DITA Reuse Strategies

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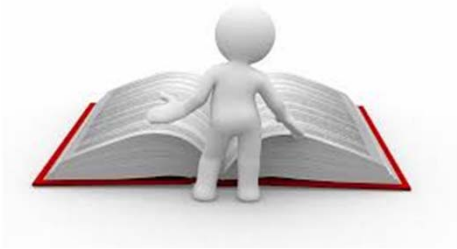
<oXygen/> XML Editor

Technical Communication



- Records knowledge about using tools and processes.
- Spread knowledge to reach large audiences.

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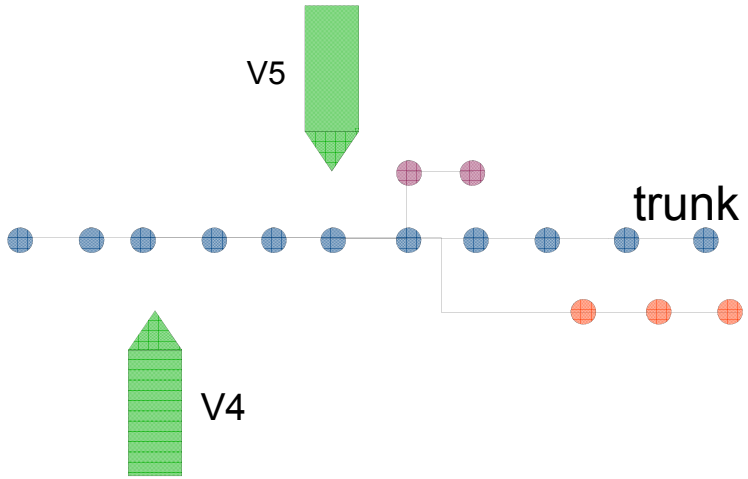
Reuse

Version Control



- Version control allows you to reuse content tagged at a certain point in time in order to produce older versions of your publications.

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Great Reuse = Publishing XML content to different formats

- XML contains the necessary content.
- XML contains the necessary structure.
- XML is a standard.
- Choice between open source and commercial tools.

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Publishing DITA content to different formats

- Topic oriented.
- Extensible.
- Choice between free and commercial editing and publishing tools.
- Plethora of reuse possibilities described below.

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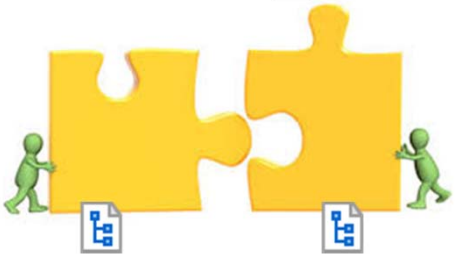
Create larger publications from existing ones



- Merge multiple existing DITA Maps in various new publications.
- Use new DITA 1.3 key scopes to separate key contexts.

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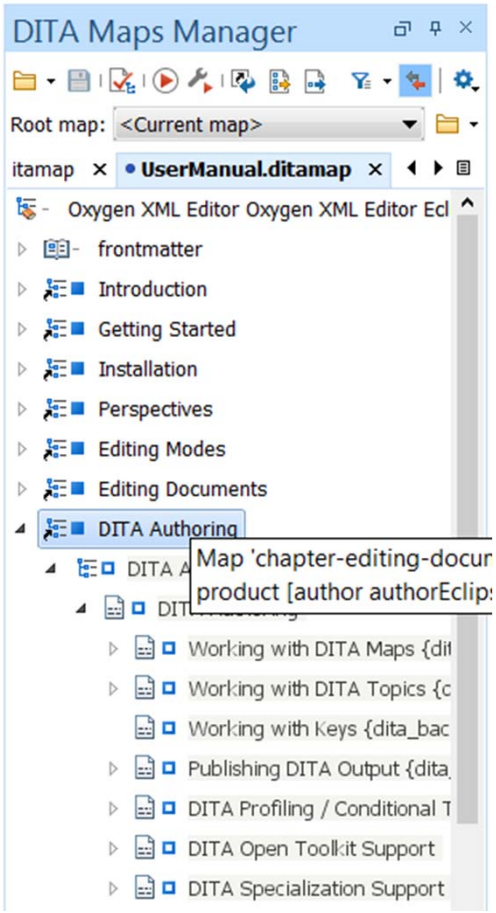
Even if you have a single root map you can keep related sections in different DITA Maps.




```
<chapter href="chapter-author-dita.ditamap" collection-typ
```

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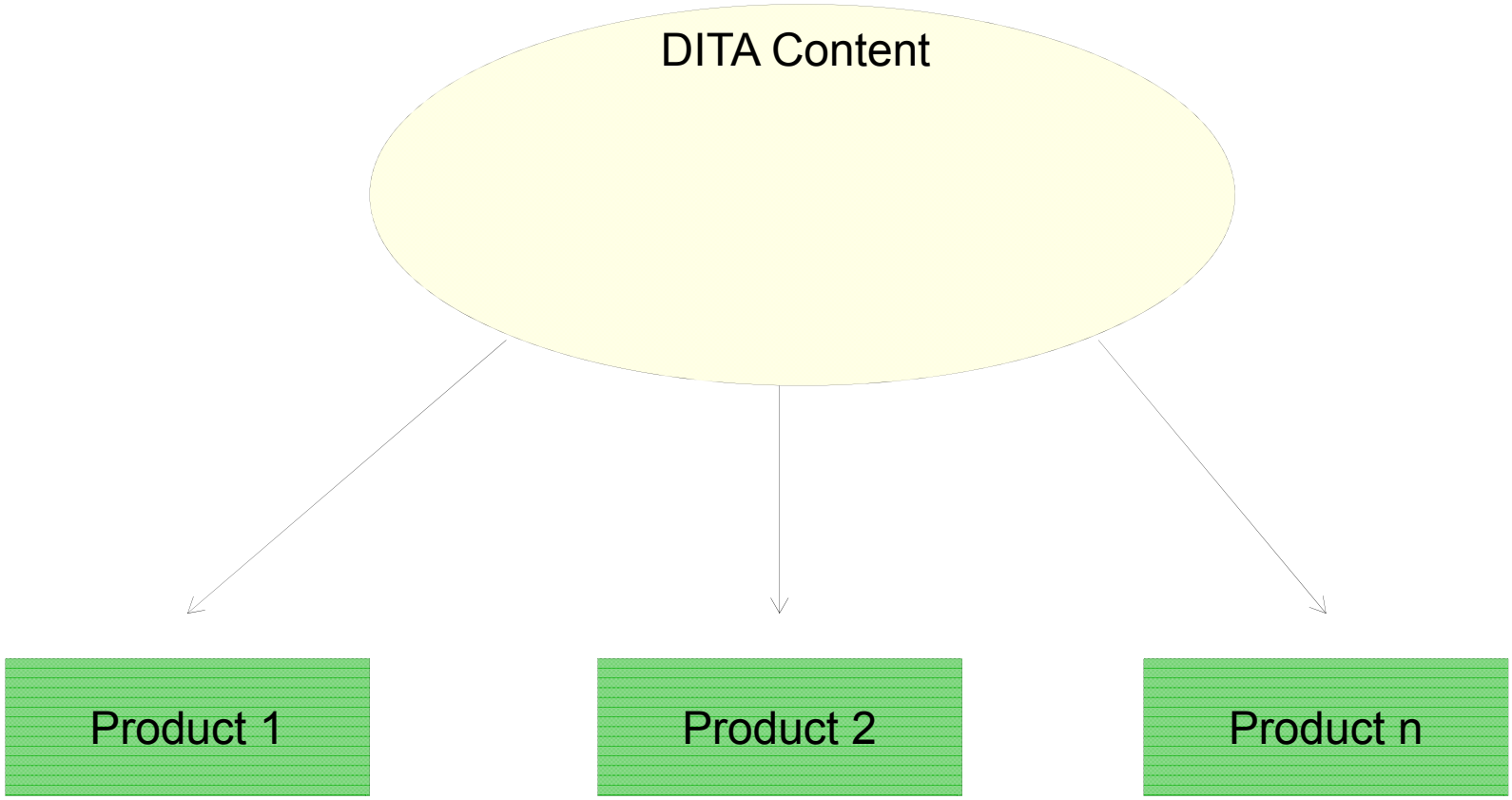
Reuse content for similar products



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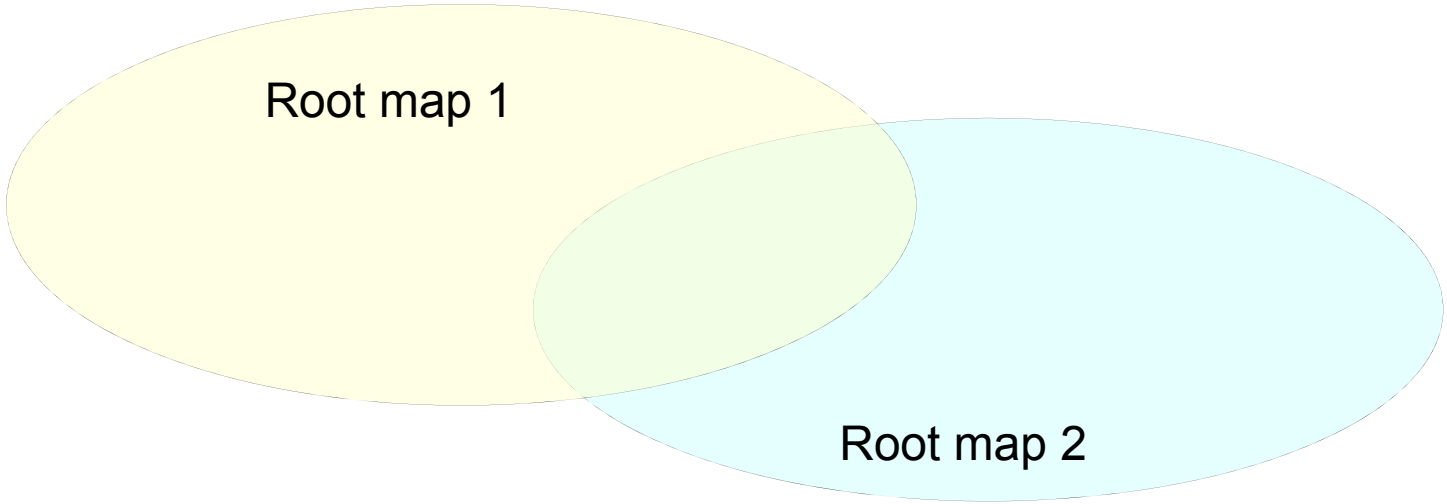
1. Use multiple root maps.



- Reuse entire topics.
- Define variable product names.
- Remap links and reused content using keys.

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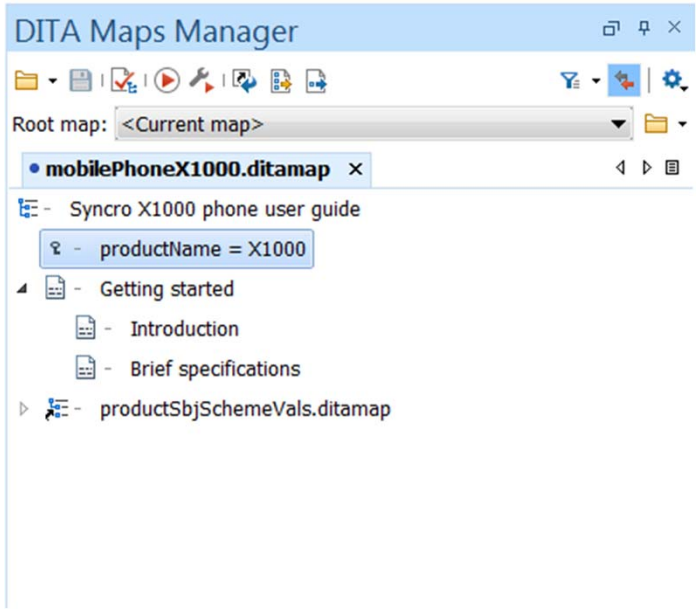
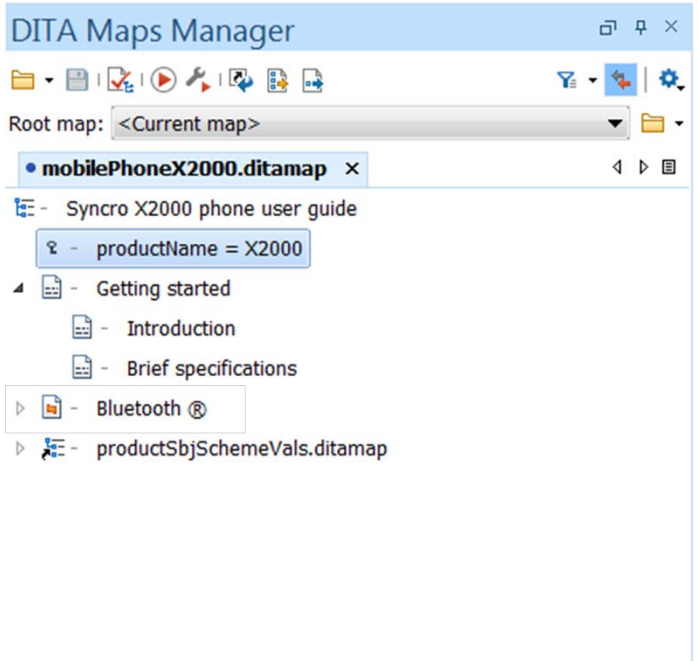
Example





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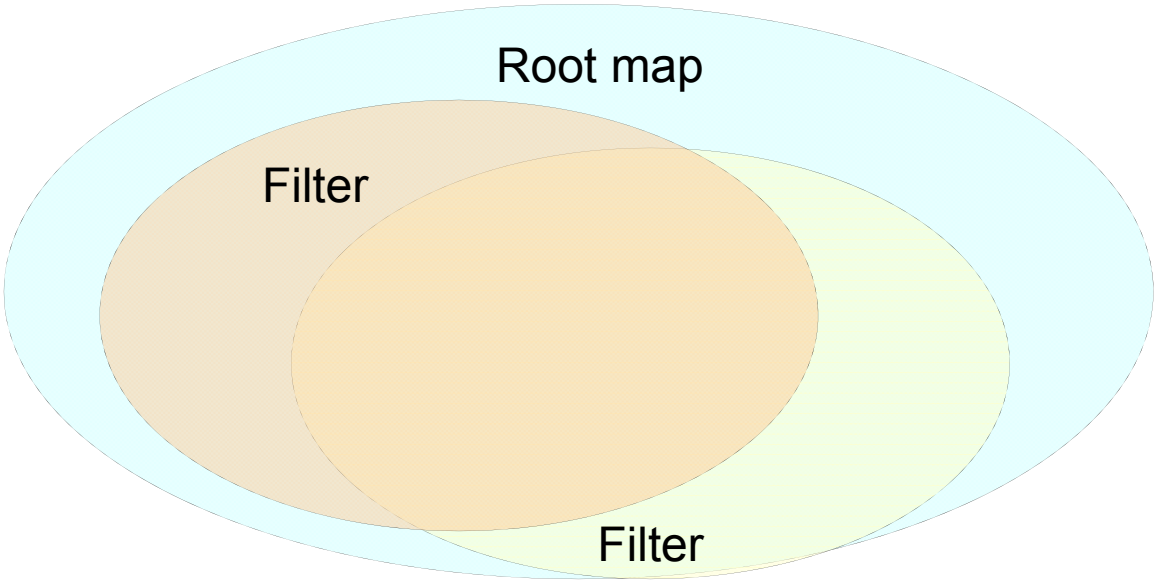
2. Use single root map.



- Define variable product names.
- Use profiling attributes to filter content at topic or element level.

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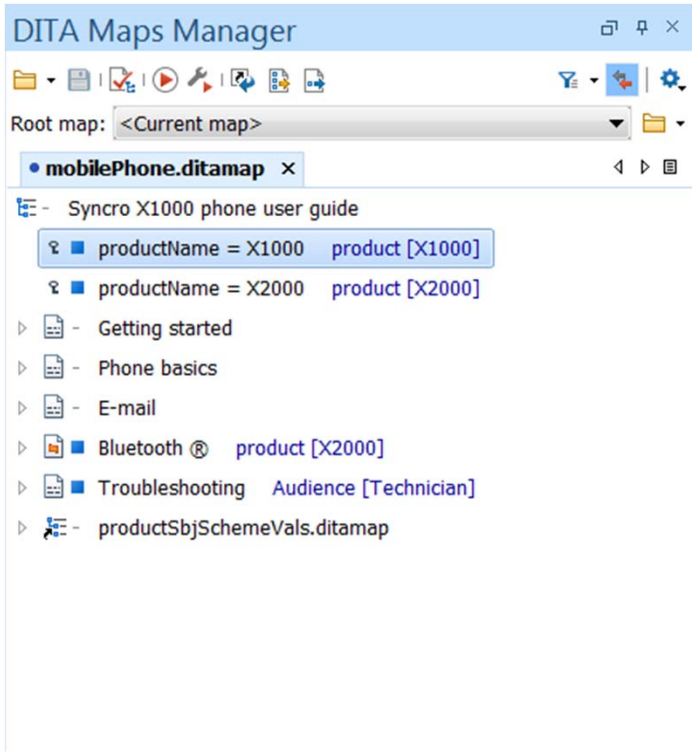
Example



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Profiling At Topic Level

- Topic Group product [editor]
  - Global Preferences product [editor]
  - Add-ons Preferences product [editor]
  - Fonts Preferences product [editor]
  - Document Type Association Preferences product [editor]
  - Perspectives Layout Preferences product [editor]
  - Encoding Preferences product [editor]
  - Editor Preferences product [editor]
  - CSS Validator Preferences product [editor]
  - XML Preferences product [editor]
  - Data Source Preferences product [editor]
  - SVN Preferences product [editor]
  - Diff Preferences product [editor]
  - Archive Preferences product [editor]
  - Plugins Preferences product [editor]
  - External Tools Preferences product [editor]
  - Menu Shortcut Keys Preferences product [editor]
  - File Types Preferences product [editor]
  - The Open/Find Resources Preferences Page product [editor]
  - Custom Editor Variables Preferences product [editor]
  - Network Connection Settings Preferences product [editor]
  - XML Structure Outline Preferences product [editor]
  - View Views Preferences product [editor]
  - Messages Preferences product [editor]
- Topic Group product [author]
  - Global Preferences product [author]
  - Add-ons Preferences product [author]
  - Fonts Preferences product [author]
  - Document Type Association Preferences product [author]
  - Perspectives Layout Preferences product [author]

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Alternate Text

Choosing an installer

You have a choice of installers.

- The native installer for your platform. On Windows and Linux, the native installer can run also in unattended mode.
  product [author, developer, editor, svnClient]
- The All-platforms installer, which can be used on any supported platform.
  product [author, developer, editor, svnClient]
- The Update Site installation.
  product [authorEclipse, developerEclipse, editorEclipse]
- The Zip archive installation.
  product [authorEclipse, developerEclipse, editorEclipse]

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Reuse fragments of content

Topic

- Content references
- Content key references
- Content reference ranges
- Content push
- Key references

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Content key references

Reusable component

```
<dd id="CPU">
  <ul id="ul_lym_bqd_x4">
    <li>Minimum - <tm tmtype="tm">Intel Pentium III</tm>/<tm tmtype="tm">AMD Athlon</tm>
      class processor, 1 <term>GHz</term>.</li>
    <li>Recommended - Dual Core class processor.</li>
  </ul>
</dd>
```

```
<keydef keys="reusable.install" href="reusables/reusable.installation.dita"/>
```

Conkeyref

```
<dd conkeyref="reusable.install/CPU"/>
```

Preview

CPU

- Minimum - Intel Pentium III™/AMD Athlon™ class processor, 1 *GHz*.
- Recommended - Dual Core class processor.

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Content reference ranges

Reusable components

```
<steps>
 <step id="washing">
  <cmd>Wash the vegetables thoroughly.</cmd>
 </step>
 .....
 <step id="peeling">
  <cmd>Pass the peeler gently over the vegetable.</cmd>
 </step>
</steps>
```

```
<keydef keys="reusable_steps" href="reusable_steps.dita"/>
```

Conkeyref range

```
<steps>
 <step conkeyref="reusable_steps/washing" conrefend="default.dita#default/peeling">
  <cmd/>
 </step>
</steps>
```

Preview

1. Wash the vegetables thoroughly.
2. Put on some thick mittens.
3. Pass the peeler gently over the vegetable.

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Content push

Original steps

```
<steps>
 ..........
 <step id="peeler_handling">
  <cmd>Pass the peeler gently over the vegetable.</cmd>
 </step>
</steps>
```

```
<keydef href="stepsPusher.dita"/>
```

Conkeyref push

```
<steps>
   <step conaction="mark" conkeyref="peeling/peeler_handling">
      <cmd/>
   </step>
   <step conaction="pushafter">
      <cmd>Read the instructions.</cmd>
   </step>
</steps>
```

Preview

1. Wash the vegetables thoroughly.
2. Put on some thick mittens.
3. Pass the peeler gently over the vegetable.
4. Read the instructions.

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Key references (Variables)

Reuse simple variables like product name, executable, etc.

```
<!-- product name -->
 <keydef keys="product" product="editor">
  <topicmeta>
   <keywords>
    <keyword>Oxygen XML Editor</keyword>
   </keywords>
  </topicmeta>
 </keydef>

  <title>Installation Options for <ph keyref="product"/></title>
```

Installation Options for Oxygen XML Editor

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Tips

- Keep all your reused content in special topics located in special folders.
- Keep a table with small reused elements.
- When using conkeyrefs create a special map with key definitions.
- Use conkeyrefs instead of conrefs.

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DITA 1.3 contributions to Reuse.

- Reuse topic with variable content depending on context (keyscopes).
- Reuse the same content profiled in various ways in the same publication (branch filtering).

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Reuse with Key Scopes

Product key reference

```
<title><ph keyref="model"/> Phone Overview</title>
```

Various key values in various scopes

```
.....
<topicref href="phoneOverview.dita" keyscope="X1000Scope">
 <keydef keys="model">
  <topicmeta><keywords><keyword>X1000</keyword></keywords></topicmeta>
 </keydef>
.....
 <topicref href="phoneOverview.dita" keyscope="X2000Scope">
 <keydef keys="model">
   <topicmeta><keywords><keyword>X2000</keyword></keywords></topicmeta>
 </keydef>
.....
```

Preview

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Reuse with Branch Filtering

Merge two product documentation maps

```
……….
 <topicref href="phoneDetails.ditamap" format="ditamap">
  <ditavalref href="ditaval/X1000Branch.ditaval">
   <ditavalmeta><dvrResourceSuffix>1</dvrResourceSuffix></ditavalmeta>
  </ditavalref>
 </topicref>
……….
 <topicref href="phoneDetails.ditamap" format="ditamap">
  <ditavalref href="ditaval/X2000Branch.ditaval">
   <ditavalmeta><dvrResourceSuffix>1</dvrResourceSuffix></ditavalmeta>
  </ditavalref>
 </topicref>
……..
```

Preview

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Reuse non-DITA resources in multiple publications.

- Reuse images (href or keyref).
- Reuse videos.
- Reuse other linked resources (PDFs).

- Choose your image format wisely (suggestion: PNG).
- Try to scale images before referring to them.

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Conclusions

- DITA is excellent for reuse, collaboration and review.
- DITA is not necessarily expensive, you can start slow and grow as you need
- DITA is mature, there is a very active community around DITA providing help, tools and services

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Thank You!

Questions?

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