

Hyland Software

Improved development and delivery

ECM leader leverages Adobe® RoboHelp® 9 and Adobe AIR® to help customers increase ROI on software investments

HYLAND
SOFTWAREHyland Software
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Hyland Software is one of the world's largest independent developers of enterprise content management (ECM) software. The company's flagship product, OnBase, focuses on solving problems that result from time-consuming, costly, and error-prone manual tasks across industries such as healthcare, banking, and government. Headquartered in Cleveland, Ohio, Hyland Software has more than 1,100 employees and 10,000 customers globally.

Hyland delivers innovative software solutions to its customers, making it important that as a company, Hyland stays on the cutting edge of technology to remain competitive. As a result, Hyland recently identified an opportunity to improve content development and delivery in the Custom Solutions Group of its Technical Services division. The group now leverages Adobe RoboHelp 9 and Adobe AIR to develop and deliver its high-profile, customer-facing Software Development Kit (SDK) that contains more than 4,200 topics.

Among other things, the group works closely with OnBase customers that choose to customize solutions beyond the standardized offering. To empower its customers with information about the OnBase application programming interfaces (APIs), Hyland offers the SDK, comprised of highly technical information provided by Hyland developers and enhanced and organized by Hyland's documentation specialists. "Our customers depend on the kit for critical assistance in their custom OnBase programming," says Karen Dular, documentation specialist with Hyland's Custom Solutions Group.

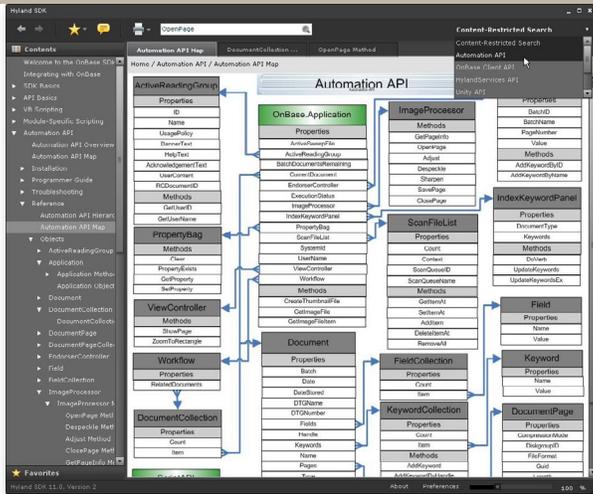
Transforming disparate content formats into a single, integrated SDK

At the onset of the enhanced SDK project, the Hyland Custom Solutions Group searched for the best way to integrate a vast amount of information from different formats, and housed by various internal groups, into a single SDK. Previously, numerous API documents resided with various software development groups across the company, and the team faced significant challenges maintaining the content and importantly, fulfilling customer requests for SDKs with specific APIs.

"We needed a way to pull together the vast amount of documentation and data from various groups into a cohesive and easy-to-use document," says Dular. "We also wanted to provide our customers access to our breadth of APIs in a range of development languages in a user-friendly format. We selected Adobe RoboHelp because we needed robust capabilities and a highly stable platform that could handle such an enormous, complex document." The HTML editor in RoboHelp was also an important factor for the development team.

Using Adobe RoboHelp, the Custom Solutions Group integrates help content from Microsoft Word documents, HTML files, Microsoft .CHM files, Microsoft Visual Studio files, and many other formats. Adobe RoboHelp topics reside in a common source folder, making it easy for developers to write snippets of HTML code and easily integrate them directly into the SDK. Adobe RoboHelp also provides a cost-effective and centralized way for documentation specialists to update and repurpose the content across projects, with other important capabilities delivered by Adobe AIR.

Using Adobe RoboHelp and delivering help systems as Adobe AIR applications has transformed the way Hyland Software produces, maintains, and delivers its SDK to customers—making it a much more usable and higher-quality document.



Challenge

- Integrate distributed API content into a single document
- Simplify content creation for developers and authors
- Deliver improved, more current help content to customers

Solution

- Integrated software development kit Hyland Software is using Adobe RoboHelp 9 and Adobe AIR to consolidate API content in different formats from many sources into a single, integrated document.

Benefits

- Provided greatly improved workflow for developing, managing, and delivering content
- Significantly reduced support calls by delivering highly usable, easy-to-search content
- Delivered SDKs to coincide with software releases, accelerating content delivery by six months

Toolkit

Adobe RoboHelp 9
Adobe AIR

“Using Adobe RoboHelp and delivering our help systems as Adobe AIR applications has transformed the way we produce, maintain, and deliver the SDK to our customers,” says Dular. “Having a single interface and a single, integrated kit, we can work seamlessly with our developers and deliver our customers a much more usable and higher quality document with a quicker time to market.”

The Custom Solutions Group particularly appreciates the ease of navigation offered by Adobe RoboHelp and Adobe AIR, making it easy for developers and documentation specialists to quickly get up to speed learning and using the solution to find the content they need. The Adobe AIR advanced real-time commenting capabilities enable Hyland’s highly specialized teams to collaborate more effectively by embedding important notes and feedback into the SDK. Other features of Adobe RoboHelp are also improving the productivity of the group.

“The Favorites and Tabs features in the Adobe AIR application are extremely useful and continually save our team members time,” says Dular. “We can bookmark any help page in the system as a Favorite and have multiple windows open using the Tab function. This is a huge asset for us, given our enormous volumes of technical information and lines of code that people have to access and learn.”

The team also uses the Baggage Files folder for importing external elements, such as sample files for tutorials, so that the elements appear correctly in the output. The ability to edit and merge information into a master Table of Contents allows the group to work with indexes from development tools like Doxygen and Sandcastle to produce an integrated TOC.

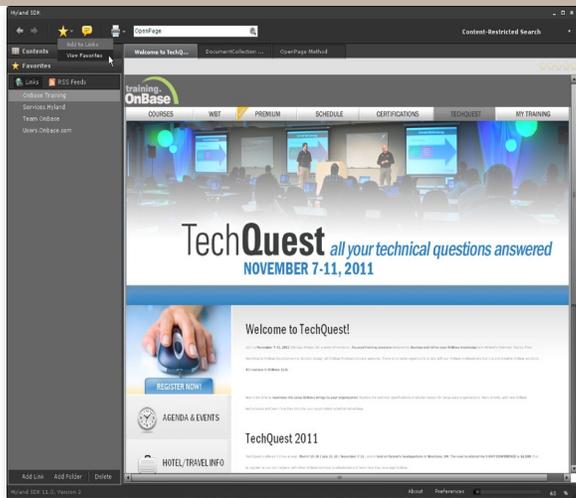
Providing customers dynamic, user-centric content

With Adobe RoboHelp and Adobe AIR, Hyland’s Custom Solutions Group is delivering more value to its customers by providing personalized, current content so they can optimize how they use their OnBase solutions. “Our customers are using the SDK more these days because it’s easy to use and easy for them to find the information they need,” emphasizes Dular. “When they depend on the kit to customize their OnBase solutions to better suit their needs, it has a direct impact on the ROI the customer receives from OnBase.”

Depending on the particular APIs needed by a customer, the Hyland team is able to use metadata tags to produce subsets of the SDK for specific customer needs. The team used to deliver its SDK content six months after delivery of the software, given the challenges they previously faced in managing all of the distributed content.

“Now, with a central Adobe RoboHelp interface and fully integrated content, we can stay in step with the software development cycle and release our SDKs to coincide with our OnBase software updates and releases,” says Dular. “That’s a significant benefit to our customers and how we engage with them.”

Hyland Software uses Adobe RoboHelp 8 and Adobe AIR to develop one single, customer-facing SDK. Adobe RoboHelp was chosen because of its robust capabilities and highly stable platform that could handle the enormous, complex document.



“Using Adobe RoboHelp and delivering our help systems as Adobe AIR applications has transformed the way we produce, maintain, and deliver the SDK to our customers.”

Karen Dular
Documentation specialist, Custom Solutions Group,
Technical Services,
Hyland Software

The straightforward Adobe RoboHelp search functions, as well as access to a single, integrated document enabled by Adobe RoboHelp HTML editing across development teams, is noticeably reducing support calls. “Our API user base has seen steady annual growth in recent years, yet we’ve seen a proportionate decrease in the support calls coming into our group,” says Dular. Adobe RoboHelp makes it much easier for Hyland support specialists to find the right information to assist customers. The new Content Categories feature in RoboHelp 9 allows users to restrict searches to a subset of information for a more efficient lookup of key information. “We’re able to offer better support to our customers using Adobe RoboHelp and Adobe AIR as the foundation of our Software Development Kit,” says Dular.

New opportunities

Word traveled quickly at Hyland about the successes of using Adobe RoboHelp and Adobe AIR for the SDK. Solutions engineers on Hyland’s Medical Applications team—targeting a new vertical for the company—are using the Adobe solutions to pull together best practices for the installation of OnBase into the medical vertical. The result is an Interactive Healthcare Checklist that is maintained and launched from a single platform.

“Using the advanced navigation capabilities of Adobe RoboHelp, the team can deliver highly usable, searchable medical installations content that is much easier to access and manage,” says Dular. “This streamlined approach and improved access to critical information empowers the Medical Applications team to better pursue new opportunities for OnBase to help our customers in the healthcare market.”

For Medical Applications and other departments, keeping up with technology advances helps the company, on the whole, stay at the forefront of the enterprise content management software market. With the successes of using Adobe RoboHelp and Adobe AIR, the Custom Solutions Group is looking into transitioning other sources of information to Adobe Technical Communication Suite to further enhance information sharing and delivery.

“As a company, we like to keep up with the latest technology developments and provide our documentation specialists with advanced tools for performing their jobs,” says Dular. “Adobe RoboHelp and Adobe AIR offer us the tools we need to be successful as employees and as a growing enterprise software company.”

For more information
www.adobe.com/products/technicalcommunicationsuite



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