

**An OASIS DITA Adoption Technical Committee Publication**

# DITA 1.2 Specification: Status Update

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On behalf of the OASIS DITA Adoption Technical Committee

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The OASIS DITA Adoption Technical Committee members collaborate to provide expertise and resources to educate the marketplace on the value of the DITA OASIS standard. By raising awareness of the benefits offered by DITA, the DITA Adoption Technical Committee expects the demand for, and availability of, DITA conforming products and services to increase, resulting in a greater choice of tools and platforms and an expanded DITA community of users, suppliers, and consultants.

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This white paper was produced and approved by the OASIS DITA Adoption Technical Committee as a Committee Draft. It has not been reviewed and/or approved by the OASIS membership at-large.

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## Document History

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## DITA 1.2 Specification--Status Update

*The DITA Specification, version 1.2, is now a Committee Draft that is in review by the OASIS DITA community.*

The DITA 1.2 Specification has been formally approved as a Committee Draft by the members of the DITA Technical Committee. The DITA 1.1 Specification was published in May 2007. Since that time committee members have worked on the 1.2 Specification, first by reviewing proposals for additions to the Specification and then by updating the Specification to account for the changes and additions. As part of the revision process, committee members elected to revise the text of the Specification extensively. That process took more time than was expected.

Finally, in May 2010, the 1.2 Specification was considered complete and in conformance with all OASIS requirements. The Technical Committee voted to approve the Specification as a Committee Draft.

According to OASIS policies, a Committee Draft is an official document that is ready for the mandatory review by the OASIS public, especially all members of the DITA community. This review began on 7 July 2010 and will run for 60 days. Any OASIS member may submit comments on the 1.2 Specification until 5 September 2010. For information about how to submit comments, see [http://www.oasis-open.org/committees/comments/index.php?wg\\_abbrev=dita](http://www.oasis-open.org/committees/comments/index.php?wg_abbrev=dita)

After 60 days, the DITA Technical Committee revises the Specification in response to the comments and questions, approves the document as a revised Committee Draft, and submits the document to a 15-day review. The reviews continue until all comments are resolved. At that point, the Technical Committee votes to approve the Committee Specification. This Specification then goes to a formal ballot of the OASIS membership. The ballot process takes about a month to put into place, at which time the official OASIS members vote. Approval requires 15 percent of the members to vote in the affirmative, with no negative votes.

As a result of all these process requirements, we expect formal approval of the 1.2 Specification near the end of 2010.

### DITA 1.2 Readiness for Use

Despite this complex process, DITA 1.2 has been ready for use for at least two years. The DTDs and Schemas have long been available for download and many early adopters have already been successful using the new features of the 1.2 release, such as keyref and conkeyref, the general task model, the learning and training specialization, the machine-industry specialization, and more. Except for bug fixes, the DTDs and Schemas have been quite stable. In fact, few substantive changes have been made since the last of the proposals were implemented two years ago.

The vendor community has also been active in building the DITA 1.2 specification into their products. We have seen DITA 1.2 versions released by XML editor developers PTC/Arbortext, JustSystems/XMetal, and SyncRO Soft/Oxygen, and DITA2Go. Content Management System (CMS) vendors SDL/Xysoft and Ixiasoft have announced DITA 1.2 support in the next few months. As a result, many organizations have begun authoring in DITA 1.2 and implementing the new features.

In addition, the DITA Open Toolkit, which is developed independently of the OASIS DITA Technical Committee, has included the DITA 1.2 features and changes since version 1.5. At this stage, the DITA Open Toolkit 1.5.2 version is available for download from SourceForge. In fact, the 1.2 version of the Open Toolkit has been available since mid-2008. The more people who use the 1.2 Open Toolkit, the more stable and bug-free it becomes. At present, we find that the features work as the committee intended.

We urge all members of the DITA community to download the 1.2 DTDs or Schemas and begin actively working with the new and improved features. For your benefit, the DITA Adoption Technical Committee has been publishing a series of articles on the DITA 1.2 features. These feature articles are available at dita.xml.org today at [http://www.oasis-open.org/committees/comments/index.php?wg\\_abbrev=dita](http://www.oasis-open.org/committees/comments/index.php?wg_abbrev=dita)



Note that DITA 1.2 is completely backward compatible with DITA 1.1, unless you have changed the source DTDs or Schemas in some way. To maintain backward compatibility, it is essential to make any alterations to the core DITA DTDs or Schemas through specialization rather than modifying the source files.

If you are already using DITA 1.2, we would like to know about it. You can add your implementation to the testimonials that are part of the OASIS DITA website and will help us to establish the <http://wiki.oasis-open.org/dita/DITA1.2Adopters>

We also urge vendors of content management systems to move quickly to implement support for DITA 1.2. Customers are ready to use the valuable new features today. If vendors have questions about DITA 1.2 features, we invite them to submit questions to the DITA Adoption Technical Committee with emails to the committee at <http://wiki.oasis-open.org/dita/DITA1.2Adopters>

### **Starting on the next DITA release**

The DITA Technical Committee is already beginning its work on the next DITA release. We look forward to requests from all members of the larger DITA community to ensure that we continue to meet your needs.