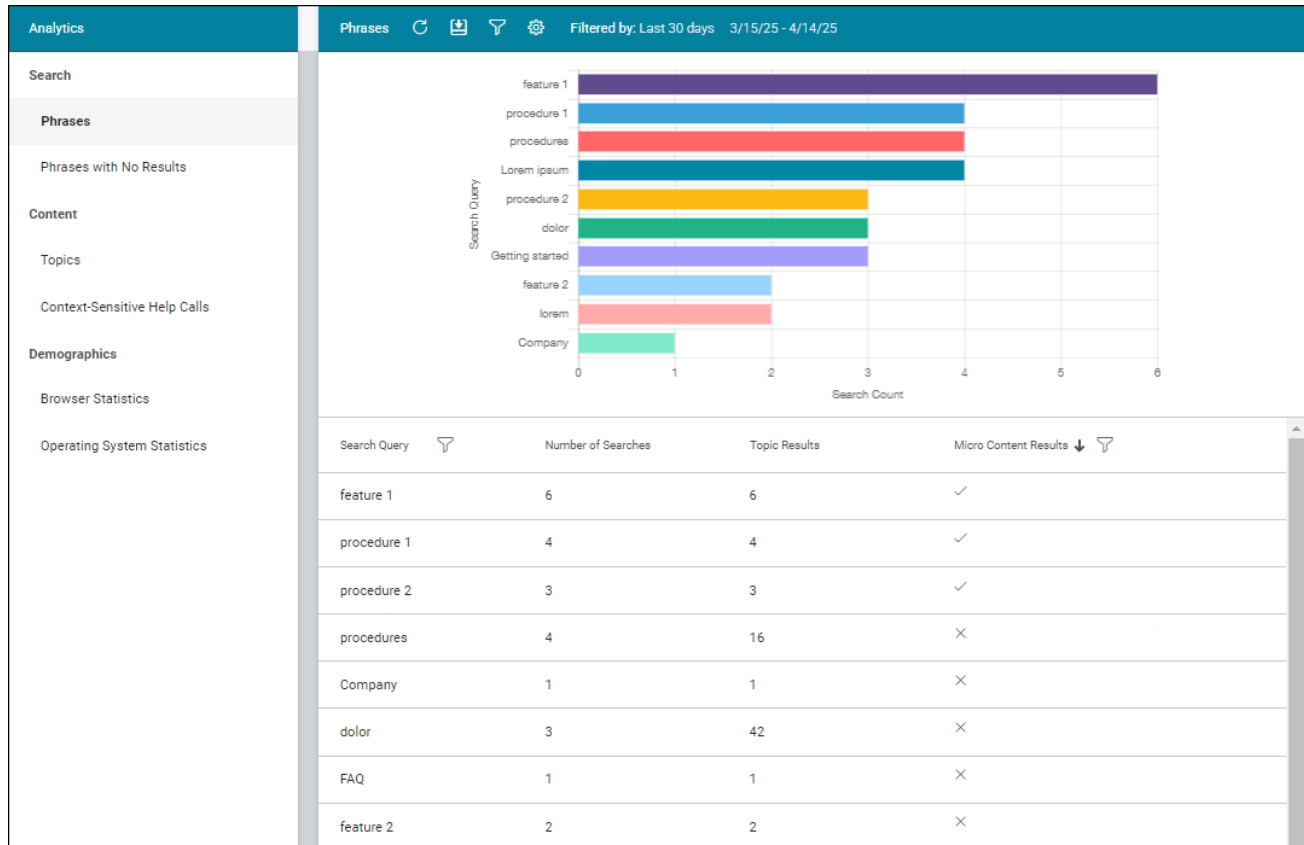rases with no results, topics viewed, context-sensitive Help calls, and demographic statistics (browsers and operating systems).

The process is quite simple. You create an analytics key in a couple of steps, associating it with a target. Then after building and publishing your output, you use the Analytics page in Flare Online to view user activity on the output as it occurs.

Analytics works on projects located in Flare Online, or you can host output on your own servers. If you host the output outside of Flare Online, you still need to use Flare Online with a key to view the analytics data. Also, the server where the output is hosted must be able to communicate with Flare Online (e.g., not be behind a firewall).

Global Project Linking

By using Global Project Linking, you can import content and project files contained in another Flare project, thus allowing you to maintain the information in one location but reuse it in any other project. With this feature, you can include or exclude particular types of files (e.g., topics, snippets, stylesheets, glossaries, targets), specific individual files, or files that have certain condition tags applied. Simply use the include/exclude methods that work best for you.

This is different than a simple import process, because in this case, the imported files remain linked to the source project. This lets you make future updates to those files in just one place—in the parent project. When you perform ongoing imports using your previous settings, Flare Desktop recognizes changes to the source files. Therefore, the new files can be brought over, replacing the outdated ones.

MadCap Flare Online Integration

MadCap Flare Online is a cloud-based platform that lets you plan, track, and manage the processes, content, and teams that are at the heart of your organization.

Over time, Flare Online has grown so much in terms of authoring features (including collaborative authoring) that it really has morphed into a cloud-based version of Flare. A Flare author could start a project, work only in the cloud (without ever needing or touching Flare Desktop), and end up with state-of-the art online and print-based outputs.

MadCap Flare Online's integration with MadCap Flare Desktop lets you store copies of your projects in Flare Online, continue to work on them locally in Flare Desktop, and keep both sets of copies in sync. You can use Flare Online to quickly build and publish output (and roll back when necessary) without the need to involve an IT department. Custom vanity URLs let you produce meaningful paths for your outputs. You can also send topics and snippets for review in Flare Online, as well as use custom checklists to track your progress in Flare projects.

The Flare Online window pane in Flare Desktop lets you upload (bind) and import projects, as well as push project changes to Flare Online. Additionally, you can see project properties, log in and out of your Flare Online account, and launch the Flare Online portal in your browser.

Not only can you build and publish output on MadCap Flare Online, but you also have the option of publishing output directly to Flare Online from your local Flare Desktop project. By "publish," we mean copying your output files to Flare Online, not making that output "live," which would make it visible to the general public. You would still need to use Flare Online to make that output live.

Another benefit of Flare Online is that you can produce private output that requires a user to log in with an email and Flare Online password. Without credentials, people cannot see the output. It is possible to set private output for all output types supported by Flare Online.

> **NOTE** For more complete information about the benefits of Flare Online, see its Help system:
>
> `https://documentation.madcapsoftware.com`

> **NOTE** MadCap Flare Online is sold separately from Flare Desktop. Please contact MadCap Software Sales for more information.

Meta Tags

A meta tag is a type of metadata that you can use in MadCap Flare files to make it easier to find, identify, and control information, whether it is in the source files or the output.

- **Search engine optimization (SEO)** The process of improving search results (quality and quantity) for web pages by search engines.

- **Content management** The use of processes and systems to help gather, handle, and distribute information.

- **Micro content integration** The generation of short, concise information that stands alone and is easily consumable. Meta tags can help display micro content in search results, and they are also helpful in controlling where micro content is shown in regular topic output.

Reviews and Contributions

There are a couple of processes that you can use for Flare topic reviews and collaboration.

- **Flare Online Reviews (Recommended)** Flare Desktop supports review packages (i.e., bundling files such as topics and snippets) and lets you send those packages to Flare Online to be reviewed by others. After editing and annotating the files in Flare Online's Review Editor, the reviewers submit the finished files, sending them back to your inbox in Flare Desktop. You can then accept or reject their changes and accept the file, replacing the original source file. Because this system uses the cloud, reviewers do not need to download any software to review your files. Also, multiple reviewers can edit the same file at the same time.

- **Contributor Reviews** The review process lets you send Flare files for review and receive file contributions from SMEs and other Flare authors. Non-Flare Desktop users can download a separate application called MadCap Contributor when collaborating with you and your Flare project. You can also use the same features to send files for review to other Flare Desktop authors using Flare Desktop only.

> **NOTE** If you do not choose to use either of these systems, you can always generate output—such as PDF or Word—and send those files to your reviewers. However, although this can be an easy method, it is also more manual and means that you need to copy and paste the changes into your source Flare files.

SharePoint and External Resources

Flare Desktop supports integration with Microsoft SharePoint, including SharePoint Online (or SharePoint 365). From Flare Desktop you can access, edit, and synchronize SharePoint files.

One of the ways Flare Desktop supports team collaboration is that you can create mappings to external resources. The External Resources window pane lets you select and maintain groups of external files that you want to share among Flare projects. The paths of these files are written to the registry so they will be available for all your Flare projects.

Source Control

Because all content and project-level files are stored as separate XML files, projects are compatible with all source control systems. All files in a project are independent of one another, which means that there are no file dependencies that hinder multiple authors from accessing project files. Flare Desktop also provides built-in support for Microsoft Team Foundation Server, Perforce Helix Core, Git, and Apache Subversion. Also, if you integrate MadCap Flare Online with your project, you can use Flare Online as a source control solution, with Git working behind the scenes.

Templates

A template is an existing project or file that serves as the basis for a new one, providing preset content, settings, or formatting.

Translation and Localization

Translation and localization services provide the ability for us to communicate and understand each other around the world better. Translation changes the language of your content, while localization adapts content for a specific region. MadCap products (e.g., Flare Desktop, Lingo, Capture, etc.) are designed to streamline the translation process so you can easily provide multilingual documentation to your global users.

The easiest approach to getting material translated into another language is engaging MadTranslations, MadCap's full-service translation and localization division. You send your Flare project to MadTranslations, and at the end of the process you get a translated Flare project back.

We recommend using MadCap Lingo as part of the translation process, whether it is used to do the actual translation or as a way to bundle and send Flare files to a translator who works with a third-party tool.

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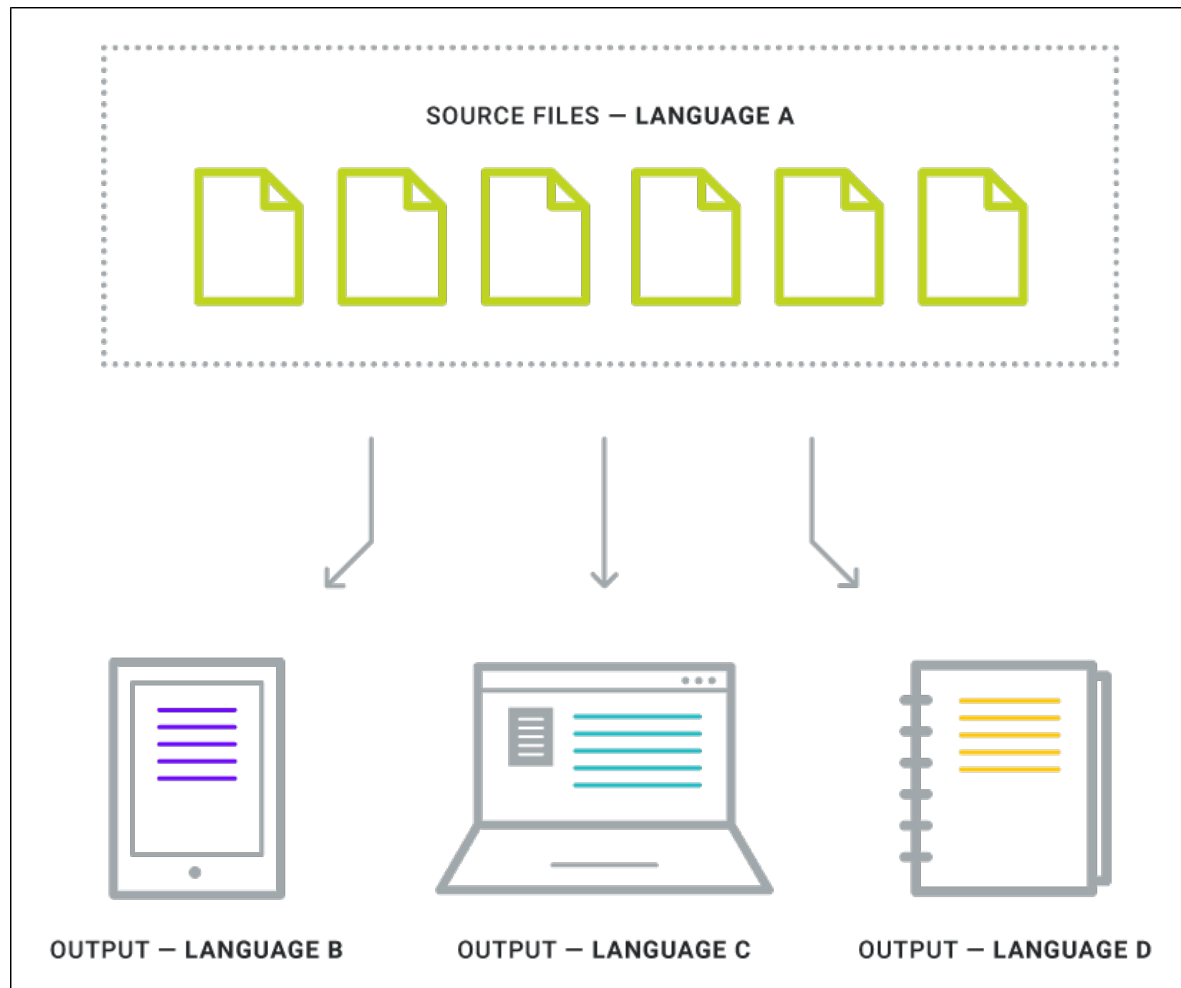
APPENDIX

PDFs

The following PDFs are available for download from the Help system.

▍ Tutorials

Autonumbers Tutorial

Back-to-Top Button Tutorial

Context-Sensitive Help Tutorial

Custom Toolbar Tutorial

eLearning Tutorial—Basic

eLearning Tutorial—Advanced

Getting Started Tutorial

Image Tooltips Tutorial

Lists Tutorial

Meta Tags Tutorial

Micro Content Tutorial—Basic

Micro Content Tutorial—Advanced

Responsive Output Tutorial

Single-Sourcing Tutorial

Snippet Conditions Tutorial

Styles Tutorials

Tables Tutorial

Word Import Tutorial

Cheat Sheets

Context-Sensitive Help Cheat Sheet

Folders and Files Cheat Sheet

Learning & Development Cheat Sheet

Lists Cheat Sheet

Micro Content Cheat Sheet

Print-Based Output Cheat Sheet

Search Cheat Sheet

Shortcuts Cheat Sheet

Structure Bars Cheat Sheet

Styles Cheat Sheet

User Guides

Accessibility Guide

Analysis and Reports Guide

Architecture Guide

Autonumbers Guide

Branding Guide

Condition Tags Guide

Context-Sensitive Help Guide

Eclipse Help Guide

eLearning Guide

Getting Started Guide

Global Project Linking Guide

HTML5 Guide

Images Guide

Import Guide

Indexing Guide

Key Features Guide

Lists Guide

MadCap Flare Online Integration Guide

Meta Tags Guide

Micro Content Guide

Navigation Links Guide

Plug-In API Guide

Print-Based Output Guide

Project Creation Guide

QR Codes Guide

Reviews & Contributions With Contributor Guide

Scripting Guide

Search Guide

SharePoint Guide

Skins Guide

Snippets Guide

Source Control Guide: Git

Source Control Guide: Perforce Helix Core

Source Control Guide: Subversion

Source Control Guide: Team Foundation Server

Styles Guide

Tables Guide

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Targets Guide

Template Pages Guide

Templates Guide

Topics Guide

Touring the Workspace Guide

Transition From FrameMaker Guide

Translation and Localization Guide

Variables Guide

Videos Guide

What's New Guide