

# How Teradata Turned its Technical Documentation Into the Company's Most Visited Website

« Fluid Topics is a huge leap forward for us. The content delivery portal has grown to become an enterprise resource that directly supports our internal teams and our customers »

**Elizabeth McFadden,**  
Technical Project Manager for Content Operations



  
Enterprise Software

  
More than 7000 employees

  
\$2 billion revenue

  
5M visits per year on their Fluid Topics portal

Teradata is the connected multi-cloud data platform for enterprise analytics. The company, which has been recognized by market researcher Gartner® as a leader in Cloud Database Management Systems, offers through Teradata Vantage, a unified set of analytics capabilities to manage everything from freight transportation and logistics to performing predictive analytics for sales, forecasting and supply change management.

The solution is delivered in a consistent manner in the cloud, on multiple clouds, on-premises, or any combination thereof.

As such, the company needs to serve technical product documentation to various audiences including administrators, data analysts, business analysts and developers. Teradata's Information Engineering department consists of 30 associates – writers, architects and technical tool specialists who support over 100 products – cloud, on-premises, hardware, software, analytics.



We sat down with **Elizabeth "Beth" McFadden, Technical Project Manager for Content Operations at Teradata** to explore the company's challenges and lessons learned after moving their vast enterprise content from PDF downloads to web-based dynamic delivery.

## The Teradata Challenges

Historically, Teradata created technical content using 6 different tools. The customer experience for finding and accessing the right content in the place and moment of need was dreadful.

In fact, Teradata's documentation was published in PDF format and sometimes in HTML and was scattered across:

### >> The challenges

- Content created using 6 different tools
- Documentation scattered across many touch points with disparate user interfaces
- Need to update technical documentation faster, decoupled from the product release

### >> The results

- Real-time publishing directly from Ixiasoft
- Single, unified knowledge center, no matter the initial source and format
- Increased visibility with 5 million visits on the portal within the first year

- The info.teradata.com website
- SUPR (Single Unified Procedures Repository), an internal website for field and support personnel
- DEVX (Developer Exchange), a website for developers owned and operated by the engineering team
- In-product help
- Another website with HTML content used for a single release of a single product

On top of that, these channels, all had different user interfaces (UI) and search mechanisms. At the time, mobile phones and tablets were beginning to gain ground but only one of these UIs incorporated a responsive design.

*“The lowest level of granularity was a book and the mix of disparate systems and tools led to inefficiencies and a frustrating content experience,”* said Beth McFadden.

The information was so dispersed that the content publishing experience was inconsistent and unfriendly. As an example, publishing a single book typically meant three publishing formats, two tools and three resources to publish to all the channels.

Additionally, the release of new content was tightly integrated with the software deployment process which prevented the Information Engineering team from updating it as frequently as needed and providing the latest information.


So, after years of storing documents all over the place and maintaining different formats for multiple channels, the company realized that they needed to provide a unified content experience for their global customers

## The Detour

On their move to dynamic content delivery, the Information Engineering team met with the IT department to get budget approval. Rightly so, the IT department wondered why the team couldn't use the Marketing team's Content Management Solution.

*“This is a perfectly legitimate question from organizations who do not understand the difference between marketing content and technical content. Any team wanting to move to Dynamic Content Delivery must be prepared to educate their funding organization in the ways of technical content delivery,”* Beth explained.

There are fundamental differences between the two platforms and it's important to highlight them.

**Technical Content Website** 

- Topic-based
- Filter on component
- Technical documentation
- Audience: Mostly customers
- Metadata reflects user goals and products
- Topic-level integration for app, websites, bots, etc.
- Product versions
- DITA support
- CCMS connector for easy publishing
- Content lifecycle is many years
- Analytics all about the content and users

**Marketing Website** 

- Document-based
- Filter on document
- Sales enablement
- Audience: Mostly sales employees
- Metadata reflects industry, region, sales cycle
- Unlikely to integrate well with software
- No native support for versioning
- No DITA support
- No CCMS connector
- Content lifecycle is months
- Analytics all about marketing

## The Fluid Topics Solution

After evaluating a variety of potential vendors, Teradata identified Fluid Topics as the right Content Publishing Platform to solve their challenges.

Teradata launched a new cloud-based Content Delivery Platform, powered by Fluid Topics. The platform collects and unifies the company's technical content and publishes it on the documentation portal at the click of a button.

### » Real-time publishing

The DITA content is created with IXIASOFT using oXygen XML Author. A dedicated connector enables Beth's team to publish directly to Fluid Topics from IXIASOFT, offering a frictionless delivery experience. The company also publishes unstructured formats like Word, Excel and PDF or other structured content like HTML and Markdown to Fluid Topics. The company's tech doc team now saves hours of tedious document formatting.

They can also automatically publish content as soon as it's approved and as often as needed without requiring assistance from the IT department. By connecting in real-time to the sources of information, Fluid Topics keeps the documentation live and accurate on the user side at any time.

### » Single, unified user experience

Beth's team has successfully consolidated the company's technical content silos into a single knowledge center. The documentation is completely unified, no matter the initial format. Teradata's customers and partners can now self-serve from any location on mobile, tablet or desktop devices. "In today's digital-first environment, Fluid Topics' mobile-friendly interface helps our company deliver improved content services to our users," added Beth McFadden.

The documentation portal has also been fully customized to support Teradata branding requirements.

### » Interactive knowledge

Teradata's users now enjoy a host of features that allow them to interact with content. Customers – both internal and external – get the possibility to:

- Create and manage collections of documents focused on their preferred products
- Bookmark their favorite content and design their own personal books
- Save searches and create content alerts to be informed every time content is added or modified

## Results

With their new Fluid Topics Content Delivery Platform, Teradata created a seamless content experience while meeting its business objective of improving the overall User Experience. Users can easily search for information from within the portal and from a web search engine. Each page is well-referenced thanks to Fluid Topics' SEO feature that allows the Information Engineering team to auto-generate some of the SEO elements. This is crucial for visits that come directly from search engines – mostly Google – and serves to increase the global visibility of the company.

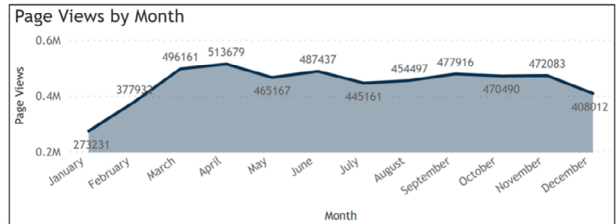
After suffering through years of poor content visibility, Teradata's technical documentation website is now the company's most visited website with over 5 million visits in the last year alone.

"Fluid Topics is a huge leap forward for us. The content delivery portal has grown to become an enterprise resource that directly supports our internal teams and our customers," said Beth.

Finally, the organization can now better leverage data to enrich their content and offer better customer service. While marketing-based analytics track sessions, users, pages, flow, duration, bounces, and campaigns, Fluid Topics' Content Analytics captures every user interaction with high levels of detail and deep context while fully respecting privacy and security. All the ways people interact with the company and its content over time are now reported and can be used to make informed decisions.

## Technical Documentation Analytics

Date: 1/1/2021 - 3/1/2022 **5341766** Search Page Location



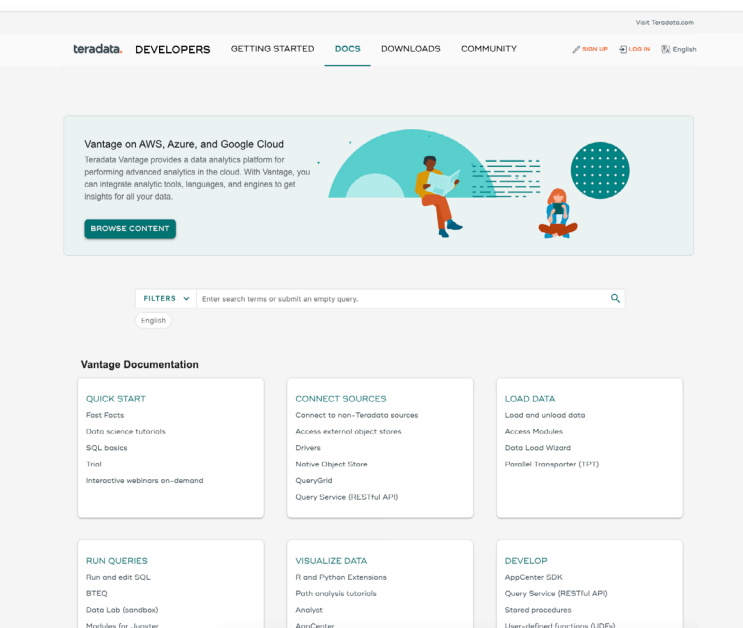
"These new content analytics have helped to challenge long-standing beliefs about how content was used. Now, the team can easily understand what users have searched for and for how long or if for example there are topics that have never been visited. We use these insights to drive our documentation effort", explained Beth McFadden. The company has even hired a data scientist to delve into analytics and build even more expertise.

## What's Next?

In addition to deploying a new portal for the product management team, Teradata is working with Fluid Topics to add more capabilities such as:

- » More personalized content: with Fluid Topics, content will be delivered to each user according to their profiles and preferences, but also to their behavior from which the AI-powered search engine constantly learns from
- » Offline mode: some of Teradata's users will need the ability to access and search for technical content without being connected to the internet
- » User Experience: Teradata is starting to use the new Fluid Topics customization feature which will allow the company to refine their user interface as they see fit and in full autonomy

"Fluid Topics is easy to use and meets all of our requirements. The platform is stable and easy to customize. It's been a great adventure so far and we look forward to continuing to work with the whole team," concluded Beth McFadden.



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