

# Why (or why not) FrameMaker?

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<http://www.microtype.com>

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# Box contents

- **FrameMaker & Structured FrameMaker**
- **Acrobat Distiller**
- **WebWorks Publisher Standard Edition 7.0, which supports export to HTML, Palm Reader and Microsoft Reader formats (but not HTML Help)**



# Functionality highlights

- **Complex/long document handling**
  - **Stability**
  - **Books**
- **Single sourcing capabilities**
- **Interactive PDF output**



# Functionality highlights

## ■ Automation

- **Pagination/layout control**
- **Autonumbering**
- **Cross-references, variables**
- **Character style control in special text**
- **Generated files**

## ■ Structured FrameMaker

- **Validation**
- **XML, SGML output**



# Complex/Long Document Handling



- **Manage multiple files as a single project**
  - **Book-wide Search/Replace, spell check, view commands**
  - **Navigation (page up/down across files)**
- **Number pages & paragraphs throughout the book**
- **Prepare a table of contents or index for an entire book**



- **Use one set of definitions or different definitions in each document**
- **Update cross-references, generated files & text insets for an entire book in one operation**
- **Can convert book to a single PDF file or to a set of cross-linked PDF files**



# Single Sourcing Capabilities



# Single sourcing capabilities

- **Global control of settings:  
Multiple templates**
- **Identical chunks in same or  
different chapters: Text insets**
- **Shared chapter(s) in different  
publications: through FrameMaker  
Books**



# Single sourcing capabilities

- **Conditional text**
- **Additional text-level control, using:**
  - **Variables**
  - **Cross-references**
  - **Autonumbering**
- **Color views**

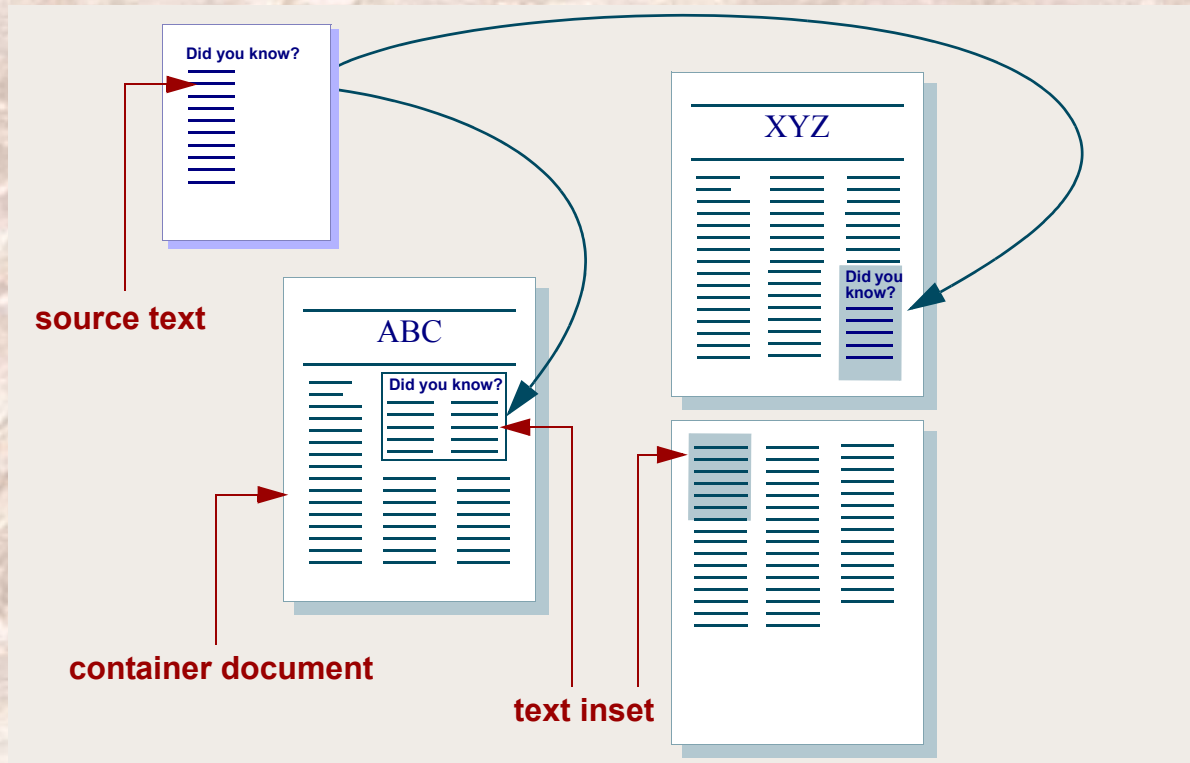
# Conditional text

**Contain multiple versions in one file:**

- **Unconditional text shows in all versions**
- **Conditional text – a single character to an entire section – only belongs to some versions**
- **Hide/show conditional text for different document versions**



# Text insets (referenced)



# Interactive PDF Output



# Conversion to PDF

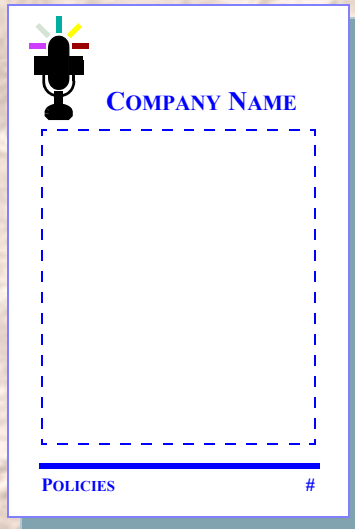
- **Specified paragraphs are converted to Acrobat bookmarks**
- **Hypertext commands (manual or automatically-generated) and cross-references are converted to links**
- **Cropping, DocInfo, destinations, DocView**



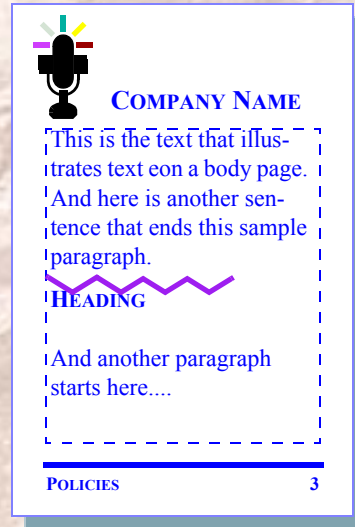
# Automation



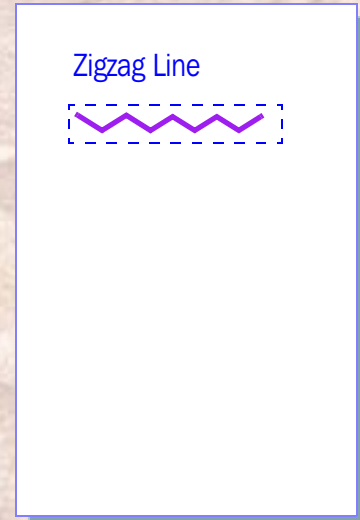
# Master/Reference/Body pages



Master page



Body page



Reference page



# Variables

- **User defined variables:**
  - **customer name, product name, code name, etc.**
  
- **System variables:**
  - **page count, current date, modification date, file name, etc.**



# Heading styles

- **In column (embedded)**
- **Side Heads**
- **Side Head & Across All Columns**
- **Run-In**

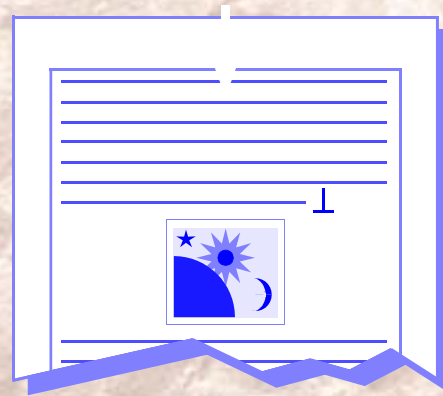
# Graphics

- **FrameMaker includes basic drawing tools**
- **Complex vector drawings, flowcharts & bitmaps are created in other tools and imported**



# Anchored frames

- **Contain text and graphics**
- **Anchored to specific location in text**  
Below current line, Top of column, Bottom of column,  
At insertion point, Outside column/frame, Run into paragraph



# Tables

- **Tables have table formats (settings, ruling & shading)**
- **Apply periodic or custom colored shading to rows, columns, or cells**
- **Optionally rotate headings**



- **Keyboard navigation between cells is cumbersome**
- **Column width is global**
- **Cell cannot be split between pages**
- **Table cannot be split directly**



# Cross-references

- **Within current document or between different documents**
  
- **Every cross-reference has a format that determines:**
  - **Exact wording**
  - **Appearance (character format)**
  - **What information cross-reference provides**



## ■ Information can include:

- Page number (See p. 35)
- Text of an entire paragraph (See “*Training*” on page 72.)
- Name of pgf tag (See *Section 5-4*)
- Entire autonumber of pgf (See *Figure 5-4*)
- Autonumber but not text of pgf (See *5-4*)
- Name of another FrameMaker document (See *otherdoc.fm*)



# Generated files

<b>Suffix</b>	<b>Generated file</b>	<b>Order</b>	<b>Source</b>
TOC	Table Of Contents	Collated	Paragraphs
LOF	List Of Figures	Collated	Paragraphs
LOT	List Of Tables	Collated	Paragraphs
LOP	List Of Paragraphs	Collated	Paragraphs
LOM	List Of Markers	Collated	Markers
LOR	List Of References	Collated	References
AML	Alphabetical Marker List	Sorted	Markers
APL	Alphabetical Paragraph List	Sorted	Paragraphs



# Generated files

Suffix	Generated file	Order	Source
IX	standard IndeX	Sorted	Markers
AIX	Author Index	Sorted	Markers
SIX	Subject Index	Sorted	Markers
IOM	Index Of Markers	Sorted	Markers
IOR	Index Of References	Sorted	References

- **Hypertext links created automatically – useful in FrameMaker, online formats**



# Structured FrameMaker



# Structured documentation

- Document organized into logical chunks of information, called elements
- Elements have rules about
  - Content
  - Hierarchy
  - Order
  - Frequency
  - Whether required or optional



# Structured documentation

- Authors focus on content and organization (structure) of information, not formatting
- Focus on structure promotes documentation consistency throughout companies and across industries
- Consistency improves communication of information



# Structured documentation

## ■ Facilitates re-use

- Element attributes provide additional info
- Fragments may be stored in database/  
content management systems



# Why use Structured FM?

- **Need to deliver SGML/XML files or receive source files in this format**
- **Want to enforce more structure in documentation (no need in SGML/XML)**
  - **Large-scale, complex documents that are to be used enterprise-wide**
  - **Many writers in team, or off-site writers**
  - **Validation (integrity of documents, compliance to rules)**



# Considerations



# Why not FrameMaker?

- **No support for Hebrew**
- **FrameMaker–Word round-tripping not practical**
- **Limited text editing capabilities**  
(no multiple undo, no drag and drop, no auto-correct, no ongoing-spelling)
- **Not Unicode compliant**



# FrameMaker add-ons

- **Editing**
- **Outline view**
- **Tracking changes**
- **Improved indexing capabilities**
- **Scripting**
- **User interface (shortcuts, toolbar)**



# Learning curve?

- **To get the most out of any tool, it is best to learn it thoroughly**
- **With FrameMaker, as with other tools, you can dive in and try your best, at your own risk and at the risk of your company's documents**



# Crystal ball

- **At Adobe, FrameMaker is in “maintenance mode” and will probably stay so**
  - **Some bugs are fixed**
  - **Tool is adapted to most new operating systems**
  - **Not many new features are added**



# Crystal ball

- **No other mainstream tools are close to competing with FrameMaker's heavy-weight capabilities**
- **There is a large user base worldwide, and therefore the tool is not likely to be discontinued**

