

Clarity's Consultant Instrumental in Updating Help Documentation

Challenge

A global powerhouse in scientific instrumentation planned to move the documentation for its new oscilloscopes from hard copy to the Web, but its documentation specialist left early in the process, so the company had to ship instruments without the online help its customers required. The company needed reliable, Web-based documentation as quickly as possible, so it required a consultant who was versatile, experienced, and ready to contribute immediately.

Opportunity

Clarity's consultant brought an unusual combination of skills to help the company meet its urgent need. On the writing side, she had college training in technical writing and editing and 11 years of experience at Cape Canaveral Air Force Station as a technical writer and editor for launch documentation and maintenance procedures. On the Web side, she had training in design, HTML, and programming. She had expertise in programs such as FrameMaker®, RoboHelp®, Dreamweaver®, and Adobe AIR®. The consultant's full complement of skills made her a one-person resource for multiple functions.

Although the basic design for the new Web content was in place, the company's creative process and rolling changes required the consultant to combine speed and flexibility with an ability to translate engineering terminology into customer-facing language. Most of the work was executed onsite, which enabled the consultant to build collaborative relationships with engineers, write copy and compose pages that were accurate and user-friendly, and work quickly during the four-month progression from drafting and wireframes to review and publication. The consultant wrote copy and composed pages that were accurate and user-friendly. She worked quickly during the four-month progression from drafting and wireframes to review and publication.

Results

The consultant delivered a comprehensive customer resource website. There were 10 main sections, each with subpages that described the equipment, answered frequently asked questions, and listed technical specifications. Each subpage included downloadable instruction documents in PDF created with FrameMaker. The four-month project was completed on time and went live on schedule.

► Do you have critical projects to complete, but lack the necessary resources to get the job done? [Contact us.](#)



Clarity enabled the company to:

- Move critical documentation online in a more easily updatable format.
- Gain consensus with subject matter experts on content.
- Deliver more relevant help documentation to its customers.

“It wasn't just writing technical documentation in a linear process; it was bringing the engineers to consensus, making a uniform platform and presentation, and making sure that the messaging was clear and useful to customers who weren't necessarily engineers themselves. It was writing the technical documentation and building the medium by which it would be delivered.”

Cami T., Consultant