

# Adobe solutions for technical communications

Adobe solutions for technical communications help customers create, maintain, and publish technical information—a core function in many businesses, particularly in manufacturing, where the information that accompanies a product helps ensure its correct installation, operation, and maintenance.

**Q: For what applications do businesses use Adobe solutions for technical communications?**

**A:** Adobe technical communications solutions help businesses publish documents such as installation and reference guides, regulatory notices, user manuals, maintenance information, and support documentation.

They also are used to produce other types of technical information, such as embedded user assistance or Help content embedded in software; electronic, hyperlinked knowledge bases; and interactive content, such as self-paced training systems, simulations, and demonstrations.

**Q: What products does Adobe offer in its solutions for technical communications?**

**A:** Many Adobe products and technologies are used by technical communicators. Four are particularly useful for technical communicators.

Adobe® FrameMaker® software is the market leader for the creation of technical documents, XML authoring and publishing, and multichannel publishing (publishing from a single source to print, PDF, HTML, XML, and more).

Macromedia® RoboHelp® software is the market leader in the creation, management, and delivery of embedded user assistance (such as online and in-application Help systems) and knowledge bases.

Macromedia Captivate™ software is the market leader in the creation of training, simulations, and demonstrations created using Macromedia Flash® technology.

Adobe Acrobat® 3D software is a market leader in the creation of fully interactive PDF documents using 3D CAD models and 2D representations for a richer, more engaging user experience.

**Q: How do technical communicators use the Adobe Engagement Platform?**

**A:** The Adobe Engagement Platform, consisting of PDF, Flash, and HTML, is a core format for delivering technical information in both print and electronic form. PDF is used extensively in the print production workflow and is the most common format for the electronic delivery of technical documents created with Adobe FrameMaker software. Captivate software uses Flash to generate interactive training systems, simulations, and demonstrations; and RoboHelp software supports Flash output. RoboHelp is designed around the HTML format and is commonly used to deliver Help and knowledge bases in HTML.

**Q: What are Adobe's plans for future products for technical communications?**

**A:** New versions of FrameMaker, Acrobat, RoboHelp, and Captivate are currently in development and will be released over the next 12 months.

**Q: How do technical communicators use Acrobat 3D software?**

**A:** Acrobat 3D enables technical communicators to include "live" 3D models in PDF documents, providing a richer experience for end users. Acrobat 3D also includes tools for technical communicators to manipulate 3D models and to produce 2D representations directly.

**Q: What are Adobe's plans for the future of RoboHelp software?**

**A:** RoboHelp is a market-leading product with a loyal and substantial user base. Adobe will continue to invest in the product and develop new releases targeting current and future developments in online Help and knowledge base systems. Future versions of RoboHelp will be branded as "Adobe RoboHelp."

RoboHelp is the perfect complement to Adobe's portfolio of solutions for technical communications and eLearning. The combination of RoboHelp, FrameMaker, Captivate, Acrobat 3D, Macromedia Authorware®, and Macromedia Breeze® software provides a complete solution for technical communicators.

**Q: When is the next version of RoboHelp expected to be released?**

**A:** Adobe has not published an official time frame for the next release of RoboHelp and generally does not disclose details of new releases more than 30 days before a product is expected to ship. However, Adobe currently plans the next major release of RoboHelp for the first half of 2007.

**Q: What features will be included in the next version of RoboHelp software?**

**A:** Adobe has not announced the feature list for the next version of RoboHelp. Adobe intends to build on existing product strengths and respond to customer requirements and trends in technical communications.

**Q: How do I participate in shaping the next RoboHelp release?**

**A:** Adobe will draw input from its customers in a number of ways. A customer advisory panel is being set up to provide direct input. Adobe also monitors user forums and support logs. Events and shows present great opportunities for customers to meet with Adobe staff and discuss their requirements. Customers can also submit new feature requests using the form located at [www.macromedia.com/cfusion/mmform/index.cfm?name=wishform](http://www.macromedia.com/cfusion/mmform/index.cfm?name=wishform).

**Q: How do I report a bug or get support for RoboHelp?**

**A:** Details on the support available for RoboHelp can be found at [www.macromedia.com/support/robohelp](http://www.macromedia.com/support/robohelp). A self-help knowledge base is provided free of charge. Customers can also get direct phone support, although this may involve a small fee on either a per-instance basis or as part of a support plan. User-to-user support is available through a number of forums. Customers can also report bugs using the form located at [www.macromedia.com/cfusion/mmform/index.cfm?name=wishform](http://www.macromedia.com/cfusion/mmform/index.cfm?name=wishform).

**Q: How do I find out if the next RoboHelp release will fix a bug I'm experiencing?**

**A:** Adobe typically does not disclose details of individual bugs being fixed in a release until that release ships. However, Adobe does monitor support logs and user forums to track which bugs are most common and should receive the highest priority for fixing.

**Q: As a current RoboHelp customer, should I consider migrating to another tool?**

**A:** No. Adobe continues to sell and support RoboHelp and is actively investing in new features for the next version that will target customers' most pressing needs.

**Q: How does RoboHelp differ from FrameMaker?**

**A:** RoboHelp and FrameMaker software provide different features to customers. In some cases customers can use either or both tools to meet their requirements, while in other cases, only one of the tools is appropriate.

FrameMaker software is a complete authoring solution for technical and/or long documents, and provides single-source, multichannel publishing to print, PDF, HTML, XML, and more. Together with third-party solutions, FrameMaker can publish to common Help formats and other formats not supported “out of the box.” FrameMaker software includes a complete structured authoring environment for editing and publishing content in XML and SGML. FrameMaker is most commonly used in high-tech and manufacturing companies, although it can be found in many other organizations that publish long or technical documents.

RoboHelp software is a complete authoring and publishing solution specifically targeted at publishing to Help and other online formats out of the box. RoboHelp users use either HTML editors or Microsoft® Word as their primary authoring environment. RoboHelp is used in a wide variety of industries, either to provide documentation to support the use of software or to present information for presentation in an easy-to-navigate, online style.

Differences between the features and file formats of RoboHelp and FrameMaker mean that both products will continue to target different end-user workflows. However, over time customers of both RoboHelp and FrameMaker will see benefits from both products being developed by one company.

**Q: How does RoboHelp work with Captivate software?**

**A:** Macromedia Captivate software (formally RoboDemo) enables users to create Flash based software demonstrations and tutorials without having to learn the intricacies of Flash development. RoboHelp supports the integration of Flash based content (including Captivate Flash files) into Help content. The two products are highly complementary and provide a compelling toolset for creating dynamic and engaging Help and training materials.

**Q: How does RoboHelp relate to Quadralay's WebWorks® ePublisher Pro?**

**A:** RoboHelp customers use either HTML editors or Microsoft Word software as their editing environment. Many customers who standardize on FrameMaker use Quadralay's WebWorks ePublisher Pro for Help and HTML output. FrameMaker 7.2 includes the standard version of WebWorks ePublisher in the box, and many customers use the included version of WebWorks ePublisher for HTML output. Within Word-based workflows, RoboHelp and Quadralay's WebWorks ePublisher Pro for Word are competing products.

**Q: What does Adobe's ownership of RoboHelp mean for Adobe's partnership with Quadralay?**

**A:** For several years, and four releases, Quadralay has provided advanced HTML output technology for FrameMaker in the box. This technology plays an important part in the FrameMaker single-source, multichannel publishing workflow. Quadralay has also sold the professional version of this technology as a complementary, third-party option to FrameMaker, and many users rely on this version for customized HTML output and Help output from their FrameMaker files. Quadralay will continue to offer this option.

In addition, RoboHelp for Word and Quadralay's WebWorks ePublisher Pro products will compete in the Word-based workflow market. In the software industry, it is not unusual for companies to be partners in some areas and competitors in others.

**Q: When will Adobe reintroduce an upgrade plan or maintenance plan for RoboHelp?**

**A:** As Adobe finalizes its plans for the next version of RoboHelp software, it will evaluate the opportunity to reintroduce upgrade and maintenance plans for the product.

**Q: What are Adobe's plans for the future of FrameMaker software?**

**A:** Adobe continues to invest in FrameMaker, the market leader in technical communications and structured authoring. Version 7.2 was introduced in the fourth quarter of 2005, and a major new version is currently being developed.

**Q: What new features will be added to FrameMaker?**

**A:** Adobe has not announced the feature list for the next version of FrameMaker. However, it intends to build on existing product strengths and respond to the most important new trends in technical communications, including increased globalization and localization of technical content, increased use of structured content and XML (and the increased importance of standards such as DITA), and increased integration of rich media, such as 3D content and animation.

**Q: When will the next version of FrameMaker be available?**

**A:** Adobe has not published the time frame for the next release of FrameMaker software and generally does not disclose details of new releases more than 30 days before a product is expected to ship. However, our current assumption is that the next major release of FrameMaker will be in the first half of 2007.

**Q: How can I get technical support for FrameMaker?**

**A:** Adobe provides a range of free and fee-based technical support services. Details can be found at [www.adobe.com/support/products/frameMaker.html](http://www.adobe.com/support/products/frameMaker.html).

**Q: How can I request a new feature for FrameMaker?**

**A:** You can submit a new feature request for FrameMaker at [www.adobe.com/support/feature.html](http://www.adobe.com/support/feature.html).

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