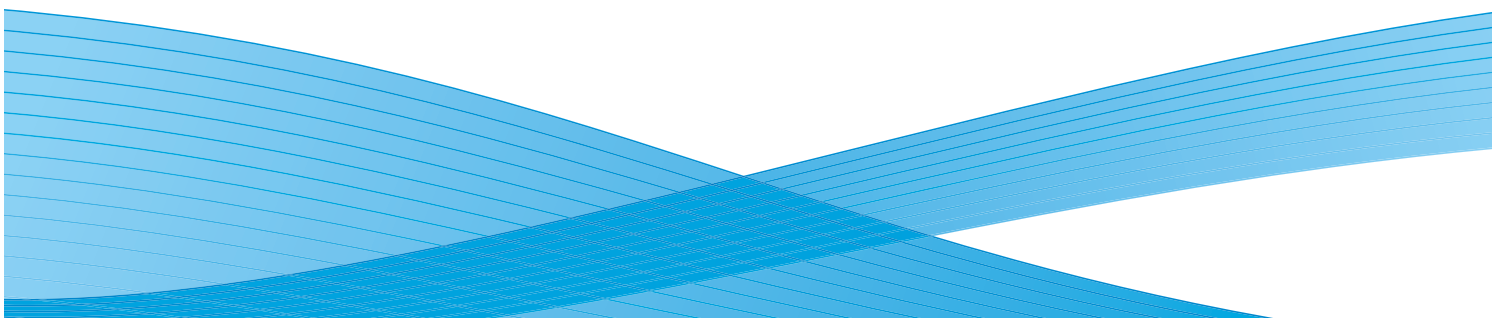


Accelerating Globalization

How documentation innovation can speed up your Time-To-Market.

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Documentation—a critical success factor in global marketing.

Executive Summary

In a global marketplace marked by rapid change and intense competition, a single day's delay in the introduction of a new product or service can adversely affect customer satisfaction, brand image and the bottom line.

In many cases, millions of dollars are at stake. That's why companies around the world have implemented process improvements and management methodologies like Lean Six Sigma to increase their overall efficiency and Time to Market speed.

Yet many of these companies have overlooked a key business process that has a direct impact on their ability to launch new products at the earliest opportunity.

It's the process that develops a wide range of product-related technical and marketing documentation for customers, distribution and sales channel partners, and service and support personnel.

All of this documentation has to be ready at the time of launch. Prospects need it to make purchasing decisions. Sales and distribution partners need it to sell the new product effectively. Customers depend on it to help them take care of the product after purchase. Service and support personnel use it to prepare for the inevitable inquiries and requests for repairs. In many cases, it's even required for regulatory compliance.

In the best of circumstances, it can be challenging to produce high-quality documentation in time for a new product launch. But that challenge is magnified when a manufacturer wants to enter multiple markets at the same time.

Once the original content is finalized, it must be carefully translated and localized to reflect critical differences in languages, dialects, cultures and regulations. And all of those tasks are complicated by the last minute revision cycles that come with the territory when you're developing marketing and technical documentation.

The impact of inefficiency.

When you consider this big picture view of the relationship between documentation and a global product rollout, it's easy to see how problems or inefficiencies in the documentation production process can derail an ambitious launch plan.

What may be harder to see, however, is this: The typical process for producing this documentation is highly inefficient. As a result, many companies routinely fail to optimize their time-to-market activities. They also struggle with post-sales support.

In a highly competitive marketplace where speed and efficiency are essential, companies can no longer afford to accept the suboptimal performance of a business process that plays a critical role in the success of new products—especially when there's an effective alternative.

After all, advancements in technology, best practices, strategic partnering and Business Process Outsourcing now make it possible for global companies to re-engineer the entire documentation process to eliminate inefficiencies, take full advantage of the power of automation and improve critical Time-To-Market activities.

Content creation and management, translation and localization, multi-channel production and distribution—all of these steps can be dramatically improved with a holistic business process optimization effort.

The result? Costs go down. Employee productivity goes up. Documentation quality improves. Compliance problems disappear. And companies are able to launch new products in multiple markets at a faster pace than ever before.

It's all part of the effort to turn an essential document-driven business process into a powerful competitive advantage that will help you maximize the global marketing potential of every product opportunity.

The relentless pursuit of global growth.

No question about it. The age of globalization has opened up promising new markets in virtually every region of the world. And these dynamic markets are more important than ever, because they provide the new customers that companies need to drive sustained growth.

Nevertheless, the diversity of these markets complicates the task of getting marketing and technical documentation ready for global launch. After all, everything has to be skillfully translated and localized in accordance with local cultures, customs, regulations and dialects.

As I pointed out before, these challenges are compounded by legacy production processes that are fragmented, redundant and highly inefficient. Let me explain the problems with the traditional approach in greater detail.

Breaking through the status quo.

In a typical supply chain scenario, several different organizational silos will be involved in the production of documentation. They may be responsible for different documents or deliverables. Or they may manage a different component of the process.

This approach essentially means that companies are operating multiple processes instead of a single, integrated process. As a result, core content that may be needed for several different deliverables is created, translated and localized again and again. The revision process follows the same redundant pattern. And even in cases where process components operate efficiently within the boundaries of specific silos, there may be problems with hand-offs and repetitive efforts as the workflow proceeds to the next organizational unit.

Clearly, these inefficiencies add time and cost to the process. Here are two common examples.

With a procurement-driven approach to translation, a company might send every product-related document out for full translation to a vendor offering the lowest cost per translated word. However, if documents go through multiple revisions or if similar content goes into multiple documents, a company might be paying to have the exact same words translated again and again. As a result, the low cost vendor turns into a costly and inefficient solution.

Different teams may design specific documents without a holistic understanding of all of the related deliverables that may be involved in the product documentation process. As a result, they miss the opportunity to develop designs that facilitate the re-use and re-purposing of content for post-sale and production support functions.

This fragmented, silo-based approach to process management can also have an impact on the quality of the documentation, since a variety of organizations, workgroups and vendors are involved in content creation, translation, localization, production and distribution.

In addition, quality problems and production delays may have an adverse impact on regulatory compliance and brand image.

Of course, employees involved in the production of documentation often recognize these inefficiencies, but they often do not have the power and influence to address them. So the status quo remains. And companies miss the opportunity for breakthrough improvements.

Building a better process.

If you start with a clean slate, however, it's easy to see the potential for a very different approach to process design. And it's based on a single transformative insight.

Since all of the documentation is based on the same product, there should be an opportunity to re-use content. So why re-create content for each document deliverable? Why keep re-inventing the wheel?

Instead, you can re-engineer the entire process to maximize the re-use of content and minimize content creation, translation and localization. That's the way to make a real breakthrough in terms of Time To Market speed. It will also improve documentation quality and cost.

These goals become even more important when you consider the realities of product development and manufacturing. Companies today often produce different versions of a product as well as different families of products sharing a common platform. Clearly, there should be opportunities to re-use content in both of these situations.

In addition, the inevitable engineering changes that occur before and after launch make it difficult to produce accurate, high-quality documentation in a timely fashion. So it's important to design the entire process for maximum efficiency so you can maintain quality control and expedite these essential revisions.

Of course, it's not easy to change the status quo and turn a series of fragmented operations into an integrated and optimized process.

But the potential for step-change gains in efficiency represent a powerful business case for improvement.

If you're ready to transform the marketing or technical product documentation process in your organization, here are some of the keys to success.

Process transformation: seven essential steps.

1. **Think like a change agent and break down the silos.** To achieve the full potential of a business process transformation, you have to optimize it from end-to-end. Otherwise, you'll only get the benefits of a partial improvement.

That's why it's so important for clients to step back from a business-as-usual, silo-based perspective and recognize that all of the operations for producing product documentation can be integrated into a centralized process designed for maximum efficiency and speed.

The next step is to help key stakeholders understand the many ways a process optimization effort will yield long-term benefits to the enterprise while making their organizations more efficient and effective. This shared vision will help break down the silos and build a strong foundation for success.

2. **Analyze the process end-to-end with a disciplined methodology like Lean Six Sigma.** Since product documentation is a complex, multi-faceted process that often crosses organizational boundaries, it's essential to conduct an in-depth, data-driven analysis before taking action to engineer improvements. This analysis will help identify the redundancies and non-value-added steps that can be eliminated with an effective process optimization effort.
3. **Build the foundation for content re-use.** Here are two key components of a documentation process designed to maximize the use of content and minimize content creation.
 - A centralized digital repository. The repository stores all of the content for product documentation. When revisions are required, they are made to content stored in the repository. Revised content can then be quickly exported to the appropriate documents and deliverables. This time-consuming step can even be automated with the right process design. Having a centralized repository also gives companies an effective way to ensure fast access to content and maintain version control.

- **Structured content authoring.** Organizations can streamline the documentation process with a structured approach to content authoring based on a nonproprietary standard like XML. It simplifies the task of content creation, ensures quality and consistency, automates formatting, and facilitates search and retrieval. In essence, it gives unstructured text the advantages of a structured database. In combination with a digital repository, this disciplined approach to content development also plays a key role in automating the revision process.
4. **Simplify global translation and localization.** Translation and localization services are critical for success in a diverse, global marketplace. Yet few companies have optimized their approach to managing these essential activities.
- One problem is the dependence on dozens or even hundreds of niche service providers. Experience shows that this multi-vendor approach often leads to inconsistent quality, high error rates, production delays and compliance problems—all of which can have an adverse impact on an organization’s brand image and Time To Market. That’s why vendor consolidation is a logical component of an effective solution. In fact, it’s now possible to rely on a single outsourcing partner to manage all of your global translation and localization needs.
- A qualified partner should have expertise in dozens of languages and dialects, familiarity with the cultures, laws and regulations of key markets around the world, state-of-the-art translation tools and technology, a network of top professionals to call on for highly specialized projects, disciplined management procedures designed to continuously improve quality and extensive experience in serving the needs of global companies.
5. **Implement the latest technologies and best practices.** Companies should take advantage of the latest innovations to automate time-consuming steps, improve information security, break down the barriers between paper and digital documents, and speed up the workflow. The implementation of best practices developed by leaders in the product documentation field is another important step that accelerates process optimization.
6. **Employ disciplined, data-driven management to maximize efficiency and deliver measurable results.** In a complex undertaking like process transformation, it’s essential to ensure that your management and governance model includes reliable mechanisms for quality control, brand control and continuous improvement. It should also help you maintain a sharp focus on organizational efficiency and effectiveness.
7. **Consider a comprehensive Business Process Outsourcing solution.** For most companies today, the development of product documentation is not a core competence. That’s why it makes sense to bring in outside expertise or possibly outsource the entire process to a partner with the experience, expertise, technology and disciplined management methodologies needed for everything from content creation, translation and localization to multi-channel distribution and end-of-life product management. It’s the fastest way to reap the benefits of a holistic business process transformation.

A global IT leader transforms its documentation process.

It's easy to understand the theoretical benefits of optimizing an inefficient legacy process. But the ultimate test is whether it yields valuable benefits in real-world applications.

Here's one example of how a leading IT provider dramatically improved its entire process for product documentation through outsourcing.

A few years ago, Fujitsu decided to transform its product documentation process to accelerate Time-To-Market, reduce costs and increase its ability to succeed in a highly competitive marketplace. At the time, the company operated two documentation production centers in Europe where it maintained an inventory of 200 user guides in 26 different languages.

The process was difficult to manage, because the user guides are frequently updated and revised due to changes in product specifications as well as the product line. The company also realized that it wasn't taking full advantage of opportunities for structured authoring, content re-use, automation and optimized workflows.

With help from a strategic partner, Fujitsu developed a comprehensive content management strategy and just-in-time workflow for the entire product information lifecycle. The outsourcing solution also included a centralized digital repository for content, a structured approach to technical writing; expert translation and localization services; and a more efficient approach to print production, fulfillment and inventory management.

Once the solution was implemented, the company reduced its costs at both of its production centers, realizing double-digit cost savings in year one with additional savings in successive years. In addition, authoring and translation costs decreased by 25% in the first year, thanks in large part to the efficiencies that come from content re-use.

The transformation effort also streamlined the entire documentation workflow, which improved the company's time to market and enhanced its ability to launch products in multiple markets at the same time.

Other real-world examples of breakthrough process improvements.

Continental Airlines decided to make dramatic improvements in its Maintenance Advisory process. The company wanted to accelerate production and distribution, reduce costs, and improve compliance, since all of the company's mechanics and inspectors are required to read new advisories within 20 days of the publication date.

With help from a strategic partner, Continental re-engineered the process to include structured authoring, a centralized document repository and an automated approach to compliance management. The transition to structured authoring helped the company reduce the cycle time for document creation by almost 50%. The accelerated pace of production also enhanced safety by providing maintenance staff members with critical updates at the earliest opportunity. The automated workflow improved

compliance and reporting while saving maintenance supervisors valuable time every week. In addition to these benefits, the company decreased the annual cost of this critical business process by more than \$750,000.

Ford Motor Company launched an initiative to optimize a key documentation process. The automotive leader reduced product content turnaround times by as much as 80% and increased the Time-To-Market speed for key deliverables like workshop manuals and technical service bulletins.

In the 1990s, Xerox transformed the entire process for providing information to our service technicians to improve service quality, boost customer satisfaction and reduce costs. The solution included a centralized digital repository for all service-related information, a structured approach to authoring and design and a focus on maximizing the re-use of content. The solution lowered our documentation costs and increased the productivity of our technicians by providing laptop access to the right information at the right time. Over a period of several years, the total savings in our documentation and service organizations amounted to \$670 million. We also optimized our approach to new product documentation in Europe, reducing costs 60% over a three-year period even though the number of product launches doubled during that time.

All of these examples point out the advantages of optimizing complex product documentation processes. They also show that true process transformation often yields multiple benefits in terms of speed, efficiency, cost, compliance and sustainability.

Recognizing the value of a pragmatic approach.

When it comes to business process optimization, the most powerful gains come from a holistic transformation. But let's face it: That can be difficult to achieve in situations where it's unrealistic to expect all of the stakeholders to commit to re-engineering their workflows.

That's why it's important to remember that significant, step-change progress can be made by launching an optimization effort in specific areas such as marketing or technical documentation. In this scenario, the first process improvement initiative not only addresses a top-priority "pain point," it helps build the infrastructure for a solution that can be expanded into other areas. Each initiative also serves as a pilot project for the next phase.

Take the management of service and support documents, for example. Through strategic partnering or outsourcing, companies can implement an optimized approach that includes structured content authoring, objective-driven content design, XML-based content management, document production, inventory management and multi-channel information delivery.

Many companies are also taking action to implement a benchmark approach to global translation and localization through outsourcing. After all, a single partner can manage translation and localization on a global basis by providing in-country translators who

are subject matter experts in the product category, translation memory management, and disciplined management practices designed to ensure the right formatting and the consistent use of terminology.

These integrated services can help companies make dramatic improvements in the cost structure and Time to market for key product-related deliverables.

The same approach can apply to other areas of product documentation. It can also be extended to improve the management of engineering documents, which play a critical role in the development of all product documentation.

So whether the initial goal is a holistic transformation or development of a practical, step-by-step migration path to process optimization, companies can streamline the development and distribution of high-quality product documentation with help from a qualified consultant, strategic partner or a leading Business Process Outsourcing services provider.

In a fast-moving global marketplace, speed is a powerful advantage.

Over the years, companies have transformed their engineering and manufacturing processes by employing Lean Six Sigma methodologies that speed up cycle times, maximize efficiency and eliminate unnecessary steps.

But they haven't applied the same drive for maximum efficiency to the supply chain for product documentation. As a result, they operate processes that are inefficient, redundant and error-prone. These problems, in turn, cause product introduction delays that literally put millions of dollars at risk in terms of both revenue and corporate brand image.

Through expert outsourcing, however, companies can re-engineer their product documentation processes to speed up Time To Market and improve their ability to launch products in multiple markets at the same time. As a result, they will be in much better position to maximize their new product opportunities.

In addition, efficient product documentation processes will help them lower their operating costs, increase employee productivity, improve compliance and make faster progress toward their sustainability goals.

And remember. This is not a hopeful vision of the future.

It's a concrete description of what's possible today with the power of transformative Business Process Outsourcing.

About the Author

Richard Baily serves as vice president for Xerox Global Services, where he manages the Imaging & Document Management Services group, a team that works closely with North American clients in six major industries: financial services, manufacturing and energy, retail, healthcare, government and high-tech. Baily and his team provide services that improve the employee and personnel records management process, manage engineering drawings, mine research documentation to better manage intellectual property, and manage the legal discovery process to better prepare clients of litigation.

Baily's experience with document management and information systems dates back to early 1991, when he left Arthur Anderson and Company to help form XLConnect, a systems integration consulting business. When the company went public in 1997, Baily managed operations in the mid-Atlantic region, including marketing, alliance and training programs. When Xerox later acquired XLConnect, renaming the division Xerox Connect, Baily joined the team and helped to successfully integrate the two companies, which were later merged into Xerox Global Services.

Baily holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in chemistry from West Virginia University and a Master of Business Administration degree from the University of Pittsburgh.

Visit Rich's page on the Xerox Thought Leadership site (www.xerox.com/thoughtleadership) for more information and to find the following:

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