



Intralox boosts productivity and reduces desktop publishing costs by 99% with Tridion Docs

www.intralox.com

Founded: 1971

Division: Technical Communications

Industry: Manufacturing

Headquarters: New Orleans, Louisiana

Employees: 2,000+

Customers: 60,000+

Countries serviced directly: 100+

Languages supported: 18

Intralox is the global conveyance solutions leader, specializing in modular plastic conveyor belts and related services and equipment. They create innovative technologies such as Modular Plastic Conveyor Belting, ThermoDrive® technology, DirectDrive™ Spiral Systems and Activated Roller Belt™ (ARB™) equipment.

Intralox's Technical Communications Group is responsible for creating and maintaining internal and customer-facing documentation for all products. This includes product literature, design guidelines, user manuals, maintenance manuals, engineering manuals, policies and procedures.

Situation

With the company slogan 'Reliably Inventive', it comes as no surprise that Intralox is constantly looking for ways to do things better. As the world's largest modular plastic belt manufacturer, Intralox is continuously developing, improving and delivering on its promises to customers. That's why in 2018, the company decided to evaluate their content strategy and make changes to the way they produce, maintain and distribute their technical documentation.

Arguably the most important change came when Jonathan Chandler, at the time a seasoned technical writer at Intralox, made the case for establishing the Technical Communications Group and bringing all technical writers together into a unified team. Jonathan is now the Technical Communications Group Supervisor, managing a team of 10 writers.

Solution elements

Tridion® Docs

RWS Translation Management

RWS Language Services

Results

99% reduction in annual DTP costs

3x more productive than non-Tridion users

79% translation cost savings

Consolidated content management into single source of truth

Removed IT overhead for redundant systems

Challenge

One of the biggest challenges the Technical Communications Group initially faced was keeping pace with the needs of the business as it grew. With typical documents averaging 100-120 pages and the longest over 500 pages, consistently updating documents had become a huge task. Based on customer feedback, changes were frequently required and costs for desktop publishing and translation were steadily increasing. Despite the Tech Comm group now operating under one roof, the documentation for each individual product line was still being managed and maintained in separate systems. Content was being authored in isolation and then reviewed in PDFs, resulting in hundreds of disparate files and numerous versions of the same content.

Following an internal audit, Intralox learned they had the potential to reuse 87% of their content, but their existing process had no way of effectively enabling or managing content reuse. The Tech Comm group soon realized that moving to a structured content management approach was the logical solution. They also realized that in order to make this change sustainable and to maximize content reuse, standardization and collaboration between teams, a Component Content Management System (CCMS) would be needed to manage content centrally. It was very important to Intralox that the system of choice was cloud-based and would integrate with their translation management system so they could continue leveraging their translation memory. As existing customers of RWS Translation Management and Language Services, Tridion Docs was the standout CCMS choice for Intralox.

Solution

In preparation for the move to a DITA-based structured content management system, Intralox needed to refresh their content strategy. The team worked closely with Content Rules, a RWS partner with expert structured content strategy consultants. The Tech Comm group set to work modelling their content, contextualizing it with metadata, organizing it into a taxonomy, and defining their workflows. Each publication was broken down into its component parts – chapters, procedures, concepts, images, etc. – and standardized as much as possible. Metadata was then applied to content in a project that involved stakeholders from all areas of the business – from marketing and engineering to customer service. Lastly, workflows were created for content production, review and delivery of all content components.

Jonathan explains how laying the foundation of a structured content strategy helped Intralox achieve the greatest value from Tridion in a short space of time:

“This work was critical to the success and rapid progress we made. We couldn’t have accomplished what we did or gotten the same level of reuse if we’d carried on working the way we were.”

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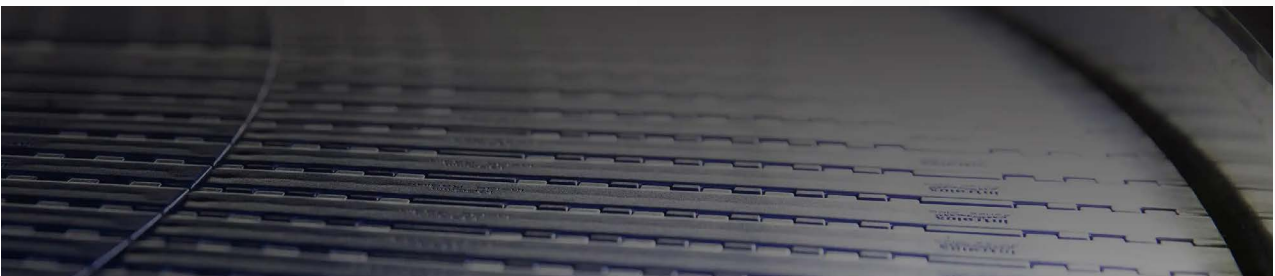
With the strategy work complete, Intralox easily implemented Tridion Docs into the Tech Comm group and immediately saw productivity gains. The user manuals that include all the information end users need to install, operate, service or troubleshoot their equipment are updated more frequently. Previously, this work was carried out in separate systems with separate workflows and required the input of stakeholders from multiple departments. However, Technical Writers now work with Oxygen XML Author and the Tridion Docs Publication Manager for these tasks. Additionally, Tridion was able to remove inefficiencies by consolidating the draft and review process into a single system – Collective Spaces.

With Collective Spaces, Intralox centralized the technical authoring process and combined feedback in a new, streamlined workflow. Input from engineering teams and the lifecycle services team is provided through Review Space, meaning that writers working on those updates no longer have to reach out to subject matter experts (SMEs) separately or try to track changes through multiple PDFs; now they can see all suggested changes in the Tridion user interface. They can also communicate with each other through Tridion, using synchronized comments and a simple feedback mechanism that enables greater collaboration.

Tridion has also enabled Intralox to unlock their potential to reuse content across the Tech Comm group. Prior to implementing DITA and Tridion Docs, reusable content had to be copied and pasted across all the relevant documents and managed separately. Using Tridion, content is created once, then deployed to multiple documents at the push of a button. Transitioning to structured content has greatly improved content reuse, quality, consistency and translation efficiency, and has contributed to the Tech Comm group being 3x more productive than other groups working outside of Tridion. When combined with RWS Translation Management and RWS Language Services, Intralox has achieved a 99% reduction in desktop publishing costs and 79% in translation cost savings¹.

These benefits have even trickled down to other parts of the organization. With Tridion and structured content, the Tech Comm group can more effectively serve the customer support side of the business by attaching sections of larger manuals to sales orders. As a long-term goal, the Tech Comm group wants to move to an HTML output, which will allow easier access to specific content and make sharing content easier.

The process improvements the Tech Comm group have made are also felt by the customer training team, who use the technical documentation to develop training programmes. They create material from scratch less frequently and have been able to create much better content as a result. These outcomes are a huge win for Intralox, who have always been proud of their high customer service accuracy score.



¹ Source: Intralox QBR 2021

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Jonathan Chandler
Technical Communications
Group Supervisor, Intralox

What’s next

Intralox has made great strides in optimizing the delivery of their technical content to PDF with Tridion Docs and, looking into the future, are excited about rolling out more dynamic publishing options. Currently, the group is testing the delivery of content via the web, with a goal of making their documentation even more accessible and versatile.

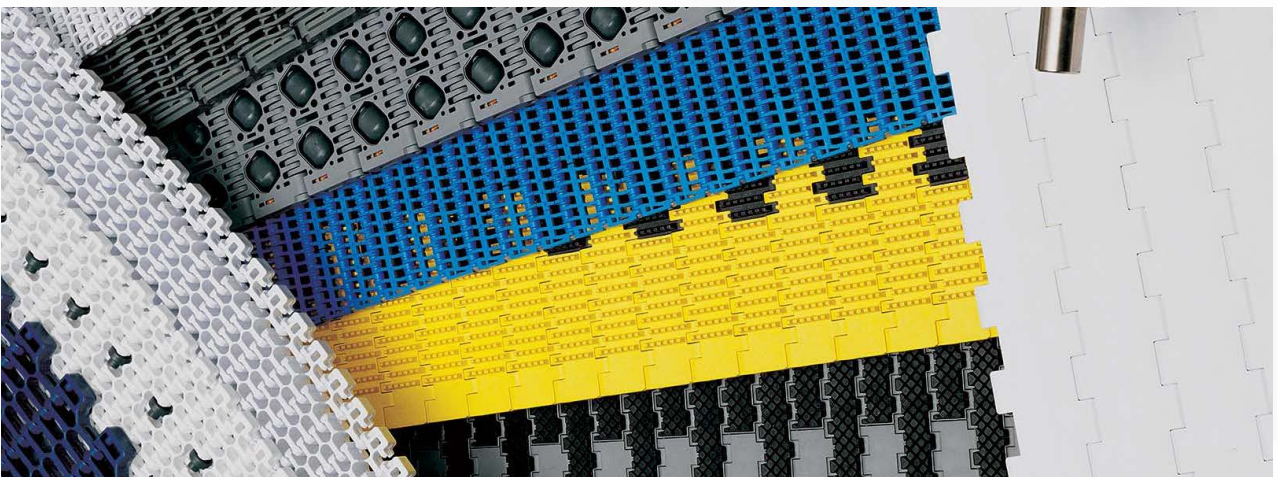
Jonathan talks about how he sees this becoming a more important aspect of their use of Tridion in the future:

“The dynamic publishing component of Tridion is crucial for us. It gives us a lot of flexibility and more opportunity to split up how we’re delivering content and what we’re delivering to where. The possibility to deliver smaller documents in PDF while pushing more content to the web – that’s big for us.”

Another avenue being tested is allowing SMEs to author content in Tridion themselves. Currently, SMEs are documenting product development processes in a variety of systems – PowerPoint, Excel, notes, emails – and the Tech Comm group has to amalgamate this information to create their tech docs. By providing SMEs with access to Draft Space to document product development, technical writers can easily access it, collaborate with SMEs sooner and use the information to create whatever document types are required.

Intralox has achieved astonishing savings from using Tridion, but the real value is deeper than that. Jonathan explains how the implementation of Tridion Docs has allowed Intralox to stay true to their company mantra ‘Reliably Inventive’:

“Moving to DITA and implementing Tridion has allowed us to harness and gain more control. It’s provided us with new ways to think about content—how we use it, who creates it, how we share it. It’s given us more flexibility and opportunities we didn’t have before.”



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About RWS

RWS Holdings plc is a unique, world-leading provider of technology-enabled language, content and intellectual property services. Through content transformation and multilingual data analysis, our unique combination of technology and cultural expertise helps our clients to grow by ensuring they are understood anywhere, in any language.

Our purpose is unlocking global understanding. By combining cultural understanding, client understanding and technical understanding, our services and technology assist our clients to acquire and retain customers, deliver engaging user experiences, maintain compliance and gain actionable insights into their data and content.

Our clients include 90 of the world's top 100 brands, the top 20 pharmaceutical companies and 19 of the top 20 patent filers. Our client base spans Europe, Asia Pacific, and North and South America. We work in the automotive, chemical, financial, legal, medical, pharmaceutical, technology and telecommunications sectors, which we serve from 80+ global locations across five continents.

Founded in 1958, RWS is headquartered in the UK and publicly listed on AIM, the London Stock Exchange regulated market (RWS.L).

For further information, please visit: www.rws.com

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