

# DocBook vs DITA

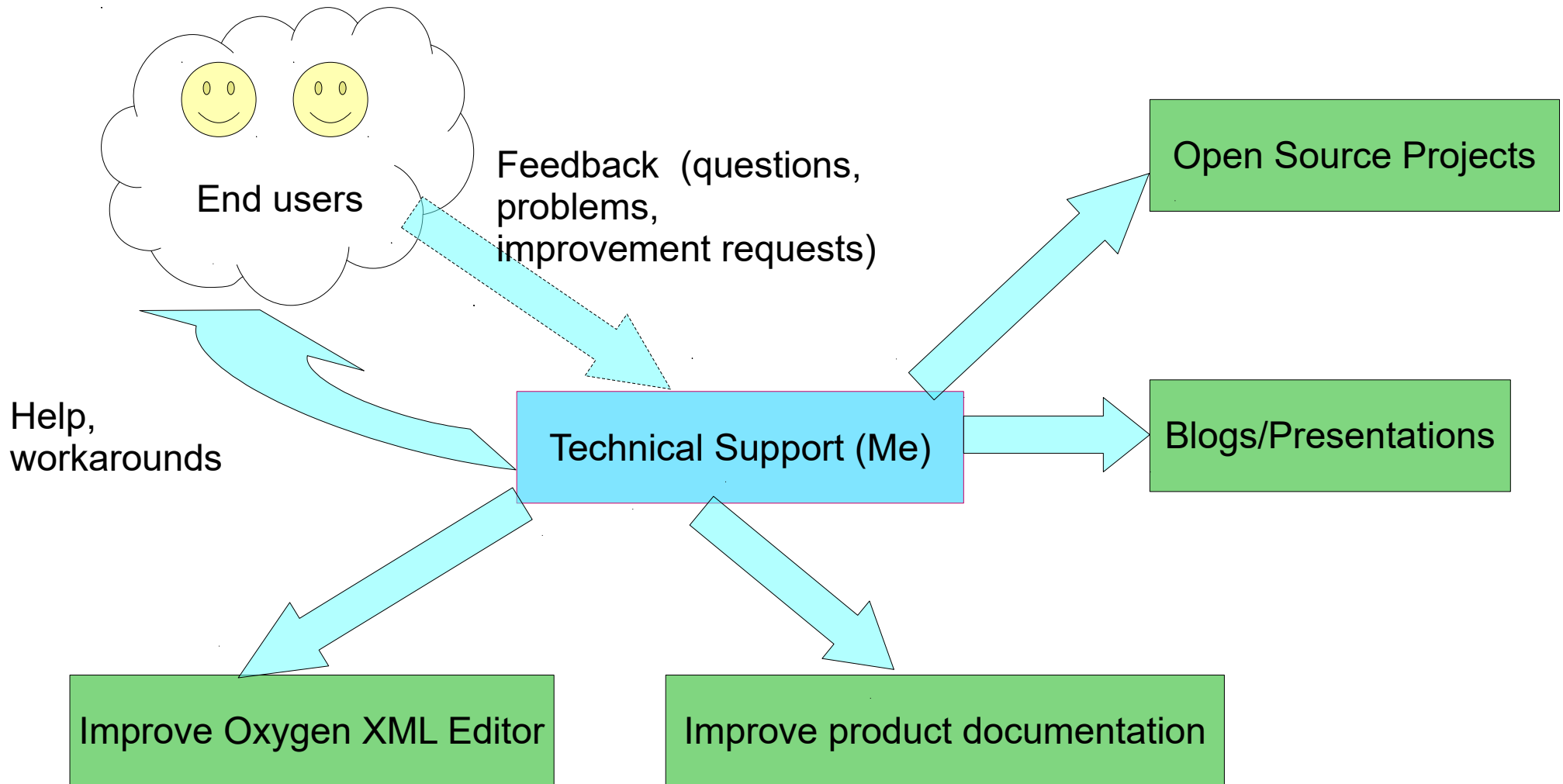


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# About the Author

I'm a Hub:



# DocBook vs DITA

DocBook



<http://docbook.org/>



“Comparing DocBook and DITA is like comparing two different types of birds”

# DocBook 5 vs DITA 1.3



- Compare standards/vocabularies
- Compare publishing systems
- Compare documentation/communities

# Short History

## DocBook

- 1991 – First DTD

HAL Computer  
Systems and O'Reilly

- 1998 – OASIS
- Current version: 5.1
- Extensive XML vocabulary (366)

## DITA

- 2001 – First DTD

IBM

- June 2005 - OASIS
- Current version: 1.3
- Extensive XML vocabulary (461)

# Main Purpose

## DocBook

- Books, articles in web or PDF format

“DocBook is a general purpose [XML] schema particularly well suited to books and papers about computer hardware and software (though it is by no means limited to these applications).”

## DITA

- Topic-oriented information

“The Darwin Information Typing Architecture (DITA) specification defines a set of document types for authoring and organizing topic-oriented information, as well as a set of mechanisms for combining, extending, and constraining document types.”

# Versioning

## DocBook

- Three major versions (3, 4 and 5).
- Numerous minor (maintenance) releases.
- Latest version is DocBook 5.1.

## DITA

- 4 minor versions (1.0, 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3)
- Latest Version is DITA 1.3

# DocBook Specs Versioning Rules

- Minor versions (“point releases,” such as V2.2) could add to the markup model, but could not change it in a backwards-incompatible way.
- Major versions (such as V3.0) could both add to the markup model and make backwards-incompatible changes.
- Major-version introductions must be separated by at least a year.

Problems updating from DocBook to DocBook 5 (DocBook 4 for was in 2006).



# Schema

## DocBook

- Initially: DTD
- Now: Normative - Relax NG, available also as DTD and XML Schema

## DITA

- Initially: DTD
- Now: Normative - Relax NG, available also as DTD and XML Schema

# Content Reuse

## DocBook

- xi:include

Problems: Harder to validate, duplicate IDs

- Entity references

## DITA

- Conrefs
- Keyrefs
- Conkeyrefs

# Linking

## DocBook

- Internal links based on ID/IDREF constraints
- Links based on ID/IDRef and XLink standard.

Neat stuff:

- You can add links on all DocBook elements
- You can define [xreflabel](#) on any element
- Olink (linking across publications)

## DITA

- Direct/indirect
- Related links
- Relationship tables.

# Media resources (images, audio, video)

## DocBook

- Support for referencing images, videos and audio resources
- Scale, scalefit, width, depth
- Content area width, depth
- Align
- Valign

## DITA

- Only image references (direct or indirect)
- Scale, scalefit, width, height
- Align

# Block Elements Trivia

## DocBook

- Article
- Books
  - Chapters
- Topic (new in 5.1)
- Sections
  - Numbered
  - Recursive
  - Simple

## DITA

- Topics
- Div's
- Sections (non-nesting)

# Tables

## DocBook

- CALS table
- HTML table
- Informal table
- Internal table

Table related info:

- Support for table footer
- Table Orientation attribute
- Table page wide scale (pgwide)
- Profiling on any table cell

## DITA

- CALS table
- Simple table

Table related info:

- Table Orientation attribute
- Table page wide scale (pgwide)

# Inline Elements Trivia

## DocBook

- Emphasis with roles instead of bold/italic/underline
- Inline equations
- Inline SVG
- UI element refs like “guibutton, guilabel, guimenu, guisubmenu”

## DITA

- Bold, italic, underline
- Inline equations
- Inline SVG
- UI element refs “uicontrol”

# Other Common Vocabulary Features

- Keywords
- Index terms
- Footnotes
- Image maps
- Embed SVG and MathML.



# Profiling/Filtering

## DocBook

- 14 pre-configured profiling attributes
- Values are semi-colon separated
- Filter using transformation parameters
- You can filter based on any attribute

## DITA

- 7 pre-configured attributes
- Values are space separated
- Filter using DITAVAL file

# Extending/Restricting the vocabulary

## DocBook

- Once you extend vocabulary it's no longer DocBook

## DITA

- Specialize, restrict, extend vocabulary

# Mainstream Publishing Engines

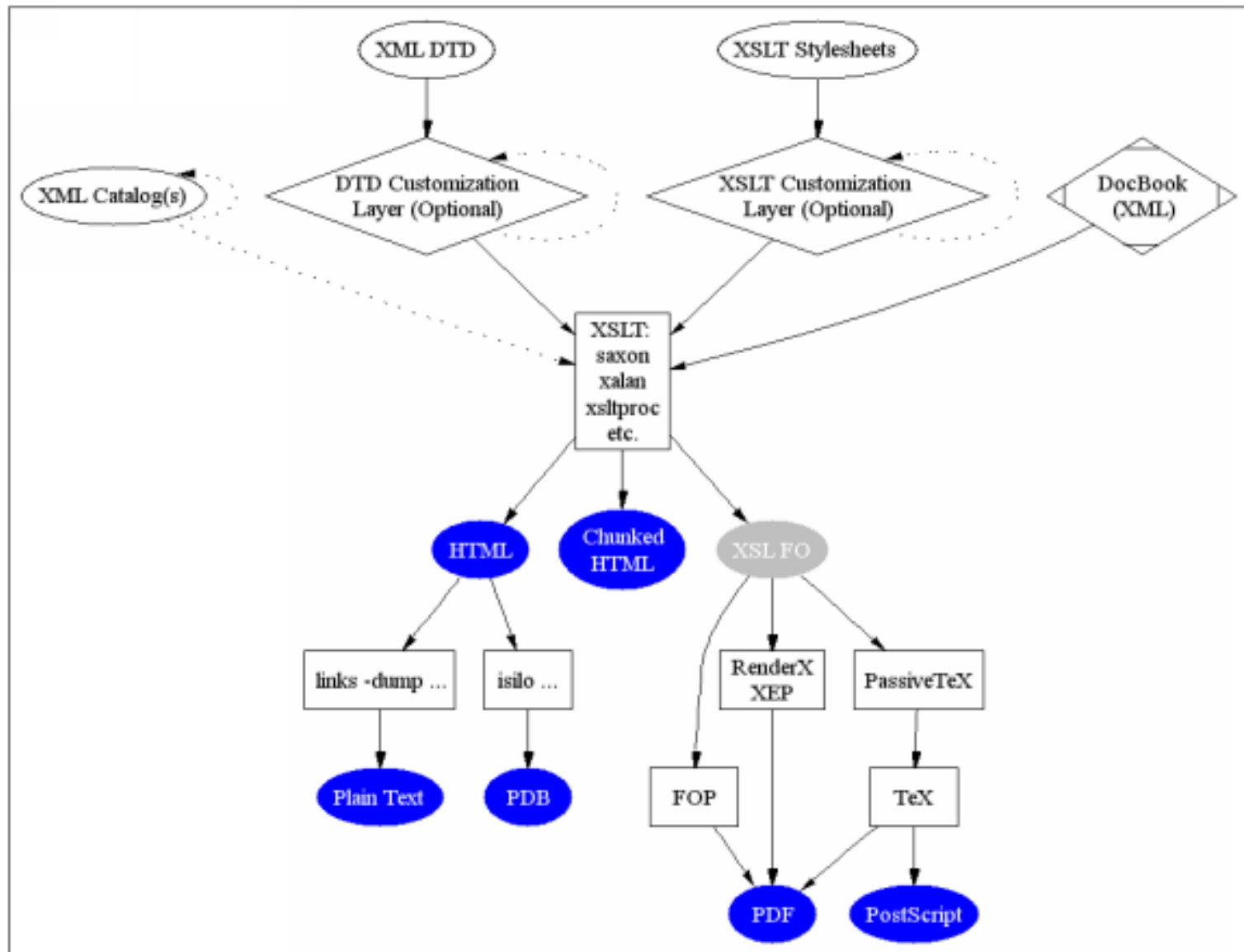
## DocBook

- DocBook XSLTs:  
HTML, XHTML,  
WebHelp, EPUB,  
PDF, Eclipse Help,  
Java Help
  - Based mostly on XSLT  
1.0 and a couple of  
Java extensions

## DITA

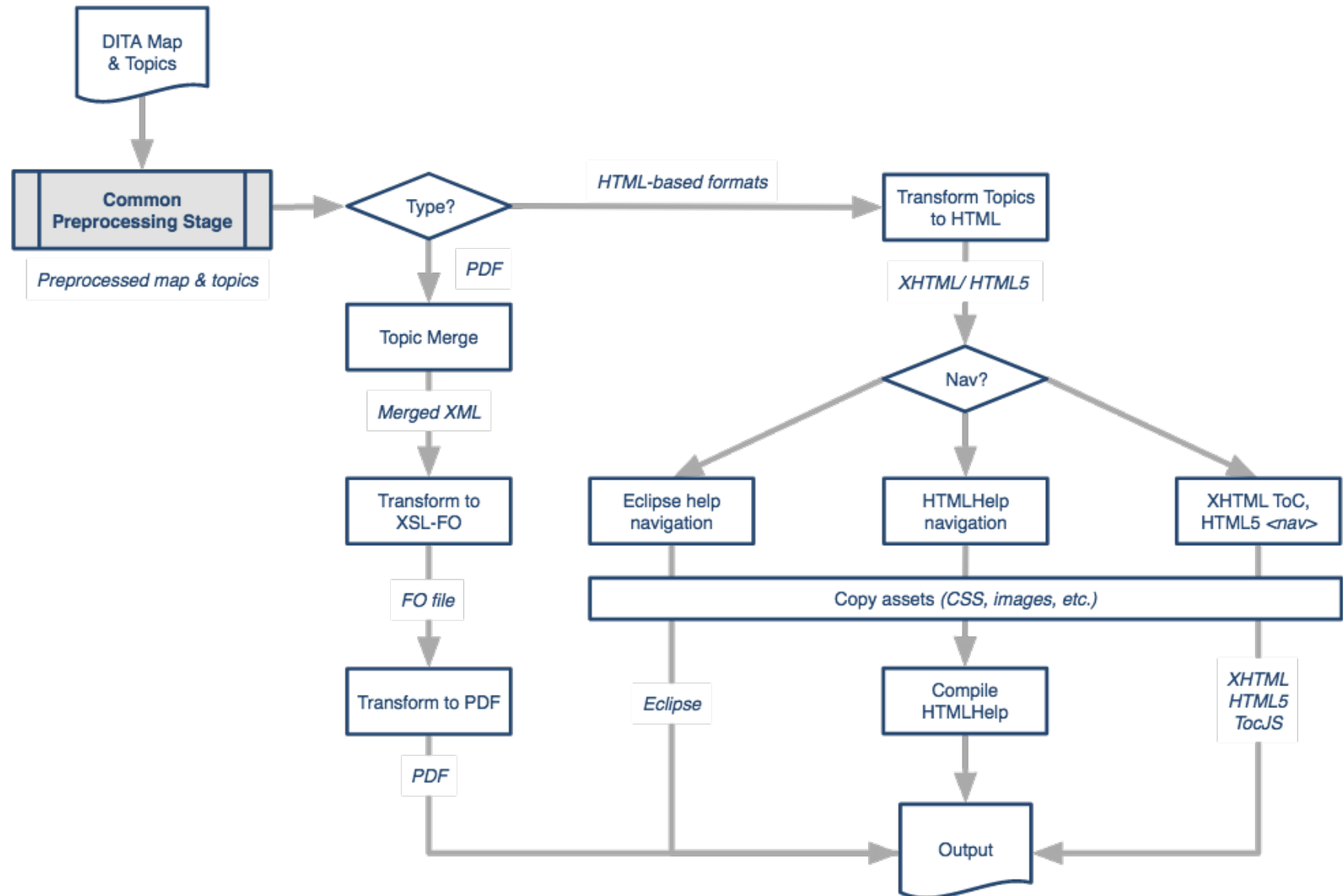
- DITA Open Toolkit  
(open source):  
HTML5, XHTML, PDF,  
Eclipse Help
  - Based on mixture of  
ANT build files, Java  
code and XSLT 2.0  
stylesheets

# DocBook Publishing Diagram



DocBook XML Publishing (XSLT)

# DITA OT Publishing Diagram



# PDF Publishing Customizations

## DocBook

- PDF font, paper size, columns can be customized with parameters
- Special support for FOP, XEP
- Anything else configurable via XSLT

## DITA

- You need XSLT knowledge and to build customization folder or plugin for any customization
- Special support for FOP, XEP, Antenna House

# HTML-based Publishing

## DocBook

- HTML (old), XHTML
- Chunked HTML/XHTML
- Eclipse Help
- WebHelp output
- EPUB

## DITA

- HTML5, XHTML
- Eclipse Help

# HTML Publishing Customizations

## DocBook

- CSS
- Lots of parameters
- XSLT customization

## DITA

- CSS
- XSLT customization



# Extra DocBook Publishing Features

- Custom Processing instructions
- Some parameter XSLTs generate documentation.
- Java Extensions to:
  - Add line numbers to program listings
  - Determine the intrinsic size of an image
  - Provide syntax highlight in program listing

# Communities

## DocBook

- DocBook Users List (general questions)
- DocBook Apps Users List (publishing-related)

## DITA

- DITA Users List (Yahoo Group, Google Group)
- DITA-OT Users List (Google Group)

# Online Help Resources

## DocBook

- Vocabulary
  - DocBook Definitive Guide
- Publishing:
  - DocBook Complete Guide

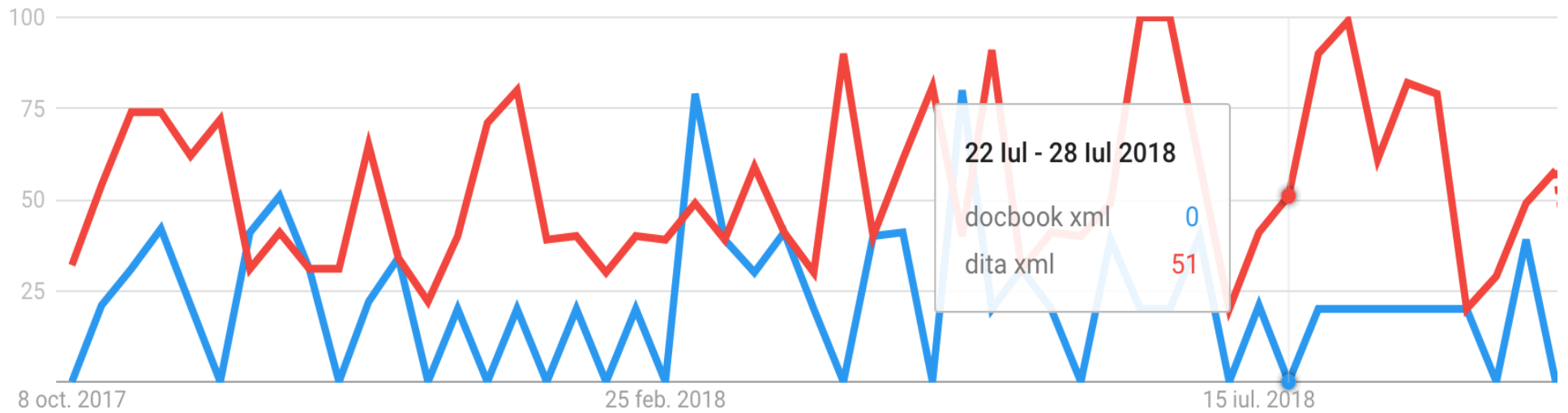
## DITA

- Vocabulary
  - DITA Specification
- Publishing:
  - DITA Open Toolkit documentation

# Trends

DocBook

DITA



# Questions

- Why is DocBook getting replaced by DITA?
- Do we have anything to learn from the DocBook specification?
- Do we have anything to learn from the DocBook publishing system?

# Thank You!

## Questions?

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